

**VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM PLAN COMMITTEE
WORKING SESSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2026 - 12:00 PM
9996 WATER STREET**



Present: Andy Bartelt, Grace Held, Laird Hart, Rick Hoyerman, Monique McClean, BD Thorp, and Ken Nelson – Chair.

Staff: Brent Bristol - Village Administrator and Kim Roberts - Deputy Clerk.

Guests: John Cox and Kathy Pentler.

Call to Order: K. Nelson called the working session to order at 12:00 PM.

The Committee reviewed the intent statement of §17.20. Two (2) versions of the intent language were discussed with Hart and Hoyerman, explaining that they had worked on a version on their own. After brief discussion, the Committee agreed that both drafts conveyed the same ideas and that the substantive difference was minor wordsmithing. The Committee agreed to retain the current version and to strike the word "also" from its opening line.

The Committee reviewed the Permitted Uses section without changes.

In the Conditional Uses Section §17.20(3)(b)(1), Bristol suggested adding the reference to §17.20(7) at the end of the sentence.

The Committee reviewed the Prohibited Uses and Special Exception Review sections without changes.

Section 6 — Additions, Modifications, and Replacements

The Committee discussed the addition of "accessory buildings" to the heading of the section, alongside residences, explaining that this would allow applicants proposing changes to structures such as sheds — including adding a hip roof or rebuilding for reduced exposure — to come before the Committee. It was noted that retaining walls, fences, and stone walls are addressed elsewhere in Chapter 17.

Section 8 — Reproduction of Existing Structures

The Committee jumped ahead to review Section 8 and identified a drafting inconsistency: the word "house" appeared in a sentence within this section that should read "structure," consistent with the broader language change. The Committee agreed to amend "of the original house" to "of the original structure."

Regarding materials, the Committee discussed a potential conflict between paragraph (a), which states materials "must be sourced" to ensure authenticity, and paragraph (b), which allows modern material substitution. Members debated whether the word "ensure" was too strong given the exception. The Committee ultimately opted to leave the language as-is, accepting that authenticity in this context is meant to address appearance rather than requiring use of identical historical materials, and that the two (2) paragraphs together provide a workable road map prioritizing original sourcing while permitting suitable substitution.

Section 6(a) — General Requirements (Footprints)

In §17.20(6)(a)(i)(a), the Committee decided to add, "Footprint of finished interior space" at the beginning of the sentence.

Section 6(b) — Design Criteria

1.5 Story Definition: The Committee reviewed the definition of a 1.5 story house, which had been restored to its fuller form including references to knee walls, steeply pitched roofs, gables, dormers, and sloped ceilings. The Committee discussed whether to impose a hard numerical limit on the ratio of upper floor area to first floor area to address bulk concerns. Members examined square footage data from recently approved projects.

The Committee debated whether this ratio was acceptable or whether it indicated insufficient restriction. Members discussed whether defining a hard percentage was workable given the difficulty of determining where to measure floor area relative to knee wall height. Several members expressed concern that a percentage could be disadvantageous to owners of small structures. The Committee ultimately concluded that requiring a minimum

6:12 roof pitch — already agreed upon — would be the more effective control on bulk, and that imposing a hard upper-floor area cap was unnecessary. The Committee agreed not to include a maximum percentage for upper floor area.

The Committee also agreed to change "nominally" to "typically" in the definition of a 1.5-story house for consistency with the word "normally" used elsewhere in the same definition.

The Committee reviewed design criteria section §17.20 (6)(b)(iv) and the associated definition of "house attachment," which had been drafted to address porches and decks as non-conditioned structures attached to the principal building. There was discussion that using the term "house attachment" was confusing because it implied attached garages, which are a separate issue.

The Committee reviewed an inventory of existing structures in the PW district. The underlying policy goal was discussed: to grandfather existing attachments so that owners who modify or tear down their structures can replace what they had — on a like-for-like basis — without new additions being allowed. For example, a porch could be replaced by a porch, but not upgraded to a screened or windowed porch if it was not previously one.

After extended discussion, the Committee agreed to eliminate the term "house attachment" from both the definition section and the body of the ordinance. The Committee agreed that "house attachment" could be struck from 17.20(6)(b)(iv) and be replaced with “decks and porches”.

The Committee identified that attached garages present a distinct issue from porches and decks, as they are enclosed structures that fall within the footprint definition. Two (2) properties in the PW district currently have attached garages predating recent construction. The Committee discussed whether owners of attached garages should be permitted to convert garage space to finished living space.

Members agreed that such conversion should be permissible — as it would not increase the footprint or the width of the structure as seen from the highway, but that no upper level (second story) should be permitted over the repurposed garage space. Members suggested inserting a new sub-paragraph that specifically addresses attached garages, stating attached garages may be converted to finished living space, provided that no upper level is added above the converted space, and there is no increase in width. The Committee agreed to add language in a new §17.20(6)(a)(i)(b) to address attached garages becoming living space. The current §17.20(6)(a)(i)(b) would become §17.20(6)(a)(i)(c).

Section 6(c) -Dimensional Standards

The Committee discussed whether new or replacement construction should be limited to the existing height of the structure being replaced, rather than the 23-foot maximum. The Committee discussed this but concluded that the 23-foot cap, combined with the 6:12 minimum roof pitch, would serve as an effective practical constraint, particularly on narrow lots, and that maintaining a uniform standard was preferable to tying height to prior structure dimensions.

The Committee engaged in extended discussion regarding the permitted width of shed dormers, which may be considered with a roof pitch as low as 3:12 and a maximum of 6:12. Members discussed whether a percentage of the roofline width would be a more proportional cap than a fixed footage. A suggestion was 50% as a reasonable starting point; Bartelt suggested 75%, also acknowledged as somewhat arbitrary. There was discussion about whether the shed dormer provision applies to one or more sides of the building, with concern that allowing shed dormers on multiple sides — particularly all four (4) sides of a square footprint — could effectively create a full second floor.

In §17.20(6)(c)(5), “except for the following circumstances” was added to the end of the sentence.

In §17.20(6)(c)(5)(a), language was amended to, “A roof pitch for a limited amount of shed dormer of less than 6/12 and a minimum of 3/12 may be considered.

In §17.20(6)(c)(5)(b), “Roof pitches for porches less than 6/12 may be considered.”

In §17.20(10)(a), the word “house attachments” was replaced with “decks and porches”.

The committee did not complete a full pass through the ordinance during this session. K. Nelson acknowledged that a further working session would be needed before the draft is ready for the regular Plan Committee meeting.

Held moved, Hoyerman seconded to adjourn at 2:08 PM.

Recorded by Kim Roberts – Deputy Clerk