

**VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM
PLAN COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2026 – 7:00 PM
9996 WATER STREET**



ACTION ITEMS:

Held moved, Bartelt seconded to approve the July 28, 2026, Plan Committee Working Session minutes, as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

Thorp moved, Hart seconded to approve the July 28, 2026, Plan Committee minutes, as corrected, all ayes. Motion carried.

Hoyerman moved, Bartelt seconded to approve the August 4, 2026, Plan Committee Working Session minutes, as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

Thorp moved, Held seconded, to approve the New SFR Design Review application for Cora Elquist on Town Line Drive parcel 121-01-24312714B3 as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

Thorp moved, Bartelt seconded, to approve the New SFR Design Review Application for Smart Custom Homes at 10471 Valvaere Way, as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

Thorp moved, Hoyerman seconded, to approve the New SFR Design Review Application for Smart Custom Homes at 10467 Valvaere Way, as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

Held moved, Hoyerman seconded to adjourn at 7:33 PM, all ayes. Motion carried.

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

Absent: Monique McClean

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

Guests in person: Cora Elquist, representatives from Smart Custom Homes (Maureen Bryfcznski et al), and Shane and Stephanie Poda.

Guests online: Brent Heim (John Joseph Company), “Ben K”, John Cox, and Gary Houchin-Miller.

1. Call to order:

K. Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Quorum:

A quorum of the Plan Committee was present.

3. Approval of previous minutes:

Held moved, Bartelt seconded to approve the July 28, 2026, Plan Committee Working Session minutes, as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

Thorp moved, Hart seconded to approve the July 28, 2026, Plan Committee minutes, as corrected, all ayes. Motion carried.

A minor typographical error was noted for correction by Bartelt on item 15 of the July 28 Plan Committee minutes. He noted that the date of the next meeting had not been updated for the next meeting.

Hoyerman moved, Bartelt seconded to approve the June 14, 2026, Plan Committee Working Session minutes, as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

4. Changes in agenda: There were no changes.

5. Visitors’ Comments: There were no Visitors’ Comments.

6. Cora Elquist– Town Line Drive- New SFR – Design Review:

Bristol provided an introduction, noting that the application had appeared the previous month as a concept review. At that time, the project appeared to potentially require a special exception due to a maximum height reading of 32 feet. Upon further review, the averaged height calculation brought the structure within the standard allowance, eliminating the need for a special exception. No dimensional concerns were identified.

Applicant Cora Elquist presented material samples to the Committee. She described the exterior finishes as follows: LP SmartSide siding in an onyx (black) color, black window frames, black doors, black garage doors, and a "pristine green" three-dimensional architectural shingle for the roof. All trim elements were described as black, making the roof the sole non-black exterior element.

A discussion was held regarding the New SFR Design Review Application. In response to a question from Held regarding visibility from Townline Road, Elquist confirmed that the home would not be visible from the road, as it is situated well back on a large property with significant tree coverage. Bartelt also noted that the elevations were more appealing with windows incorporated into the design compared to the prior concept review.

Thorp moved, Held seconded, to approve the New SFR Design Review application for Cora Elquist on Town Line Drive parcel 121-01-24312714B3 as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

Bartelt asked about the driveway, which was confirmed to be situated on an easement across the adjoining property, owned by Elquist's father.

Elquist indicated her intention to begin construction as soon as possible.

7. Smart Custom Homes – 10471 Valvaere Way– New SFR – Design Review

Bristol introduced the application, noting that the applicants had appeared before the Committee twice previously for other lots within the Valvaere development. He noted that the lot dimensions, impervious surface totals, and building separations were consistent with prior approved lots in the subdivision, and that no dimensional concerns were identified.

Maureen Bryfcznski of Smart Custom Homes presented the application for Lot 5 at 10471 Valvaere Way. She provided a rendering and material samples. The exterior was described as LP SmartSide siding, black doors, black garage doors, white trim, and black dimensional architectural shingles. A rendering was distributed in place of a physical shingle sample.

A discussion was held regarding the NEW SFR Design Review Application for 10471 Valvaere Way. It was noted that the main gable featured a 14:12 pitch, which exceeds the standard 12:12 threshold. Bristol clarified that pitches over 12:12 do not require a special exception but did warrant additional Committee consideration. Hoyerman expressed that he found the steeper roof aesthetically appealing. The Committee inquired whether the design was sufficiently differentiated from the other homes in the development. Bryfcznski confirmed that this is the only home in the development featuring a shed dormer, which provides clear exterior differentiation, and that the second home on the agenda (10467 Valvaere Way) features two gables, further distinguishing the designs from one another. Thorp asked whether the homes were model homes or pre-sold. Bryfcznski indicated that one was intended to operate as a short-term rental (STR) and the other potentially kept as a personal getaway, though that had not been finalized.

Following the motion, a permanent resident of the Valvaere neighborhood, Shane Poda, (2844 Velvaere Court), came forward to raise several concerns. He and his wife were identified as one of two permanent, full-time resident households in the neighborhood. His concerns included:

- **Sight Lines:** His front porch directly faces the rear of 10472 Valvaere Way, and he was concerned that back patios on adjacent STR properties would create privacy issues for both parties.

- **Covenant Compliance and Character of Development:** He expressed concern that the original character of the development—emphasizing natural surroundings, pervious surfaces, and tree preservation—could be eroded when properties are developed primarily as business ventures rather than as personal residences.
- **Parking and Occupancy:** Mr. Poda reported that the week prior, a neighboring STR had nine cars present, five of which were parked on the street. He expressed concern that with up to eight high-occupancy STRs in the neighborhood, the development could routinely see 50 to 70 vehicles at any given time, which he found excessive. He noted that the high-occupancy nature of these rentals—advertised to sleep 10 to 15 people—was a contributing factor, as large family groups rarely carpool.

K. Nelson acknowledged the concerns and provided context, noting that the State of Wisconsin had preempted local municipalities from prohibiting short-term rentals outright. He noted that STR operators in Ephraim are required to obtain renewed permits annually, and that the Village monitors how properties are advertised. He encouraged Poda to report instances of excessive parking to the Village directly, including with photographic documentation, as parking regulations do apply. Further, K. Nelson noted that the Village does not get involved in associations and their related covenants and restrictions.

Poda noted that the intention of the developer was not to have the development turn into STRs; however, he had to sell the lots, and STRs are controlled by the State.

K. Nelson encouraged Poda to work with the association.

Poda explained that the majority of owners are STRs, so why would they vote for any changes?

Bristol confirmed that parking rules are included in the Village's STR requirements and that documentation of violations would be useful.

Bryfcznski responded to Poda's concerns. She noted that Ephraim's STR permitting process is notably more stringent than neighboring municipalities such as Fish Creek. She stated that tenants are required to keep vehicles within the driveway, with two cars permitted in the garage and the remainder in the driveway only. She further noted that parties and unplanned gatherings are explicitly prohibited under their rental rules. She acknowledged that while the listed occupancy can reach 14 persons, the actual composition is typically around 8 adults with the remainder being children. She also noted that higher-end rentals tend to attract guests who are more inclined to follow rules. She explained that she respected Poda's concerns and that they will do their best in managing the properties.

Thorp moved, Bartelt seconded, to approve the New SFR Design Review Application for Smart Custom Homes at 10471 Valvaere Way, as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

8. Smart Custom Homes –10467 Valvaere Way– New SFR – Design Review

Maureen Bryfcznski presented the second application for Smart Custom Homes, for the adjacent property at 10467 Valvaere Way. She provided a rendering and material samples, describing the exterior as LP SmartSide siding with brown garage doors, distinguishing this home from the neighboring 10471 Valvaere Way design.

Shane Poda again raised the sight-line concern relevant to this property as well, clarifying that 10472 Valvaere Way's rear faces directly toward his front porch, and that the location of a back patio on that lot would determine the degree of the privacy issue for both parties. He noted that there was currently a nice tree line but was unsure if it would be maintained during the construction process.

Bryfcznski indicated that they intended to preserve the trees as much as they can. Further, their goal is to situate the patio on the 10468 side of the home rather than facing Poda's property, which would address his concern. Another member of the Smart Custom Homes team stated that the shared well between the two Smart Custom Homes lots is located on the garage side and that they intended to preserve a tree

between the properties.

K. Nelson expressed that he was glad both parties had the opportunity to speak directly, characterizing the dialogue as a productive exchange with future neighbors.

Thorp moved, Hoyerman seconded, to approve the New SFR Design Review Application for Smart Custom Homes at 10467 Valvaere Way, as presented, all ayes. Motion carried.

9. Discussion and consideration regarding PW Ordinance Amendment:

K. Nelson provided background for visitors present, explaining that the Plan Committee had been working on an amendment to the Protected Waterfront (PW) Ordinance over the preceding three months. He described the protected waterfront as the stretch of Ephraim's shoreline running from Anderson Dock southward to the area near the creek outlet by the Little Plum Cottage. This zone carries particularly strict zoning controls. The Committee's objective throughout the summer had been to create limited allowances for minor property improvements within this zone, while maintaining its protective character.

K. Nelson noted that a working session had been held that same afternoon at noon, during which the final substantive change was made: the insertion of the two words "*may be*" into section 8(a)(i)(c), modifying it to read "consideration *may be* given," to provide greater flexibility in application. He acknowledged that the ordinance had not yet been distributed in its updated form reflecting this change, as it had only been finalized hours prior.

K. Nelson invited any final comments from the Committee, noting that he was not seeking new substantive ideas given the extensive hours already invested. He explained the procedural path forward: following Committee approval, the amendment would go to the Village Board in two weeks. From there, it would be referred for a Public Hearing, with final Village Board consideration anticipated in October.

Bartelt moved, Held seconded, to recommend to the Village Board approval of the amended Protected Waterfront Ordinance as presented; all ayes. Motion carried.

15. New business for next meeting / next meeting date:

The next meeting date of the Plan Committee is September 22, 2026, at 7:00 PM.

16. Adjournment:

Held moved, Hoyerman seconded to adjourn at 7:33 PM; all ayes. Motion carried.

Recorded by Kim Roberts – Deputy Clerk