

Parks, Property & Streets Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 8, 2025

(Approved)

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

The meeting of the Parks Property and Streets Committee was called to order by Chairperson Louise Howson on Monday, September 8, 2025, at 1:00 PM.

Committee members present: Committee Chair Louise Howson and Committee members Denise Bhirdo, Nate Bell, Jerry Ahrens, and, Mike Laszkiewicz arriving at 1:03 PM.

Staff Members Present: Village Administrator Julie Schmelzer, Parks & Streets Department Director Erik Linczmaier, Dave Lienau, and Administrative Assistant Sarah Bertges.

Others Present: John Blossom, Steve Musinsky, Nancy Akerly, Barbara Hanson, Donna Johnson, Terry Wolf, Yvonne Wiltse, Chad Kodanko, Jessica Hatch, Kim Erzinger, Ellie Soderberg-Gruger, Chris Schmeltz, Jared Schmidt of REL, Jennifer Liimatta of REL, Todd Kruse, Mnn494-Mike Nelson, jjolles, jliimatta, Karen Berndt.

2. Approve Agenda

Motion by Bell to approve the agenda as presented, second by Ahrens. Motion carried – All ayes.

3. Approve Minutes: August 4, 2025, Regular Meeting

Several corrections to the minutes were noted:

- A typo on page 4, lines 5-6, where "seconded by" appears twice.
- Page 4, line 29, that the statement about keeping the current width of the road was not a unanimous consensus but reflected the views of some committee members. It was also pointed out that the committee did not know the current width.
- A correction was requested on page 5, line 9, to note that Howson was not on the board at the time of discussions about purchasing the Logerquist site.
- Bell indicated he would provide a correction during his comments regarding the Logerquist property being discussed as a potential location for a future fire station before being considered for the administration building.
- Howson requested adding her name on page 5, item G, line 4, to indicate her support of the ad hoc committee's recommendation.
- Howson also requested adding Bell's correction that initially the administration building was to be on the Wiltse property, and the Logerquist property was a possible location for a future fire station.
- Howson requested clarification on page 5, line 18, regarding which driveway was being discussed in the staff reports. Staff confirmed it was the driveway in front of Marina View condos.

Motion by Bhirdo to approve the minutes of August 4, 2025, with the corrections as noted, second by Ahrens. Motion carried – all ayes.

4. Comments, Correspondence, and Concerns from the Public

Nancy Akerly (Sister Bay, North Spring Road) expressed two concerns:

- Fall Festival parking issues on North Spring Road, where vehicles park on both sides creating safety hazards. She requested making North Spring a one-way street for Fall Fest weekend with parking on only one side.
- Opposition to removing the old administration building, noting its historical significance with the same stone design as the village hall and post office, dating back to 1948. She suggested selling it with a requirement to maintain the facade.

Chad Kodanko (Sister Bay) agreed with Akerly's comments on preserving the administration building, suggesting the village could use sale proceeds to preserve the village hall.

Yvonne Wiltse (Sister Bay) supported preserving the administration building, noting it was the Bank of Sturgeon Bay when she was young and is one of the few historic buildings remaining in Sister Bay.

John Blossom echoed support for preserving the building, recalling when it was Bank of Sturgeon Bay.

Barbara Hanson (Sister Bay) supported Nate Bell's suggestion of selling the building with a preservation provision for the facade.

Donna Johnson (Sister Bay) agreed with previous speakers on preserving the building.

Steve Musinsky commented on street widening, noting a correlation between wider streets and increased traffic. He suggested narrower streets help reduce speed and are safer.

Nancy Akerly asked about previously discussed plans to maintain the tree canopy along Maple Drive as a historic drive. Schmelzer mentioned this matter has been discussed by the Plan Commission.

5. Presentation/Discussion/Possible Action

a. Frontier Communications; Mike Nelson, VP External Affairs & Todd Kruse, Government and Grant Affairs; Sister Bay Area Fiber Project

Mike Nelson, VP of External Affairs for Frontier Communications, presented information about the fiber project in Sister Bay. He explained that Frontier is funding the project 100% through their Business as Usual (BAU) operations, with work covering 3,703 locations including Sister Bay, Ephraim, and Ellison Bay.

Key points from the presentation:

- The project experienced some delays due to the tourist season
- Frontier has obtained permits for some areas and is working with the village on others
- Work will involve using existing infrastructure where possible, with approximately 70% being aerial and 30% buried
- Overlashing will be used on existing strand and copper
- Hub locations were shown that will connect neighborhoods together
- The village currently has three permitted projects with three pending
- They will not serve every property, but will be able to serve most

Todd Kruse explained that marketing would begin once the first hub is activated, utilizing email, direct mail, and door-to-door marketing after registering with the village.

Committee questions focused on:

- Timeline (expected completion by spring 2026)

- Service to private roads and condominium developments through Property Access License (PAL) agreements
- Service pricing and plans (available at frontier.com/shop)
- Verizon's acquisition of Frontier expected in Q1 2026
- Decommissioning of copper infrastructure (will be maintained until customers switch)
- Customer notification (DSL customers will be informed their service will be discontinued within 6 months)

The committee noted there has been confusion among residents about this project versus a previously contracted broadband project with Bertram Communications. After discussion, the committee agreed to recommend to the Village Board that they exit the Bertram contract and allow private companies like Frontier to proceed with their own fiber deployment, with ongoing reassessment of service coverage.

Motion by Laszkiewicz to recommend to the Village Board that they exit the Bertram Communications contract and allow companies that are looking to service Sister Bay to move forward on their own, with ongoing reassessment of service coverage before spending taxpayer dollars on a fiber optic investment, second by Ahrens. Motion carried: 4- Ayes. Bell recused himself from the vote.

6. Discussion/Action Items

a. New Business

i. Robert E. Lee & Associates; Bluffside Area Road Design

Jennifer and Jared from Robert E. Lee & Associates presented conceptual designs for the "triangle" area encompassing Maple Drive, Bluffside, and the Parkview area. The design focused on maintaining narrow roads (primarily 9-foot lanes) with curb and gutter, 4-foot sidewalks where practical, and preserving retaining walls and trees where possible.

The committee reviewed several options for the Parkview/Maple/Bluffside area:

- Parkview Drive area: The committee reached consensus to eliminate pedestrian accommodations on Parkview Drive, as it is a slow-moving road with little traffic. Pedestrians can use Maple Drive to Mill Road instead.
- Maple/Bluffside intersection area (administration building location): Three options were presented:
 - Option 1: Remove administration building and install perpendicular parking (90-degree)
 - Option 2: Remove administration building and provide angled parking (60-degree)
 - Option 3: Keep administration building with more limited parking options

The committee discussed implications for parking capacity, traffic safety, and the future of the historic administration building. After debate, they decided to present two options to the public at the upcoming informational session on September 15th:

- One option maintaining the administration building with sidewalk accommodations
- One option with the administration building removed and 60-degree angled parking (modified from the 90-degree option due to safety concerns)
- Maple Drive to Highway 42: Design includes parallel parking on the north side and angled parking by On Deck store, maintaining existing spaces where possible.

Bluffside area: Design includes 9-foot lanes widening to 11 feet near Highway 42, with parallel parking along Lure restaurant replacing the current angled and perpendicular parking.

The committee reached consensus to modify the design for the public informational session, and requested the engineer make additional revisions to address driveway width concerns at Lure.

A public informational session was scheduled for Monday, September 15th.

ii. Ava Hope & Northwood Community Park

The committee reviewed a proposal from Tim Halbrook for development of the village-owned property at the front of Ava Hope and Northwoods, which includes plans for a small park area with a walking path.

The committee agreed to the following:

- Combine Halbrook's budget for playground equipment with the village's \$30,000 to purchase better quality, commercial-grade playground equipment
- Request pedestrian connectivity to improve access from Northwoods Drive and potentially to other nearby developments
- Accept the proposal that after construction, the developer would deed the park back to the village with an agreement to maintain the property and landscaping

iii. Pavilion Request; Crystal Lake (Illinois) Community Band; July 19, 2026

The committee reviewed a request from the Crystal Lake Community Band to use the pavilion on July 19, 2026. This date is a Sunday, which is movie night. Soderberg-Guger, SBAA Director, agreed to review videos of the band's performances.

The committee agreed to approve the request provided the band coordinates with Sister Bay Advancement Association (SBAA) to ensure they are completely cleared out by 5:00-5:30 PM to allow setup for the movie.

iv. Marina & Waterfront Park Request; Streamline Publishing Private Paint-Out; October 2, 2025

The committee reviewed and approved by unanimous consensus a request from Streamline Publishing for 40 plein air painters to use the Waterfront and Marina Park on Thursday, October 2, 2025.

v. Marina Restrooms; Budget Discussion

Lienau discussed plans for year-round public restrooms at the marina as part of the new marina building project, planned to break ground in fall 2026. Current public restrooms are seasonal, unheated, and connected to the marina building through a utility area.

The committee discussed including showers in the public restrooms, with points raised about:

- Whether showers are necessary in public restrooms
- Potential users (primarily public rather than boaters, as slip holders have their own facilities)
- Maintenance and cleaning considerations
- Funding sources

The committee agreed to maintain the current allocation of \$300,000 (split between 2026 and 2027 capital improvement budgets) for the project, including two stalls for women, one stall and a urinal for men, sinks, mirrors, and one shower in each restroom, all designed for easy cleaning and year-round use.

vi. TAP Grant Resolution; Highway 42 Trail

The committee recommended approving a resolution for the TAP Grant application. Schmelzer noted that a public informational session on the Highway 57 Trail is scheduled for September 22nd from 5:00-6:00 PM at the fire station.

Motion by Howson to recommend approval of the TAP Grant resolution, second by Bhirdo. Motion carried – all ayes.

vii. Soil Contamination; Remediation Alternatives

Schmelzer presented information on soil contamination remediation for the orchard property. The committee reviewed options for handling contaminated soil that would be disturbed for road construction.

The committee reached consensus to:

- *Only disturb soil necessary for the road construction*
- *Remove the contaminated soil and cap it*
- *Investigate options for off-site disposal of the contaminated soil if financially reasonable*

b) Old Business

i. New Administrative Building Site, Setbacks & Suitability

Schmelzer presented an analysis of placing the administration building at the site of the old parks maintenance building on Mill Road. The analysis examined setbacks, parking requirements, and site constraints.

Key points:

- The buildable area is approximately 19,250 square feet
- Based on calculations for a 7,200 square foot building, the site would be short by approximately 341 square feet for all required elements
- For a 6,000 square foot building, approximately 800 square feet would remain
- Soil testing would cost approximately \$5,925
- Stormwater management would likely qualify as redevelopment/infill, requiring less extensive facilities than previously thought

After extensive discussion about the pros and cons of the Mill Road site versus the Logerquist property, the committee agreed to:

- *Recommend the Board order soil borings for the Mill Road site*
- *Review the existing building plans to consider potential reductions in size and ask McMahon if they can begin working with the committee on a new design*
- *Continue discussion at the October meeting*

ii. Post Office Appraisal

The committee was informed that an appraisal for the post office would cost approximately \$6,000.

By consensus, the committee agreed to recommend to the Board to proceed with the appraisal.

iii. Binocular References & Order

Howson reported on discussions with Niagara Falls representatives about the durability of Tower Optical binoculars. The committee debated the value of investing in binoculars for the waterfront.

Motion by Howson to hold on purchasing any binoculars from Tower Optical or any other vendor, and consider alternative uses for the tourism grant money, second by Laszkiewicz. Motion carried – all ayes.

iv. Historic Signage Design & Order

The committee reviewed proposals for historic signage at Waterfront Park. Phase I would cost approximately \$25,000 plus masonry pedestals, and would include two sign boards. The design shows limestone pedestals to match village building stonework.

The committee requested:

- Finding alternative mason contractors for potentially lower costs
- Maintaining the proposed 18-inch square pillars if proportional to the signboards

Terry Wolf from the historical society confirmed they would develop content for the signs, which Julie Hain would then format artistically.

Motion by Bhirdo to postpone discussing phase II, second by Howson. Motion carried – all ayes.

v. Revisit Land Lease; Friends of the Ice Rink; TKH Ice Rink

Schmelzer explained by changing the effective date of the Operational Agreement at the Board meeting, the land lease needed to be reconsidered.

Motion by Bhirdo to reconsider and recommend to the Board approval of a revised land lease for the Friends of the Ice Rink/TKH Ice Rink, second by Howson. Motion carried – all ayes.

vi. Fee Schedule

The committee agreed to defer discussion of the fee schedule to a future meeting, with a review of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) scheduled for September 22nd from 1:00-3:00 PM.

7. Staff Report(s) Matters to be Placed on a Future Agenda or Referred to a Committee, Official or Employee

Erik Linczmaier's staff report included recommendations for:

- Four "No Parking" signs on each side of Country Walk Drive from Highway 42 to Koessel Lane (\$500)
- School zone signs on Country Walk Drive (\$280 plus labor)

By consensus, the committee approved the installation of the "No Parking" signs and school zone signs.

Committee members commended the village staff for their quick response and excellent work during the recent storm.

8. Next Meeting: Regular Meeting October 6, 2025, at 1:00 PM

- **Schedule Walking Tour; Pebble Beach**

The committee agreed to postpone the Pebble Beach walking tour.

- **Schedule Draft CORP Review**

Scheduled for September 22, 2025, from 1:00-3:00 PM.

- **Policy; Reservation Application and Guidelines**

To be addressed at the next regular meeting.

9. Adjourn

At 6:20 PM a motion was made by Laszkiewicz to adjourn, second by Ahrens. Motion carried – all ayes.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Bertges, Administrative Assistant