

VILLAGE OF SISTER BAY
PLAN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2025
APPROVED AS AMENDED

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Bhirdo called the Plan Commission meeting to order on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. and took roll call.

Present: Plan Commission Chair Denise Bhirdo, and Commission members Steve Bacsi, Nate Bell, Laurel Harff, Skip Heidler, and Patrice Champeau.

Staff Member(s): Village Administrator Julie Schmelzer, Administrative Assistant Sarah Bertges

Others: Kurt Harff, Nick and Mary Deviley, John Smith, Alejandra Ullauri, M Schwindenhammer, A Weiner, Cynthia Nelson, Brynn Swanson, Rachel Stollenwerk, Mary Kay Shumway.

2. Approve of Agenda

Motion by Heidler, second by Harff, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.

3. Approve Meeting Minutes: September 23, 2025

Motion by Bacsi, second by Heidler, to approve the meeting minutes from September 23, 2025, as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.

4. Comments, Correspondence and Concerns from the Public

Bhirdo provided an update on the conditional use permit that was granted and moved to the Village Board from last month's meeting. She explained that after extensive discussion at the Village Board meeting, the board removed the condition requiring the cottage closest to the water to have bedrooms removed and be used for storage only.

Bhirdo cited specific timestamps from the board meeting recording, noting that at 1:15 into the meeting, the applicant's attorney stated his clients agreed with the conditions. At 1:08, Geo Caris discussed the cottage by the water, stating they did not submit any plan to change either of the two structures and that she only needed to redo the main house as she wanted to retire there.

Chair Bhirdo quoted herself from the board meeting, questioning whether the Plan Commission had come up with the idea on their own, as she recalled hearing it from the applicant. She also noted that at 1:21 in the meeting, Cynthia (Geocarlis) stated she never had correspondence with Julie (Village staff) and had no personal communication with anyone before the hearing.

Bhirdo then referenced the Planning Commission meeting recording at 15:15, where Cynthia was quoted saying "our intention with the cottage by the water is to turn it into more of a boathouse and not have bedrooms. That one is extremely rustic at this point, and so our new home replaces those bedrooms. We would like to keep that building as a storage unit, kind of a boathouse for water things."

Chair Bhirdo stated she would be asking the board for reconsideration because she believed the Village Board was misled.

5. Public Hearing

a. Proposed Ord. No. 2025-013; Ch. 66; Text Amendments; P-1, CS-1, Signs

Bhirdo opened the public hearing at 5:38 p.m.

Schmelzer explained the proposed text amendments would:

- Amend section 66.0331 to allow marinas in a P-1 zoning district and establish regulations for side yards and open space
- Amend section 66.0315 to allow agri-tourism operations in a CS-1 zoning district and create related definitions
- Amend section 66.071066, 66.0711, and 66.079, and create section 66.0712 and related definitions to clarify sign regulations

Schmelzer noted the Plan Commission had previously discussed issues with outdated or confusing aspects of the code. The proposed amendments had been posted on the village website, and notices were mailed to property owners in the P-1 and CS-1 districts, as well as those that are a commercial center or multi-business development.

Hearing no public comments, Bhirdo closed the public hearing at 5:40 p.m.

6. Discussion/Action Items

a. Proposed Ord. No. 2025-013; Ch. 66; Text Amendments; P-1, CS-1, Signs

The Commission discussed several corrections to the proposed amendments:

Heidler suggested several revisions including:

- Line 15, page 10: Changing language regarding awning signage to read "signage on awning or canopy as specified above shall not count toward total signage unless a permit is required"
- Line 28, page 10: Reducing the maximum height for marquee signs from 12 feet to 8 feet
- Standardizing terminology throughout the document by using either "per side" or "per sign face" consistently

Bhirdo suggested amendments to:

- Page 10, line 33: Standardize the size limit for business signage in a commercial center to 12 square feet for both multi-tenant and single-tenant businesses
- Page 11, line 5: Reduce the maximum size for multi-use development signs from 48 square feet to 36 square feet
- Page 11, line 41: Add "orchards" to the definition of agritourism while maintaining "ranches" and "other agricultural businesses"
- Page 12, line 17: Revise the definition of "billboard" to not restrict it only to off-premise signs

Motion by Bell, second by Champeau, to recommend the proposed ordinance as presented and amended to the Village Board. Motion carried – all ayes.

b. Planned Unit Development; Nick and Mary Deviley; Approx. 17 acres east of St. Hwy 57 in Sec. 8

Schmelzer presented the proposed planned unit development (PUD) that had been initially discussed several months ago. The proposal included various housing types on approximately 14-15 acres of land. She noted that since the initial presentation, the applicants had spent time revising plans and engineering drawings to lower infrastructure costs.

The development would include:

- "A" buildings: 11 home sites with houses ranging from 700-900 square feet, with a common courtyard and 10-unit detached garage area
- "B" buildings: 8 homes, 1,100-1,300 square feet with one-stall garages in a wooded setting
- "C" buildings: 10 homes, 1,300-1,500 square feet with a common courtyard/playground area
- "R" buildings: 10 homes, 1,500-1,800 square feet
- Duplexes: 8 buildings (16 units): 1,100-1,500 square feet with attached two-stall garages

Schmelzer indicated the proposal met all PUD requirements, with only elevation views and a landscaping plan still needed before proceeding to a public hearing.

Nick Deviley explained the proposed building layout, noting the 40-foot road right-of-way with 23 feet from curb to curb, and building setbacks of 25 feet from the right-of-way. All utilities would be buried.

The Commission discussed:

- Parking requirements, with Heidler expressing concern about guest parking. Deviley agreed to address this with additional parking spots in open areas
- Potential for one-way traffic through parts of the development
- The diversity of housing sizes and types, with Heidler expressing concern about the quantity of smaller homes
- Whether the homes would be affordable for the workforce

Deviley clarified that the development was not specifically "workforce housing" but rather housing aimed at "blue collar" residents currently renting, including village workers and others in the "middle ground" who can get pre-approved for \$225,000-325,000 but cannot find suitable housing in the area. He emphasized they were not proposing low-income housing.

Several commissioners expressed support for the diversity of housing types and sizes, noting it would meet a significant need in Sister Bay.

By consensus, the Plan Commission agreed to schedule a public hearing for next month for the proposed planned unit development, contingent upon receiving the necessary elevation views and landscaping plan.

c. Site Plan/Architectural Review; Accessory Use to Existing Business; Northern Haus; 10388 Fieldcrest Rd.

Schmelzer presented the proposal from Sarah of Northern Haus, who had purchased the property next door to their wedding venue. The proposal would add a small addition for prep space, storage, and a one-bedroom unit that could serve as employee housing. The property has adequate parking. Schmelzer added for the use to be approved, it would need to be considered an accessory use to the wedding venue use on the adjacent lot, and, the two uses would need to be on one lot.

Sarah confirmed she would be willing to combine the two lots as recommended by staff to properly classify the proposed use as an accessory to the main wedding venue.

The Commission discussed the proposal, with members expressing support for the improvement to the property.

Motion by Harff, second by Champeau, to recommend approval of a development agreement to the Village Board, including the requirement to combine the properties. Motion carried – all ayes

d. Site Plan Review/Change of Use; Tavern to Retail; Two Coast Trading; Country Walk Shops, Unit 32

Schmelzer presented the proposal to convert the former Little Vegas Tavern into a retail store. She noted there were no zoning issues with the change and that there was adequate parking. Schmelzer also suggested the Commission consider amending the code in the future to streamline the process for changes to retail within a retail complex, noting the \$1,500 application fee may be excessive for such straightforward cases.

Motion by Bhirdo, second by Bacsj, to approve the change of use as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.

e. Development Agreement Amendment; Mobile Food Court; RaeAnne LLC; 10563 Country Walk Drive

Schmelzer explained that the applicant, Mike (who was not present), had received approval for a Mobile Food Court two years ago but had made limited progress. The concrete pad from a previous shed violation had been removed, and some grading for the driveway had been done. Mike cited issues with the HOA road and family problems as reasons for the delay.

The Commission discussed whether to grant a one-year extension or require the applicant to start the process over. Some members expressed concerns about the viability of the project. Harff raised concerns about the project's timeline, noting the applicant indicated in his letter that he hoped to get the project going in 2026 or 2027, and that he was having difficulty securing funding. Bhirdo reminded the Commission that the financial viability of a project is not within their purview.

Motion by Bell, second by Champeau, to extend the development agreement for one year. Motion carried 5-1 with Harff opposed

f. Site Plan/Architectural Review; Residence in Unplatted Area; Alejandra Ullauri; South Lot in a 3 Lot CSM, Country Lane

Schmelzer explained that due to code requirements, building in unplatted areas requires Plan Commission approval for site plan and architectural review. The proposal is for a single-family home with a shared driveway on Country Lane. The design met all zoning requirements.

Motion by Bell, second by Heidler, to approve the site plan and architectural review as presented. Motion carried 5-1 with Champeau opposed

g. Nonconforming Signage; Serenity Spring; 10560 Applewood Road

Patrick, the maintenance director for Serenity Spring, presented a request to replace signage at the former Good Samaritan facility. The request was for three ground signs: one at Highway 57, one in front of Bargains Unlimited, and one at the main entrance.

The Commission discussed concerns about off-premise signage, which is not allowed under the village code. There was discussion about which signs were essential for wayfinding versus marketing purposes.

Motion by Bell, second by Champeau, to approve only Sign #5 (the main entrance sign). Motion carried – all ayes.

Patrick was advised that wall signs and directional signs not visible from public roads may be permitted under different sections of the code.

h. Development Agreement Amendment; Basement Revision; Preserving Foundations; 2387 Ava Hope Court

Schmelzer explained that Paula Anschutz had signed a development agreement that did not include a basement plan, but what was built had an exposed basement with walk-out access and additions to access the basement. While these met setback requirements, they were not in the approved development agreement.

1 Paula Anschutz noted that she had met with staff and understood she was taking a risk by
2 proceeding, but the village board had encouraged her to complete the project knowing she would
3 need to return to the Plan Commission.

4
5 *Motion by Bell, second by Champeau, to recommend to the Board approval of the development*
6 *agreement amendment. Motion carried – all ayes.*
7

8 **i. Proposed Contract; Zoning Map Update; BayLake Regional Planning Commission**

9 Schmelzer presented a proposed contract with BayLake Regional Planning Commission to update the
10 village's zoning map to align with the recently adopted comprehensive plan. She noted the village
11 must have the zoning map consistent with the comprehensive plan within a year of its adoption. The
12 contract would include creating an interactive map layer for the village's GIS system. The cost would
13 not exceed \$20,000.

14
15 Bell expressed concerns about the lack of a rate sheet and specific cost breakdown. Heidler asked
16 about the interactive map functionality and was told it would be incorporated into the village's GIS
17 system.

18
19 *Motion by Bhirdo, second by Heidler, to recommend the Village Board enter into the contract as*
20 *presented. Motion carried 5-1 with Bell opposed.*
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22 **7. Administrator's Report**

23 Based on past conversations regarding the need for housing amendments, Schmelzer drafted some
24 proposed text amendments to consider, along with other amendments required by statutes or
25 mentioned throughout the year. She also noted several Assembly Bills that, if enacted, would
26 require several future code amendments and encouraged commissioners to follow the legislation to
27 ensure Ch. 54 and Ch. 66 remained compliant with statutes. She indicated that she would not
28 present amendments that would be nullified if the legislation passed, but would present other
29 amendments at the next meeting.
30

31 **8. Matters to be Placed on a Future Agenda or Referred to a Committee, Official or Employee**

32 Schmelzer mentioned she would bring text amendments forward, and include the public hearing for
33 the Deviley project.
34

35 **9. Next Meeting**

36 The Commission agreed to keep the next regular meeting on Tuesday, November 25, 2025, at 5:30
37 p.m. A special meeting would be held in December.
38

39 **10. Adjournment**

40 *Motion by Heidler, second by Harff, to adjourn at 8:12 p.m. Motion carried – all ayes.*
41

42 Respectfully submitted by, Sarah Bertges, Administrative Assistant