

**VILLAGE OF SISTER BAY
PLAN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2025
APPROVED**

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Bhirdo called the Plan Commission meeting to order on Tuesday, November 25, 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 (Via Zoom).

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

Others: Don Howard, Kurt Harff, Pete Hurth, Nick and Mary Deviley, Carol and Bob Mueller, Anne and Bob Krystyniak, Richard Sterkoef, Kathleen Barry, Jill Wettstein, John Wettstein, David Sikora, Rachel Stollenwerk, Sophie Parr, Louise Howson, Karen Grasse, Ted Jankowski, Steve Musinsky, Scott H., Haley Simpson, Frank M., Yvonne Wiltse, Mike P., Christy Bert, Carly Bert, John Dorsey, Mike Parent, Cynthia Nelson, "Hidden Maples Resident", Gordon, Heather, Jenn, Jill Gohdes Wiebe, Justc, Karen Berndt, Sally Pfeifer, Carol, dheider's iPhone.

2. Approve of Agenda

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

3. Approve Meeting Minutes: October 28, 2025

Corrections were noted:

- Ron Kane was not present at the 10/28/2025 meeting.
- The name Mary Kay Steinway should be Mary Kay Shumway.

Motion by Heidler, second by Harff, to approve the meeting minutes from October 28, 2025, as amended. Motion carried – all ayes.

4. Comments, Correspondence and Concerns from the Public

Musinsky (7051 Hillcrest Road) raised concerns about item 6e regarding woodland district requirements. He explained that during the comprehensive plan development, he had mentioned that the back part of his property is incorrectly designated as forest when it's actually an orchard, as is his neighbors' property. He expressed concern about the requirement that woodland management plans must be prepared by registered foresters at property owners' expense, suggesting this could discourage tree planting due to costs.

Harff thanked Julie Schmelzer for her friendship, guidance, professionalism, and dedication as Sister Bay Village Administrator. Harff acknowledged Schmelzer's tireless work enforcing village ordinances, handling complaints, defending the village with her expertise, and guiding trustees and committee members on legal matters. She noted Schmelzer's grant-writing experience and professionalism despite disrespect from some villagers and board members and commended her for bringing codes into compliance before her retirement at year's end.

5. Public Hearing

a) Proposed Planned Unit Development & Map Amendment; Limited Access Road, East of St. Hwy. 57; Nick & Mary Deviley

Bhirdo opened the public hearing at 5:35 PM.

Schmelzer presented the staff report on the Deviley's proposal for a 55-unit residential planned unit development (PUD) consisting of 39 single-family residences and 8 duplex buildings, plus courtyards, playground, and dog park on approximately 15 acres east of State Highway 57. The property, currently zoned R-2 (multi-family residence), would be amended to a Planned Unit Development Overlay if approved.

The development would have a density of 4 units per acre, compared to the 6 units per acre allowed by code. Schmelzer noted that the Deviley's had revised their site plan after receiving feedback from the Hidden Maples condominium to the north, clarifying that freestanding structures were garages (not storage buildings) and relocating the dog park to the south end of the property near a stormwater pond.

Schmelzer explained that PUDs allow flexibility in development design while maintaining land use density and zoning standards. She noted that the development would be built in phases over six years, and that no short-term rentals would be permitted.

During public comments:

B. Mueller (2303 Somerset in Hidden Maples) expressed concern about the dog park in its original location being in his backyard and was pleased it had been relocated. He noted confusion about multiple plans in the packet showing different locations for the dog park. He requested additional tree screening along Somerset Drive where there were gaps in existing vegetation due to dead elms. Mueller also raised concerns about the easement proposed at the end of Applewood Road.

Jankowski (2295 Somerset) questioned the requirement for dog parks in developments, suggesting Sister Bay already has adequate dog park facilities for its population size and that such facilities carry maintenance, enforcement, and liability issues.

S. Shanahan (2282 Hidden Maples Place) asked how the development would ensure housing would be available for the workforce rather than becoming seasonal housing or short-term rentals.

D. Howard (2536 Hillcrest Lane) expressed concern about having only one entrance/exit for the entire development, questioning whether this provided adequate fire protection and emergency access.

R. Stollenwerk (10464 Highway 57), a neighboring property owner over whose land the development's access easement would run, expressed support for the project, noting its potential to address housing needs. She emphasized that bringing families to the area should be embraced and that increased housing supply was necessary.

Sikora (2290 Hidden Maples Place) expressed concern about continued growth in Sister Bay and its strain on infrastructure, suggesting the village board should limit development.

C. Shanahan (2282 Hidden Maples Place) supported the project, noting she had lost friends who left the area due to lack of housing. She emphasized the importance of ensuring the housing would go to people who genuinely needed it, citing examples of luxury vehicles at other "affordable" developments.

Krystyniak (2306 Somerset Drive) asked about the project timeline, which was confirmed to be approximately six years.

Wettstein (2300 Hidden Maples Place), president of the Hidden Maples board, stated that all concerns brought to the Deviley's had been satisfied, and that all unit owners in their development had been notified of the plans.

Nick and Mary Deviley addressed some of the concerns raised:

- Regarding tree screening, Nick Deviley committed to removing dead trees and ensuring appropriate screening between properties.
 - On the dog park issue, he explained the relocation was in response to feedback, noting it was now placed in an open area.
 - Regarding housing affordability, the Deviley's indicated they were planning to retain some homes and offer land contracts to make them more accessible but acknowledged they couldn't legally restrict who could purchase the homes.
- Pete Hurth, engineer with Stantec, addressed questions about road design, noting they had incorporated off-street parking areas throughout the development to address concerns about street parking.
- Bhirdo closed the public hearing at 7:00 P.M.

6. Discussion/Action Items

a) Planned Unit Development & Map Amendment; Limited Access Road, East of St. Hwy. 57; Nick & Mary Deviley

The Commission deliberated on conditions for approval, including:

- Two-way streets with no parking on one side
- Dark sky compliant street lighting
- Fencing requirement for the dog park
- Revised landscaping plan to be approved prior to breaking ground
- Four-month minimum rental restriction
- Eleven garage units in the freestanding garage building and no other accessory buildings
- Relocation of units A1 and A11 for better driveway alignment
- Building envelope specifications for each unit

Motion to recommend approval of the PUD with the conditions discussed was made by Bell, second by Heidler. Motion carried – all ayes.

b) Site Plan & Architectural Review; Multi-Family Development & Park; Corner Ava Hope Ct. & Northwoods Dr.; Tim Halbrook Builders

This item was discussed out of order- after item 6-c, Bakery & Coffee Shop

Schmelzer presented the staff report for Tim Halbrook's multi-family development at the corner of Ava Hope Court and Northwoods Drive. The Commission reviewed the revised plans that had been updated based on previous feedback, including a reduction in the size of the third building to 6 units.

The Commission discussed several aspects of the project:

- Extending the park area to make it larger and more functional as a neighborhood park
- The village contributing \$30,000 (previously set aside from a different development) toward the park
- Adding a sidewalk along Ava Hope Court
- Additional landscaping along the north and east lot lines
- Requiring 20% of units to be affordable for those at 80% of County Median Income

Bhirdo expressed a desire to make the playground area larger, noting it would be insufficient if many families with children moved in. The Commission agreed to have the Parks Committee work with the developer on designing the park space.

The Commission also discussed a potential trail connection.

Motion to recommend approval with the conditions discussed was made by Bhirdo, second by Bacsi.

Motion carried – all ayes.

c) Site Plan Review; Bakery & Coffee Shop; Stoyan Dimitrov; 2457 S. Bay Shore Dr.

Schmelzer presented Dimitrov's proposal to convert the former Bay Shore Outfitters property into a bakery and coffee shop. She noted that the main concern was landscaping, as the parking lot didn't fully meet current code requirements.

The Commission discussed the need for a landscaping plan for the beds in front of the building and potential improvements around any new signage. They also discussed the need to restripe the parking lot to ensure compliance with current standards.

Motion to approve with the condition that a landscaping plan be approved prior to opening for business, plants to be planted by June 1st if opening occurs during winter months, sign to be brought up to compliance and that the parking lot be measured and restriped to meet code was made by Bhirdo, second by Heidler. Motion carried – all ayes.

d) New Zoning Map; Discussion No. 1

Schmelzer presented a new zoning map and explained her approach to addressing inconsistencies between the future land use map and current zoning. She suggested creating a woodland overlay district to protect wooded areas shown on the land use map without changing the underlying zoning. The Commission discussed several specific areas where zoning changes might be needed to align with the land use map:

- Areas along Fieldcrest Road and Flintridge Drive
- Property along Woodcrest and near the Deviley farm
- Several properties along Highway 42 and Bay Shore Drive

The Commission decided to keep several areas as Countryside zoning rather than changing them to R-3 as initially suggested. There was discussion about whether Countryside should be considered a residential district or an agricultural district.

Bhirdo expressed frustration at potentially reversing decisions made during the comprehensive planning process six months earlier, emphasizing the need for consistency in decision-making.

Let it be noted that Bell abruptly left the meeting at approximately 9:11 P.M.

The Commission requested more information on specific properties before making final decisions on some proposed changes and agreed to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

e) Misc. Text Amendments; Ch. 66

Schmelzer presented several proposed text amendments to Chapter 66 of the village code:

- Outdoor lighting regulations: The Commission discussed potential restrictions on string lights, which have become problematic in some areas. Harff described issues with a neighbor whose string lights shine into her bedroom. While the Commission recognized the nuisance factor, they acknowledged enforcement challenges and potential pushback from property owners.
- Removing references to metal halide lighting throughout the code, as this technology is outdated.
- Clarifying that the plan commission serves as the "zoning board" referenced in state statutes, distinguishing it from the zoning board of appeals.
- Addressing substandard lots: Schmelzer explained that state legislation (2017 Act 67) now prohibits requiring merger of adjacent nonconforming lots owned by the same property owner. The Commission discussed updating village code to comply with this law but wanted to review more details at the next meeting.

The Commission agreed to move forward with most amendments but to revisit the substandard lots issue at the December meeting.

7. Plan Commission Chair Report

The chair indicated the report was in the packet and no more discussion was had.

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

Schmelzer mentioned that she wanted Megan Barnes to present the new GIS layer that had been created, which will be accessible to the public. This presentation could be scheduled for the December or January meeting.

9. Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting was scheduled for December 18, 2025, at 5:30 P.M. in the Large Meeting Room at the Sister Bay-Liberty Grove Fire Station.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Heidler, second by Harff, to adjourn at 10:07 p.m. Motion carried – all ayes.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Bertges, Administrative Assistant