

**VILLAGE OF SISTER BAY
PLAN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2026
APPROVED AS AMENDED**

1. Call To Order & Roll Call

Chairperson Nate Bell called the Plan Commission meeting to order on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at 5:30 P.M., and roll call was taken.

Present: Commission members Nate Bell, Jerry Ahrens, Laurel Harff, Skip Heidler, Brigid White.

Staff Member(s): Village Zoning Administrator Benjamin Andrews, Administrative Assistant Sarah Bertges and Marina Manager Dave Lienau via Zoom.

Others: Kurt Harff, Katelyn Jerard, Chris Schmeltz, Amedee Savard, Marc Savard, Mary Pat Carlson. VIA ZOOM: Erin's iPhone, Paul Grossman.

2. Approve Of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Ahrens, second by Heidler, Motion carried - all ayes.

3. Approve Meeting Minutes

a. May 26, 2026; Regular Meeting

Two spelling errors noted.

Motion by Heidler, second by Harff to approve the meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried- all ayes.

4. Comments, Correspondence, And Concerns From The Public

Bell invited public comment. No members of the public or online attendees offered comment at this time.

5. Discussion/Action Items

a. Site Plan Review; Marina Building; 10733 Bay Shore Drive

Andrews presented the site plan for the proposed marina building, located within a P-1 district. The building's proposed height does not exceed the 35-foot limit. Andrews noted that while the front setback does not meet the current 50-foot standard, the proposed building does not extend beyond the footprint of the existing structure, and no concerns were identified regarding side or rear setbacks. The Commission raised the question of compliance with the ordinary high watermark setback. Marina Manager Dave Lienau, attending remotely, confirmed that the DNR had been consulted and did not anticipate an issue, and that engineering firm Stantec was in the process of formally delineating the ordinary high watermark, with results expected within a week. Heidler emphasized that the specific footage had not yet appeared on any submitted drawings and that formal verification was needed.

White noted that the updated architectural drawings showing revised wide-lap siding had inadvertently not been included in the packet. Lienau confirmed that the most recent version, reflecting changes requested at a prior courtesy review on May 14th, was available through the marina. The Commission discussed concerns regarding blank wall areas, particularly on the east elevation, and Lienau confirmed that the architectural team had addressed those concerns in the updated drawings.

Heidler raised questions regarding ventilation adequacy in the shower facilities, suggesting that the placement of exhaust returns may be insufficient during peak usage hours, and recommended a closer review during the bidding phase. Bell inquired about solar readiness, and Lienau confirmed that provisions for future solar installation—including a dedicated electrical and networking closet—had been incorporated into the second-floor design.

The Commission also discussed parking impacts, noting that the proposed trash enclosure would eliminate one or two spaces from the existing lot. It was confirmed that the marina's secondary parking lot, located approximately half a block away with over 100 spaces, would continue to serve additional demand. Heidler raised the question of whether both lots could be counted collectively to satisfy code parking requirements. The Commission reached general consensus that this had been the long-standing practice, and that the use was not substantially changing.

The Commission agreed that conditional approval was appropriate at this stage to allow the project to proceed to procurement and bidding, with specific conditions to be satisfied prior to final permit issuance.

Motion to approve the site plan for the marina building at 10733 N Bay Shore Drive, on the condition that the ordinary high watermark setback distance be formally identified and called out on the drawings, and that final siding materials and color selections be returned to the Plan Commission for review, was made by White and second by Heidler. The motion carried-all ayes.

b. Site Plan Review; Pergola Addition; CHOP – 2345 Mill Road

Andrews presented an application from CHOP restaurant for the addition of pergola structures at the front of the principal building. He explained that the application had initially been interpreted as requiring a conditional use permit for an accessory structure in the front yard, but that upon review of prior Plan Commission precedent—specifically the vestibule project—staff concluded that a structure permanently attached to the principal building may instead be treated as an addition, requiring only site plan review.

The Commission discussed this interpretation and reached consensus that, given the permanent and attached nature of the proposed pergolas, the application was appropriately treated as a site plan review rather than a conditional use permit.

The applicant clarified that the existing second-floor pergola covering had been damaged by wind and would be replaced with a louvered system in a light gray color to match the existing awning and vestibule. The applicant indicated a preference to address only the second-floor structure at this time, with the option to add similar structures at the ground level in the future. Andrews noted that ground-floor pergolas had been included in the original approved site plan and therefore would not require additional Commission approval.

The Commission confirmed that the motion would encompass both the second-floor replacement and the previously approved first-floor pergolas, providing clarity for future permit issuance.

Motion to approve the CHOP site plan with the addition of the pergolas on the second floor, as well as the first-floor pergolas in the future, was made by White and second by Bell. Motion carried, 4-1 with Heidler opposed on the basis that insufficient formal documentation had been provided to fully satisfy the review process.

c. Text Amendment Revisions Discussions

Andrews introduced three areas of proposed text amendment for Commission workshopping: (1) adding automotive body and mechanical repair as a permitted use in the B-1 General Business District; (2) revising the fee-in-lieu of parking framework; and (3) establishing regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

Automotive Body and Mechanical Repair – B-1 District

The Commission discussed the proposed addition of automotive body and mechanical repair as a permitted use in the B-1 district. Heidler expressed concern about compatibility with adjacent residential properties, citing potential noise, storage of vehicles awaiting repair, dust, and volatile chemicals. He noted that Liberty Grove restricts such uses to parcels of at least 10 acres.

Other commissioners noted that similar concerns could be raised about existing permitted uses in the B-1 district, such as gas stations and commercial laundries, and that Sister Bay had previously hosted an automotive service business without generating complaints. A representative of the prospective business was present and stated that the operation would be conducted indoors, with full awareness

1 of buffering and compliance requirements, and that the business intends to be a good community
2 partner.

3 The Commission reached general consensus in favor of allowing the use in the B-1 district, provided
4 that appropriate performance standards are developed. Andrews was directed to prepare draft
5 language addressing specific standards such as screening, outdoor vehicle storage, and operational
6 compatibility. The Commission also indicated that the use should not be added to the B-3 district, and
7 White raised the question of whether it should be removed from B-3 if it currently appears there, to
8 be considered on a future agenda.

9 10 **Fee-in-Lieu of Parking**

11 Bell introduced a proposed revision to the fee-in-lieu of parking framework. He noted that the current
12 fee of \$1,000 per space has been static for approximately 19 years, and that replacing it with a codified
13 formula tied to a CPI adjustment would provide predictability for both the village and participating
14 businesses.

15 The Commission discussed the geographic scope of the program, with consensus that it should apply
16 to the B-2 and B-3 districts rather than using a distance-based buffer. The Commission also agreed
17 that the revenue generated should remain dedicated to parking-related expenditures.

18 Discussion addressed the treatment of existing participants in the program, with Andrews noting that
19 a legal review with Village Attorney Randy would be appropriate to determine how current approvals
20 interact with the proposed new framework. The Commission agreed that any new agreement should
21 include a projected schedule so that participants can anticipate future costs.

22 The Commission expressed broad support for the formula-based approach, including a CPI escalator,
23 and discussed the possibility of establishing an administrative threshold—approximately four to five
24 spaces—below which a business could participate in the program without Plan Commission review.
25 Andrews was directed to populate the formula with verified real-world data, including recent local
26 land transaction values and construction costs, and return with a refined proposal.

27 28 **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)**

29 Bell noted that the Plan Commission last addressed ADUs in 2019, at which time the concept had
30 broad support until a concern arose regarding a state statute that grants any residential unit an
31 inherent right to rent as a short-term rental. He indicated that while this concern remains, there may
32 be ways to mitigate it through incentive-based approaches rather than direct prohibition.

33 A member of the public, Mary Pat Carlson, addressed the Commission and described her family's
34 personal need for an ADU solution, explaining that she and her husband—long-time Sister Bay
35 residents and business operators—wish to accommodate their daughter's family on their property but
36 cannot expand their two-bedroom home to do so. Her comments illustrated the broader
37 multigenerational and workforce housing benefits of allowing ADUs.

38 The Commission discussed the short-term rental concern at length. White noted that Wisconsin law
39 does not automatically grant ADUs the right to be used as short-term rentals, and that local ordinances
40 govern the question, though she cautioned that an adverse legal challenge could render any
41 restrictions unenforceable. Harff observed that the STR market inflates property values and that deed
42 restrictions in residential neighborhoods had previously been overridden by the state.

43 The Commission reached consensus that ADUs are a desirable tool for addressing the village's housing
44 needs—including multigenerational living, workforce housing, and aging-in-place scenarios—and
45 expressed a preference for long-term rental use over short-term rental. The Commission discussed
46 incentive mechanisms such as reduced setbacks or waived parking requirements for owner-occupied
47 situations, while acknowledging that such incentives may not survive a change of property ownership.
48 Regarding parameters, the Commission generally supported allowing both attached and detached
49 ADUs, a maximum of two bedrooms, a size cap in the range of 800–1,200 square feet, a height not to
50 exceed the principal structure, and at least one additional parking space per unit following existing
51 residential parking formulas. Heidler noted that ADUs should be limited to parcels with a single-family

detached principal dwelling, and that the R-4 district should likely be excluded given its density constraints.

Andrews was directed to consult with Village Attorney Randy on what restrictions are legally permissible under current state law, what incentive mechanisms have been upheld elsewhere, and to return with proposed draft language at a future meeting.

6. Annual Permit Log

Andrews noted that the working permit log had been distributed via email the prior Friday. Heidler clarified that the intent of this agenda item is to make the log available for Commission reference, not to review each permit in detail at every meeting.

7. Executive Session

a. Wisc. Stats. 19.85(1)(g) To Confer With Legal Counsel For The Governmental Body

Motion to convene into executive session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes §19.85(1)(g) to confer with legal counsel regarding strategy with respect to a zoning permit application for an accessory building was made by Bell and second by Heidler. Roll call vote: Harff – yes; Heidler – yes; Bell – yes; White – yes; Ahrens – yes. The Commission convened into closed session at 7:38 P.M.

The Commission reconvened into open session following the executive session at 8:08 P.M.

Motion to reconvene into open session by Ahrens second by Bell. Roll call vote: Harff – yes; Heidler – yes; Bell – yes; White – yes; Ahrens – yes. Bell announced that the Commission would direct staff as discussed in closed session.

8. Matters To Be Placed On A Future Agenda Or Referred To A Committee, Official Or Employee

- *Marina ordinary high watermark setback distance be formally identified and called out on the drawings, and that final siding materials and color selections be returned to the Plan Commission for review*
- The text amendment items discussed under Agenda Item 5c:
 - Fee in Lieu of parking- Staff directed to populate the formula with verified real-world data, including recent local land transaction values and construction costs, and return with a refined proposal.
 - ADU- Staff directed to consult with Village Attorney Randy on what restrictions are legally permissible under current state law, what incentive mechanisms have been upheld elsewhere, and to return with proposed draft language at a future meeting.
 - Auto Body/Mech Repair- Staff directed to prepare draft language addressing specific standards such as screening, outdoor vehicle storage, and operational compatibility.
- Zoning administrator report added to future agendas.

9. Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Plan Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, July 28, 2026, at 5:30 P.M., in the Large Meeting Room of the Sister Bay-Liberty Grove Fire Station.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:09 PM.

Motion by Heidler second by Harff. Motion carried -all ayes.

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Bertges, Administrative Assistant