

**VILLAGE OF SISTER BAY
PLAN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2026
UNAPPROVED**

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chairperson Nate Bell called the Plan Commission meeting to order on Tuesday, July 28, 2026, at 5:30 P.M., and roll call was taken.

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

Staff Member(s): Village Zoning Administrator Benjamin Andrews, Administrative Assistant Sarah Bertges.

Others: Beth Matysik, Johanna Ognodnik and Alice, Skyler Witalison, Mary Pat Carlson, Abby Doobie, Erin Peddle. VIA ZOOM: Abby Doobie, Michael Langer, Scott Penniston.

2. Approve of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Ahrens and second by Heidler. The motion carried- all ayes.

3. Approve Meeting Minutes

a. June 23, 2026; Regular Meeting

Two corrections were noted to the June 23rd minutes.

Motion by Ahrens, second by Heidler to approve the 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 and Architectural Review; Sister Bay General Store, LLC; 10674 North Bay Shore Drive

White recused herself from the dais to discuss this item as an applicant. Andrews presented a zoning application for a two-story general store with a basement for storage and kitchen preparation, located at 10674 North Bay Shore Drive within the B3 Downtown District. Andrews confirmed the proposed use is permitted, all dimensional standards are met, parking requirements are exceeded, HVAC screening and dumpster enclosure are compliant, and the lighting plan addresses items from the preliminary review. Andrews also noted that for commercial construction projects, the typical next phase would be the execution of a development agreement unless the Commission chose to exempt that requirement.

The applicant, represented by Brigid White, Skyler Witalison of Stantec and architect Michael Langer of Wade Weisman Architecture, addressed the Commission. A notable addition since the preliminary review was a walking trail running from Highway 42 through a wooded area, including a boardwalk over the wetlands, and connecting to Spring Road. The Commission expressed strong support for this addition.

Parking: The Commission discussed two parking configurations — a full 40-stall perpendicular layout and a 35-stall angled layout that would preserve significantly more mature trees. Witalison noted that the reduced layout would result in removing 41 trees compared to 57 under the full layout, with six of the preserved trees being two-to-three foot diameter cedars. The Commission acknowledged

1 the availability of a public village-owned parking lot approximately 300 feet from the property, as
2 well as the installation of two bicycle racks, as mitigating factors justifying the reduced parking
3 count. After discussion regarding the need to document the rationale clearly in the record, the
4 Commission reached consensus in favor of the 35-stall configuration.

5 Drainage: Witalison indicated that stormwater from the rear of the building will direct toward the
6 existing wetland, while front drainage will connect to a highway catch basin in coordination with the
7 utility department. Neighbor Scott Penniston, owner of the adjacent blue building, appeared via
8 Zoom and expressed concern about water collection between the two properties, near a large tree
9 at the low point. Witalison confirmed that a yard drain and storm sewer collection point would be
10 included to address this. Penniston also raised the concern about disruption to tenants and renters
11 during the period prior to Fall Fest.

12 Propane Tank: Heidler noted that the propane tank as drawn appeared to fall within the required
13 setback. The applicant confirmed the tank would be buried.

14 HVAC Screening: Heidler raised concern about the visibility of rooftop mechanical units from
15 Highway 42 as one descends toward the village. *There will be further efforts to screen the HVAC*
16 *units.*

17 Retaining Wall and Materials: Discussion confirmed the retaining wall on the north side would
18 incorporate *natural stone* consistent with the character of the property. The Commission noted
19 approval of the revised window treatments and the toned-down shingle detailing depicted in the
20 updated artist renderings.

21 Site Preparation/Tree Removal: The applicant inquired whether tree removal could begin prior to
22 Fall Fest, ahead of formal construction. The Commission discussed the distinction between tree
23 removal and ground disturbance. There was general consensus that limited tree removal — without
24 leaving heavy equipment on-site overnight and confined to standard work hours — could be
25 permissible in the quieter period after Labor Day and before Fall Fest, and that the distinction from
26 excavation would be noted in the development agreement. Stump removal was flagged as more akin
27 to excavation and therefore not allowed.

28 Landscaping *and Lighting* Plan: The Commission requested that a landscaping *and lighting* plan for
29 the parking area be submitted prior to or in advance of the next meeting, acknowledging that the
30 final plan may follow as a condition of occupancy once excavation is complete.

31 The Commission noted this item would return at the August meeting for final site plan and
32 development agreement review.

33
34 **b. Site Plan and Architectural Review; Friends of the Ice Rink/Sister Bay Sports Complex; 2155**
35 **Autumn Court**

36 Miles Dannhausen presented on behalf of the Friends of the Ice Rink, responding to direction from
37 the Commission's May meeting. The revised proposal relocates the Zamboni maintenance garage
38 and chilling equipment to a corner position behind the existing cedar tree line in order to minimize
39 impacts on parking, reduce utility run lengths, and screen mechanicals from view. A proposed fence
40 enclosure around the chilling equipment was also included, and the revised plans incorporated
41 building renderings with LP SmartSide siding in colors referencing the existing parks building.

42 Building Location and Cedar Protection: Heidler raised concern that placing the chiller pad
43 immediately adjacent to the cedar tree line could damage root systems during trenching. The
44 Commission reached consensus that the chiller pad should be moved back from the cedar line while
45 still maintaining required setbacks, with the stated purpose of preserving the existing trees.

46 Garage Doors: The Commission discussed whether all three garage doors needed to be 12 feet in
47 height. Dannhausen explained that the primary Zamboni door and the snow removal equipment
48 door each require 12-foot clearance for safe operation. The third door's necessity was less certain.
49 The Commission directed that the project proceed with approval of three 12-foot doors but included
50 a recommendation for Dannhausen to evaluate whether the size of one or more doors could be

1 reduced. Commissioners noted that large overhead doors add a commercial appearance and
2 increase heating costs, referencing operational lessons from the existing parks building.
3 Vegetation Screening: Heidler recommended planting a vegetative screen of cedars or arborvitae
4 along the west side of the building and fence, facing the playground and baseball diamond, to
5 prevent the blank wall and mechanical enclosure from being the dominant view from those areas.
6 Ahrens suggested additional evergreen screening along the southeast edge of the Zamboni drive
7 aisle so that the view from the ice rink surface looking south would be softened rather than opening
8 directly to the building and driveway. The Commission included both as conditions of approval.
9 Propane Tank: Heidler noted the propane tank as drawn appeared to be in an exposed location near
10 the parking area. The Commission directed that the tank either be screened appropriately or buried,
11 subject to subsurface conditions. The bedrock encountered in that area was noted as a potential
12 factor in cost.
13 Colors and Design: The Commission noted inconsistency in door colors across different renderings
14 and directed that the final color scheme be resolved before construction, with overhead doors and
15 man doors matching and avoiding more than two contrasting colors on the building exterior.
16 Development Agreement: Andrews confirmed that as a municipal project, no development
17 agreement would be required. The zoning permit, once issued, would be valid for one year with
18 extension available if needed.
19 Phasing and Timeline: Dannhausen outlined that the primary timeline unknowns are WPS electric
20 service routing and Keller's construction schedule. The Commission acknowledged that the ice rink
21 surface, chillers, and Zamboni building each represent separate phases, and that the ice rink could
22 potentially be operational in a limited capacity — using natural cold weather — even if the building
23 is not yet complete. The Commission agreed that construction should not interfere with the ice rink
24 during the winter season and that the baseball season construction impacts should be avoided
25 where possible.
26 *Motion to approve the site plan for the Friends of the Ice Rink/Sister Bay Sports Complex, without a*
27 *development agreement, subject to the following conditions: (1) approval of three 12-foot doors*
28 *with a recommendation to evaluate reduction in door size; (2) repositioning of the chiller pad to the*
29 *south while maintaining setback requirements, with the intent to preserve the existing cedar trees;*
30 *(3) requirement for vegetative landscaping along the west side of the building and fence, and along*
31 *the southeast edge of the driveway; and (4) requirement that the propane tank be screened or buried*
32 *— was made by White and second by Ahrens. The motion carried — all ayes.*
33

34 c. Text Amendment Revisions Discussions

35 Andrews presented updates to three proposed text amendments previously discussed at the June
36 meeting: Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), automotive body and mechanical repair in the B1 district,
37 and the fee-in-lieu of parking program.
38

39 **Automotive Body and Mechanical Repair — B1 District:** Andrews presented proposed red-line
40 language for page 114 of the zoning code, incorporating performance standards for noise, volatile
41 chemicals, vehicle storage, and compatibility with the district. Heidler raised the broader concern of
42 whether this use type was better suited as a conditional use rather than a permitted use, given its
43 potential impact on adjacent residential properties, including property values and noise levels.
44 Heidler noted that making it a conditional use would require a public hearing and notification of
45 neighboring property owners for each specific application.
46 Ahrens and Bell both acknowledged that the use is substantively similar in impact to already-
47 permitted uses such as automotive sales and service, and that boat sales and service, which involves
48 comparable service work, is already listed as a permitted use. They expressed concern that isolating
49 this use as a conditional use would be inequitable without a broader review of the permitted use list
50 and could trigger a protracted re-examination of the entire B1 district use table.
51 After discussion, the Commission reached consensus to include automotive body and mechanical
52 repair in the B1 district as a conditional use, while acknowledging that a more comprehensive review

1 of the permitted use list should occur in the future. The Commission also noted that a public hearing
2 will be held when these text amendments are formally advanced, providing adjacent property
3 owners an opportunity to be heard on the zoning change itself.

4 Heidler additionally recommended that the proposed language for this use include cross-references
5 to existing code sections on parking and vehicle storage (Section 66-403.5) and air pollution and
6 odor standards (Section 66-080-2), rather than restating those requirements, to ensure the
7 standards apply by reference and avoid redundancy.

8
9 **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs):** Andrews summarized the direction from the prior meeting: ADUs
10 would be *not be* allowable in the R4 district, both attached and detached; limited to one ADU per
11 principal structure; height capped at no greater than the principal structure; parking requirement of
12 one additional off-street space; and the removal of a minimum square footage threshold. Andrews
13 also reported that proposed state legislation that would have allowed municipalities to restrict ADUs
14 as short-term rentals did not pass and is not expected to move forward, leaving the village limited in
15 its ability to restrict rental use.

16 The Commission engaged in substantive discussion about the tension between enabling ADUs for
17 their intended benefits — multigenerational housing, aging-in-place, employee housing, and
18 affordable long-term rental — while acknowledging the risk that ADUs could be utilized as additional
19 short-term rentals or as investment vehicles. Heidler raised concern about whether allowing
20 detached ADUs could expand the short-term rental supply. Bell noted that owner-occupancy
21 requirements, if tied to declared primary residency, could serve as a meaningful limitation, and
22 expressed interest in consulting the village attorney about available legal tools before finalizing the
23 language.

24 A member of the public, Mary Pat Carlson of Scandia Road, addressed the Commission, emphasizing
25 the need for ADUs as a tool for families to remain in the community and care for aging relatives, and
26 urging the Commission to ensure that accessibility requirements — including adequate square
27 footage for wheelchair and walker maneuverability — are not overlooked in setting size parameters.
28 White echoed this concern, noting that a single-bedroom, 600-square-foot unit would likely be
29 insufficient for an elderly or mobility-impaired occupant, and recommended the minimum not fall
30 below 800 square feet. Ahrens suggested eliminating any minimum square footage entirely and
31 allowing the building code to govern, while preserving a meaningful maximum. The Commission
32 discussed the possibility of tiering the maximum square footage to allow a larger unit for ADA-
33 accessible construction.

34 The Commission agreed to continue this discussion at the August meeting, with Bell planning to
35 consult with the village attorney regarding owner-occupancy mechanisms, and Commissioners
36 directed to review sample ADU floor plans before the next meeting. The Commission further agreed
37 to defer any consideration of ADUs in business districts to a future discussion.

38
39 **Fee-in-Lieu of Parking:** Andrews reported that this item requires additional time to gather real-world
40 data and framework analysis. No substantive discussion was held; the item will return in a future
41 meeting.

42
43 **Development Agreement Execution Timeline:** Andrews noted that the current zoning code requires
44 a development agreement to be executed within six months of Village Board approval, and that this
45 timeline has in practice led to situations where agreements were left unsigned for extended periods,
46 creating complications. The Commission discussed shortening this window significantly, ultimately
47 reaching consensus on a 45-day execution period from the date of Village Board approval and
48 presidential signature, which would provide adequate time for attorney review while eliminating the
49 opportunity for delay as a negotiating tactic. Andrews confirmed that a developer failing to sign
50 within 45 days would forfeit the agreement, which could then be resubmitted to the board if the
51 project remained active.

d. Review of Development Agreement Template

Andrews presented the standard development agreement template, associated memorandum of agreement, and liability and bonds clarification documents for Commission review. Andrews noted that in practice, prior approved development agreements have at times been used as templates rather than the official standard document, and that a review of past agreements would be warranted to ensure consistency.

6. Zoning Permit Log

Andrews distributed the zoning permit log, which had been sent the morning of the meeting. The log reflected three active permits: the Sister Bay General Store (discussed under Item 5a), the Friends of the Ice Rink (discussed under Item 5b), and an accessory structure permit for a property on Westwood Drive.

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

The following items were noted for future agendas: continuation of ADU text amendment discussions including attorney consultation and sample floor plan review; advancement of the automotive body and mechanical repair B1 conditional use language; the 45-day development agreement execution timeline code change; and fee-in-lieu of parking data collection.

8. Next Meeting

The next Regular Monthly Meeting of the Plan Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, August 25, 2026 at 5:30 P.M., to be held in the Large Meeting Room at the Sister Bay-Liberty Grove Fire Station.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:54 PM.

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

Respectfully submitted by Sarah Bertges, Administrative Assistant