

Regular November Plan Commission Meeting November 17th, 2025

The meeting was posted at the Bayfield Town Hall and Town website on November 11th, 2025. Plan Commission members Chuck Finn, Jim Steffenson, Nan Swift, Carol Fahrenkrog, and Annlisa Bermel were in attendance. Robert Meierotto was absent. Chairman Finn called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM

Approval of Agenda: A motion was made by Fahrenkrog, seconded by Bermel, to approve the agenda.

Public Comment: Tom Galazen, resident of Valley Road, stood and shared his viewpoint that the Town of Bayfield needs more trails. He noted he recently visited the cross-county North County Trail and would like longer-distance trails in Bayfield area as well. He suggested Shultz Fire Lane would be a good area for a walking trail. Ann Rosenquist was also present and stated she is interested in preservation and trails near the top of Fire Tower Hill.

Communications and Correspondence: None.

Discussion and possible approval of minutes of Plan Commission Meeting of October 13th, 2025: Finn requested that the minutes be amended to change wording related to use of the Pikes Creek Trail from “non-motorized” to “foot-traffic”. A motion was made by Steffenson, seconded by Fahrenkrog, to approve the minutes with that amendment. Motion carried.

Old Business

Update on Bayfield County Zoning Code Re-Write Process: Chairman Finn reported that he has not received any new information on this topic.

Update on Braham Rezone Request: Chairman Finn suggested that the Bayfield County Zoning Department will need to look at the application once it is submitted and determine what requirements will need to be put in place in this situation. The town may need to work with Bayfield County on this issue.

New Business

Kate Kitchell of Bayfield Area Trails: Briefing and consultation on nine potential new non-motorized trails and three biking routes within the Town of Bayfield that are under consideration in the Bayfield Area Trails Long-term Plan: Kate Kitchell was in attendance. She thanked the Plan Commission for allowing her to present. A PowerPoint presentation was projected on the screen for all attendees to see. She gave an overview of the mission of Bayfield Area Trails, the existing trails, and their long-term plan. She noted that maintaining the current trails is the first priority. The presentation included a list of 15 potential future trails, four of which would be exclusively in the Town of Bayfield. The full list of potential trails was presented as follows...

1. Apostle Island Campground to Brownstone Trail.
2. Ashwahalla.
3. Bayfield Westside Trails.
4. Big Ravine Trail Additions.
5. Fire Hill Trails.
6. Gracie's to Fire Hill Trail.
7. Martin to Superior View.
8. Red Cliff to Bayfield. (There was particular interest in this proposal by Plan Commission members)
9. Salmo to Brownstone.
10. Salmo to Ski Hill Rd.

11. Washington Ave. Beach to Dalrymple.
12. Bayfield to Little Sand Bay Bike Route.
13. Bayfield Hwy J Bike Route.
14. Star Route Bike Route.
15. Washburn to Bayfield Inland Connector Bike Route.

The four trails exclusively in the Town of Bayfield would be...

1. Star Route Bike Route.
2. Apostle Island Campground to Brownstone Trail.
3. Gracie's to Fire Hill Trail.
4. Martin to Superior View Trail.

Discussion took place about each proposed trail in the township. Kitchell asked for input including any potential concerns. Star Route Road Bike Route: It was noted by several in attendance that Star Route Road may not be an ideal place for a bike route as there is a fair amount of traffic and some people drive fast. It is also used by logging trucks. Concerns about the safety of bikers on this narrow road were discussed. It would be expensive to add a bike route or widen the roadway. It was agreed that due to these concerns, promoting the road to the public as a bike route would not be appropriate at this time. It was suggested that signs urging bikers to use caution may be helpful. Apostle Islands Campground to Brownstone Trail: Bermel shared her concerns about people crossing the highway. It was noted that people are already doing this, but there is a safety issue. Kitchell explained the trail would route from the campground to Blue Wing Bay Road. The idea of obtaining a grant from the WI Department of Transportation for a tunnel under the highway was brought up as an idea. Gracie's to Fire Hill Trail and Martin to Superior View Trail: Discussion took place about these routes that would run near the "fruit loop". Kitchell suggested people may be able to walk from town and visit the wineries as they go. It was agreed that it would be beneficial for visitors to the area to be able to walk from town and through the orchards on a trail. Few concerns were brought up about these specific locations. General questions and concerns focused on the ability/ease of obtaining easements from private landowners and financial concerns about the town taking on expenses/maintenance responsibility. Concerns about who would pay the legal fees related to obtaining the easements was also discussed. Tom Galazen asked about the need for parking. It was explained that there is not an anticipated need for much additional parking in the near future.

Discussion and possible recommendation to Bayfield Town Board on potential new trails and bike routes in the Town of Bayfield: It was agreed that the Plan Commission is in favor of the long-term plan moving forward while acknowledging there are some hurdles that Bayfield Area Trails needs to work through based on the Plan Commission's concerns that there not be a fiscal or labor burden on the town, and that a maintenance plan be put in place.

Chairman Finn suggested that some more entry level bike trails opportunities could be beneficial to the area. Steffenson thanked Kitchell for her work.

Set date and time for December Plan Commission Meeting: Tuesday, December 2nd, 5:30 PM. (Note: The date and time was later changed to December 4th at 5:00 PM.

Adjourn: A motion was made by Fahrenkrog, seconded by Finn, to adjourn. Motion carried.

Minutes presented by: Kelly Faye, Clerk