

DRAFT
TOWN OF CALEDONIA PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
November 10, 2025
Town of Caledonia, Waupaca County, Wisconsin

Commissioners present: Helen Adams, Bill Fitzpatrick, Mike Stoltz, Cary Zaug, alternate #1, Bob Prah, Corey Besaw, alternate #2

Excused: Shari Fudge

Also Attending: Bill Abba, Town of Caledonia chairperson

Chairperson Bill Fitzpatrick called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He noted that the required public notice for the meeting had been posted. The agenda was approved as published 5-0. The minutes of the October 13, 2025 meeting were approved as presented 5-0.

Consider 2026 Implementation Priorities Consistent with Town Board Priorities & the Comprehensive Plan

Bill Fitzpatrick invited town chairperson Bill Abba to the meeting to lay out the town board's priorities for 2026. Bill Abba listed the 2025 Town Board priorities which include:

- Broadband expansion for unwired parts of the town
 - The Town Board is awaiting a decision on Brightspeed's grant application for installing broadband in the remaining parts of the Town of Caledonia.
- Complete phase 1 of Gruetzmacher Park
 - Work is on schedule with the pavilion construction to begin in February and completed in 3-4 months. The playground will be installed in June/July. The park will officially open in September 2026.
- Complete the natural gas pipeline
 - The company repaired damaged roads, and all construction areas are reseeded. The Town Board is very pleased with how the work progressed and the end result.
- Select an assessor.
 - Long-time town assessor Larry Pruess was selected.

For 2026, Bill Abba listed the following Town Board priorities:

- Complete installation of broadband in unfinished parts of the Town of Caledonia.
- Complete Gruetzmacher Park.
- Create a Long-Term Park Maintenance Plan for Readfield Park, Pagel Pier, and Gruetzmacher Park.
- Create a Plan for Residential Growth in the Town of Caledonia.

Each commissioner received a handout detailing the need and rationale for planned residential growth in the Town. Bill Abba's main points included:

- Benefitting from its location, the Town of Caledonia is one of the fastest growing residential areas among the townships in Waupaca County.
- Despite efforts by the Town Board and local individuals, commercial development is very limited.
- Industrial development is also limited until a second cross country railroad track is laid, and currently nonmetallic mining is the single industry.
- With levy limits placed by the state, only residential development (both new construction and remodeling) will generate new revenue to offset rising costs and the expectations of residents for additional services.
- The current inventory of lots in local subdivisions is very low with all lots in three subdivisions sold. Only Woodland Hills Phase 2 still has small lots remaining.
- To manage infrastructure installation costs (broadband access, natural gas, and appropriate roads), residential growth should be focused in defined areas.

- To maintain a rural environment, residential development must be planned, not haphazard. Planning helps avoid conflicts between types of land uses (i.e. large farming operations, railroad expansion, expansion of mining operation, etc).
- If not planned, residential growth will be directed by landowners who want to sell their property rather than by a thoughtful process that preserves the rural landscape, matches local resources, and minimizes land use conflicts.

Bill Abba requested that the Planning Commission work with the Town Board to create a plan that will define future residential development. Chairperson Bill Fitzpatrick suggested that a joint meeting with the Town Board might be beneficial to determine first steps. He also recommended that the Planning Commission review the town's Future Land Use Map for potential residential development sites.

Report from Town Board Liaison

Bill Abba town chairperson, reported on the following item:

- **Transition to New Retirement Plan:** The Town Board voted to move from its current employee retirement plan to Social Security and the State Trust Fund System for the employees that are eligible.

Report from Park Committee representative

Helen Adams reported that on November 5, the Park Committee endorsed six types of rules for use in Gruetzmacher Park: General Park Rules, Sledding Hill Rules, Pavilion Use Rules, Trails (walking & cycling) Rules, Playground Rules, and Pickleball Court Use Rules. In November, the rules will be sent to DNR grants specialist Jessica Terrien for her review and input. The Park Rules Committee will work next on designing the park's physical signs displaying the rules. The text of the rules will be edited, and the Gruetzmacher Family Trust's logo may be included on the signs.

Old Business

Leadership Succession Plan: Bill Fitzpatrick described the next steps in the Leadership Succession Plan. The following changes will occur at the end of January 2026:

- Interim Planning Commission chairperson Bill Fitzpatrick will leave the Planning Commission at the end of his term on January 31, 2026.
- Cary Zaug, currently vice chair, will become the next chairperson.
- Bob Prahll will move from Alternate 1 to a full member of the Planning Commission, and he will be assigned the PC4 gmail account.
- Corey Besaw will move from Alternate 2 to Alternate 1 and will be eligible to vote when a commissioner is absent. He will use the caledoniapcalternate email account.
- There will be a vacancy in the PC vice chair position.

Vice Chair Vacancy: Bill Fitzpatrick voiced the need to recruit a vice chair and asked commissioners to consider volunteering to serve. He framed the open position as an opportunity to grow and stated the Planning Commission will revisit the issue in an upcoming meeting.

New Business

Elector's Meeting: Bill Fitzpatrick announced that on Monday November 17, the Town Board will hold an Electors Meeting from 6:00 to about 6:30 to present and pass the 2026 town budget. The budget can only be approved by the town's "electors" (residents) who are present. Bill Abba explained why the Elector's Meeting is necessary, and he urged commissioners to attend.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen R. Adams, Recording Secretary

Action items from the November meeting:

- Bill, Cary, and Helen will meet on Friday, Nov. 28 via Zoom to prepare the agenda for the December 8 10 PC meeting.
- Bill requested that commissioners continue to prepare draft motions for resident requests that occur at upcoming meetings.
- Future Comprehensive Plan tasks
 - January 12: c

Upcoming meetings

December 8, 2025	5:30-7:00 pm	Monthly Planning Commission meeting, Community Center
January 12, 2026	5:30-7:00 pm	Monthly Planning Commission meeting, Community Center
February 10, 2026	5:30-7:00 pm	Monthly Planning Commission meeting, Community Center