

TOWN OF YORK, DANE COUNTY

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE MINUTES – August 3rd, 2026

The regular meeting of the Town of York Comprehensive Plan Committee was called to order by Committee Chair Jamie Derr at 7:00 pm on Monday, August 3rd, 2026. Those present were Committee Chair Jamie Derr, Town Planner Ben Kollenbroich, and Clerk Jessa Lane. Additional committee members and any other attendees are listed on the sign-in sheet attached to these minutes.

The Posting of the agenda and meeting notice was verified by Committee Chair Jamie Derr, as posted by Dean Helwig.

Minutes of June 1st, 2026: Motion by Dave Zander with a second from Steve Wolfe to approve of the minutes of the June 1st, 2026 meeting with two corrections: changing the start time from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm and adding Keith and Trish Reopelle to the list of attendees. Minutes approved with all present in favor.

Review of Community Survey Results: Ben presented the results of the community survey, which received 134 responses out of approximately 360 sent out. The primary reasons residents live in York include farming opportunities, property characteristics, and school quality, with property tax levels also being a concern. Key land-use issues identified were the loss of farmland, preservation of rural character, commercial-scale renewable energy, and rising land prices. Regarding residential density, 57% of respondents supported maintaining the current 75-acre rule, while 31% favored a 35-acre split. Overwhelming support (84%) was expressed for accessory dwelling units (ADUs), with a strong majority feeling attached or detached ADUs should not count as a new residence against density limits. Respondents generally agreed the town should remain an agricultural community and opposed commercial or industrial rezoning unless it supported farming or home-based businesses. Steve requested printouts of the full survey responses for further review.

Chapter 5 Review - Agricultural, Cultural & Natural Resources: The committee reviewed goals for natural resource protection and farmland preservation. Keith Reopelle proposed establishing a volunteer flora and fauna survey to document local natural resources and limit habitat fragmentation, offering to lead volunteer outreach using citizen science tools like Seek and Merlin. Keith will provide specific language to Ben, Jamie, and the Clerk. Roadside littering on Fish Road and near the gun club was discussed; Jamie will contact Earthscapes regarding reports of trash left by their crews. The committee decided to strike Item 5 (protecting quality trees/woodlands from development) and Item 6 (adopting a Tree Ordinance) to avoid infringing on private

property rights, retaining language that encourages selective cutting and voluntary woodland management. Regarding historical and cultural preservation, the committee struck Item 4 (incentives for historic properties) and Item 7 (conducting regular resident surveys on hobbies, arts, and cultural practices) due to town resource constraints. Creation of a historic preservation ordinance was discussed to unlock grant funding for local cemeteries, but the committee opted to leave the ordinance out of the comprehensive plan for now and handle it separately through the Town Board.

Chapter 6 Review - Economic Development Plan: The committee reviewed economic development strategies, striking Items 1-2a, 1-2b, 1-3c, and Policies 1 and 4 (removing Purchase of Development Rights, green energy, and biotechnology policies due to financial burdens and limited town jurisdiction). Item 1-2c was amended to read: "support emerging markets for value-added agriculture, e.g., agritourism, farm stays, direct farm-product sales, community supported agriculture, greenhouses, hoop houses, biomass, specialty crops, and organic farming". Item 1-4a was amended to update "town newsletter" to "town publications" to better reflect business promotion via the municipal website and digital channels.

Infrastructure, Taxation & Land Use Discussion: Brian Henning raised concerns regarding rising town operational costs for fire, ambulance, and road maintenance, questioning whether current density limits constrain property valuation growth needed to offset expenses. The committee discussed heavy agricultural traffic impacting road shoulders, density rules, and historical 35-acre development rights pre-1980. Town Planner Ben will arrange for the Town of Dunn Clerk/Treasurer to attend the next meeting to present on mill rates, property valuations, and service cost distribution.

Next Meeting Announcement: The next Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 10th, 2026, at 7:00 pm to review Chapter 7 (Intergovernmental Cooperation), and Chapter 9 (Implementation Plan).

Adjournment: Motion made by Dave Zander to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 pm, motion was seconded by Mike Hughes. Motion carried with all present in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.