

TOWN OF VERMONT PLAN COMMISSION MEETING

4017 County Hwy JJ, Black Earth, WI 53515

Monday September 29, 2025, 6:00 P.M.

Call to order and posting certification

Tim called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was properly noticed: posted on the front door of the Town Hall, posted on the town website, emailed to the online subscribers, and published in the Mount Horeb Mail and Times Tribune.

Present: Tim Pierce, Diane Anderson, Dean Bossenbroek, Jim Elleson, Polly Kawalek, Doug Meier, and Max Scoll

Approval of agenda

Dean moved and Doug seconded a motion to approve the agenda. Motion carried 6-0.

Approval of August meeting minutes

Jim moved and Doug seconded a motion to approve the August meeting minutes. Motion carried 6-0.

Public input/general comments

Mark Haukoos shared information about a letter he received from his neighbor concerning property disputes.

Dustin Helmenstine, 4785 County Highway FF, Zoning, driveway and building application.

- Tim was not on the site visit.
- Dustin and Mackensie are planning to buy 2.27 acres from his parents and build a house.
- There were no issues with slope.
- Driveway is shared for the first portion, so a shared driveway agreement and easement are required, and a signed copy will be provided before the board meeting.
- The building envelope will be shifted slightly, and new coordinates were provided.

Doug moved and Dean seconded a motion to approve the rezone from a combination of FP1 and FP35 to RR2. Motion carried 5-0. Tim abstained.

Dean moved and Doug seconded a motion to approve the driveway permit contingent upon receipt of an easement and shared driveway agreement. Motion carried 5-0. Tim abstained.

Jim moved and Max seconded a motion to approve 100 x 150 building envelope. Motion carried 5-0. Tim abstained.

Discussion and possible recommendation on the County proposed blanket rezone to correct zoning map discrepancies

- The county will review zoning categories for any nonconformities.
- They have provided us with a list of 5 parcels with suggested new zoning categories.
- PDRs will not be impacted by any zoning changes.
- Owners can choose to reject the new zoning.
- Is there a default if owners don't respond? Tim will ask Bridgit about this.
- The PC will take action and then the board. During the process, the County will send out letters to the 5 landowners that appear to come from the Town of Vermont.

Jim moved and Polly seconded a motion to approve the revised rezone application contingent upon each owner agreeing to the proposal.

Discussion:

Max suggested that the property owners be involved right away.

Doug said the town should send out a letter and make sure the owners know that the County initiated the action on our behalf.

Jim moved and Polly seconded a motion to withdraw the previous motion. Motion carried 7-0.

The PC would be most comfortable if the County sends the owners a letter upfront informing them of the possible zoning change. The PC can then act on the rezone.

Tim moved and Max seconded a motion to table the County proposed blanket rezone pending the Dane County zoning staff send a letter to the 5 potential impacted landowners explaining the process and by giving them a chance to express if they are interested in moving forward, need more information, or would not like to move forward with the blanket rezone. Pending the feedback the plan commission will then take up any appropriate action. Motion Carried 7-0.

Comprehensive Plan Review – working topic.

Tim presented 2 policy related topics for discussion.

1. Transfer of development rights
 - This is a tool townships can use to protect farmland.
 - Town would identify a sending area and a receiving area. The sending area is prime farmland or conservation land that is designated for long term preservation and would allow landowners the right to sell development rights attached to the parcels. The receiving area is land designated for higher residential development. The town would have to allow for density above the base zoning established as of January 1, 1985.
 - Downsides are it works better in flat townships with a lot of contiguous tillable acreage and by doing it closer to the village it gives the village a chance to annex sooner.
 - This is done only with consent of the property owner.
 - You have to define what you are doing. If you can't define it, you can't do it.
 - The Town rules would still apply, i.e., 4 house per shared driveway and 5 splits per 5 years.

Discussion:

- Cowan's owned land that was contiguous across the road but was purchased at two different times and could not move a PDR because it was considered separate ownership.
- Some owners may be able to purchase additional PDRs to build on their property.
- What is the benefit to the town as a whole?
- Receiving area could be limited to same owners on contiguous property.
- Could change the whole concept of the town.
- Max said it would change the way people value their property.
- Do we have to worry about our enforcement power as a plan commission?
- Could in theory enter into an intergovernmental agreement to transfer them out of one township to another.
- The PC concluded that we would not pursue this topic.

2. Affordable housing policies

- What could we do to as a township to try to plateau or reduce the cost to build in the Town of Vermont?
- The town could allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) – small secondary units on existing lots, without charging a PDR which would be significantly less expensive than a stand-alone home.
- Duplexes are allowed but require 2 development rights.
- No public transportation is available.
- Someone can build a 5,000 square foot house but cannot build a 3,000 square foot house with a 900 square foot ADU.
- The board would have to initiate PC action on an affordable housing policy.
- Habitat for humanity or community housing trusts.
- Is there any impact on the township tax burden?
- Foundation based affordable housing, you could do it as a philanthropic endeavor.

Agenda items for the next meeting

Cowan rezone
Comprehensive plan
Blanket Rezone

Next Meeting Date.

October 27, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.

Adjournment

Jim moved and Max seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Diane Anderson, Planning Commission Secretary