

**JOINT ARCHITECTURAL BOARD/PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES
MONDAY OCTOBER 20, 2025
6:30 PM
BOARD ROOM
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 210 COTTONWOOD AVE.**

Present: Jeff Pfannerstill, Tim Hallquist, Jeff Bierman, Chip Schneeberger (via zoom), David DeCourcy-Bower.

Excused: Wallschlager

Others Present: Ryan Bailey, Deputy Clerk Bushey, Ryan Amtmann, Jim Siepman, Mike Moen, Marlene Torres, Jaina Lemberg,

Call to Order- 6:30 pm

Roll Call taken. All present with one vacancy.

Public Comments: Please be advised the Joint Architectural Board/Plan Commission will receive comments from the public related to any item(s) on the agenda for a three-minute time period per person, with time extensions per the Chairman's discretion.

No Comments

1. Consideration of a motion to approve the Jt. Architectural Board/Plan Commission minutes -

a. August 18, 2025

Motion (Hallquist/de Courcy-Bower) to approve the August 18, 2025, minutes. Motion carried with one abstention (Schneeberger).

b. September 15, 2025

Motion (Hallquist/de Courcy-Bower) to approve the Sept. 15, 2025, minutes. Carried (5-0).

2. Architectural Board review and consideration of an application for signage for 1023 E. Capitol Drive, Zion Lutheran Church -

Pat Meverden from Finishing Touch Sign Company of Wausau, Wisconsin, appeared on Zoom to present the signage application for Zion Lutheran Church. He explained that Zion is looking to update their signage on Capitol Drive while maintaining a similar footprint to the existing sign. The main addition would be an electronic message center below the existing sign structure.

He detailed that the electronic message center would be used primarily for community outreach messages about upcoming events. He noted that many churches in the area are implementing similar systems for communicating with parishioners. The sign would retrofit the existing structure with LEDs for updated lighting, with the message center positioned below.

President Pfannerstill expressed concern about the residential properties directly across the street from the church and asked about nighttime operation. Pat explained that the electronic signs have extensive customization options, including auto-dimming functions and the ability to go completely black during specified hours. He suggested the sign could be programmed to shut off between certain hours, such as 8 PM to 7 AM.

Board members discussed various aspects of the sign. One member asked about landscaping, and Pat confirmed the existing landscaping would remain unchanged. Another member inquired about Scott's notes regarding the sign height. A board member clarified that Scott's note indicated there are no maximum size or height limitations in the code, but he was noting that elsewhere in the village, signs don't exceed 8 feet. Pat stated their current proposal would result in a total height of 105 inches from the ground, including the landscaping base.

Pfannerstill raised the issue of message frequency during dark hours, suggesting that rapid changes could be distracting to nearby residents. He proposed that during dark hours, messages should not change more frequently than every one to two minutes. Board members agreed this would help minimize the flickering effect that could disturb residents.

After extensive discussion, a board member made a motion to approve the sign with specific conditions.

Motion (de Courcy-Bower/Hallquist) to approve the sign with the contingencies that the sign be off by 9pm & on after dawn, frequency of changing after dark is more than a minute, and to work with staff in the event of complaints. Carried (5-0).

3. Architectural Board review and consideration of an application for signage for 401 Campus Drive, Lake Country Lutheran

Marielana Torres with Lemberg appeared on Zoom to present the signage application for Lake Country Lutheran. She explained that the school currently has a monument sign and is looking to move its placement while updating it. The current sign is located near the entrance by the smallest parking lot, and they propose moving it to a green area near the larger parking lot.

Torres noted they're not making any drastic changes to the sign itself, just updating and relocating it. The proposal follows all code requirements. Additionally, they plan to add enter and exit directional signs as they want to establish one dedicated entrance and one dedicated exit, rather than the current setup where both driveways function as both entrance and exit.

Hallquist asked about the enter and exit signs, and Torres confirmed these would be refreshed directional signs to support the new traffic flow pattern with one entrance solely for entering cars and the other for exiting cars.

Bierman brought up the broader issue of lighting requirements for future applications, noting that with today's technology, signs can adjust their brightness levels. He suggested the board should establish guidelines for lumen levels rather than just setting on/off times, particularly for locations like schools where events might run late. Other board members agreed this would be a good topic for future discussion but noted they don't currently have specific lumen level information to provide guidance.

The Chair noted this is a different situation from the previous application as it's not in a residential area and agreed that a school has different needs with late sporting events and activities.

Motion (DeCourcy-Bower/Hallquist) to approve the signage and to work with staff on landscaping. Carried (5-0).

4. Architectural Board review and consideration of two-family new construction at 412 Cottonwood Avenue

Jake Ackerman, the property owner, presented his plans for constructing a two-family residence at 412 Cottonwood Avenue. He explained that he purchased the property about a year ago, obtained a razing permit to remove an old barn, and now plans to build a two-family residence as permitted by the zoning. His intention is to have his parents live in half of the building and rent out the other half.

Ackerman described the design as having two three-bedroom units. For materials, he plans to use dark gray LP SmartSide siding with white trim and black window frames, along with composite decking. The building will appear as a single story from the front but will have full exposure on the lower level facing the river due to the lot's slope.

The Chair asked about traffic concerns given the proximity to the railroad tracks. Ackerman confirmed he's aware of the visibility challenges but noted that the recent removal of the median has significantly improved access. He plans to widen the curb cut from its current 12-13 feet to 26 feet to improve access. Schneeberger asked about the grade and driveway slope, expressing concern about visibility over the railroad tracks.

Ackerman assured that the initial portion of the driveway would be fairly flat with most of the slope occurring on the sides.

Board member de Courcy Bower noted this is one of the few places in the village where limited front-facing windows would be appropriate given the commercial and industrial uses across the street. He appreciated that the design takes into account the unique location characteristics. Ackerman showed additional renderings that demonstrated how the stepped design with different setbacks between units and varied siding orientations would create visual interest despite the garage-forward design.

Motion (de Courcy Bower/Hallquist) to approve the plans. Carried (5-0).

5. Plan Commission review and consideration of T-Lon Products addition at 1110 Richards Road

Daniel Ayala with Oliver Construction appeared on behalf of Olson Realty to present plans for a 7,600 square foot addition to the existing T-Lon Products building on the south side. The addition would be constructed in what is currently an asphalt parking lot, resulting in no real change to impervious surface.

Ayala explained that the architectural design is intended to match the existing building in height, finish, and window patterns to create a cohesive appearance. The addition will be used for shipping, receiving, and warehousing. The same concrete brick masonry that exists on the entire building will be carried around to the back and east sides of the addition, including all existing accents.

The plans include adding softscape near the at-grade ramped entry to an overhead door on the south side, with small plantings along that area. Additional plantings will be added to the west of the existing parking lot to better comply with landscape requirements.

Village Engineer Ryan Amtmann raised two stormwater management concerns. First, he requested the applicant model the phosphorus reduction from the stormwater BMPs and include that in their memo. Second, he noted an existing small wet pond east of the addition that appears choked with cattails and asked for an evaluation to determine if it needs cleaning to function properly.

Ayala acknowledged these requests, stating the information had been relayed to their engineer and ownership is on board. Due to timing constraints, he requested these items be addressed as conditions of occupancy rather than prior to Plan Commission approval.

Board members expressed satisfaction with the addition's design and how it integrates with the existing building. de Courcy-Bower noted the addition looks good, includes dumpster containment and additional landscaping, and fits well with the rest of the building.

Motion (de Courcy Bower/Hallquist) to approve contingent on working with staff to resolve the outstanding items related to the site and building plans, specifically the stormwater. Carried (5-0).

6. Plan Commission review and consideration of installation of a parking lot at 163 E. Capitol Dr

Mike Moen, the building owner, and Kirsten Senfleben appeared to present their parking lot proposal. Moen explained they want to replace the existing driveway and add additional parking behind their building, maximizing parking space for future use while maintaining as much green space as possible.

Moen provided background on the building, noting it has residential tenants upstairs and space for up to four small business units on the main floor, currently configured as three units. He and Ms. Senfleben both plan to operate businesses from the building - he is in real estate and she is in aesthetics. They also have interest from a massage therapist and potentially a small retail shop.

The existing driveway creates significant safety concerns. Moen explained that vehicles must back out onto Capitol Drive unless they turn around in the backyard, which is dangerous given the busy street and limited visibility. He referenced Building Inspector Scott Hussinger nearly getting hit while backing out. The narrow driveway entrance, combined with cars often parking past the lines on the street, makes ingress and egress extremely difficult.

Regarding the parking lot design, Moen wants to match the grade with the neighboring property to the west, creating a high point where the properties meet to ensure proper drainage. Water would flow away from this high point in both directions. He expressed openness to connecting with the neighboring parking lot if approved but noted he needs to build that relationship first.

For lighting, Moen stated he would prefer not to have lights but will meet minimum requirements. He proposed one pole light in the back corner and building-mounted lights facing down at the parking lot to minimize impact on residential neighbors. The neighboring property has a tall light pole they turn off at night. Village Engineer Ryan Amtmann confirmed the site has significant constraints with no storm sewer nearby. Given the small disturbance area of 5,000-6,000 square feet that doesn't trigger stormwater permits, he and Moen determined it best to pitch the parking lot from south to north toward the street at about half percent grade.

Extensive discussion ensued about various aspects of the proposal. de Courcy Bower raised concerns about the plan's alignment with the village's B-3 zoning intent and master plan, which envisions connected parking lots in the downtown area and prohibits parking between buildings and the road. He suggested the parking lot would function better if connected to the neighboring property to the west, allowing shared access through the larger driveway.

Pfannerstill expressed mixed feelings, acknowledging the property's challenges as a residential building retrofitted for business use. He worried about increased traffic from the proposed 12-space parking lot impacting the busy street and pedestrian safety. However, he recognized the current situation is dangerous with vehicles backing onto Capitol Drive.

Schneeberger questioned several design elements, including why the driveway would be 26 feet wide at the building if parking isn't allowed in front. Moen explained he wants to pave to the building to prevent water infiltration and provide access to the side door, particularly for disabled parking needs.

deCourcy-Bower noted that extending the driveway 20 feet west would conflict with a village light post, leaving only 6 inches clearance. He felt the proposal lacked sufficient detail and created new problems with each proposed solution.

Ms. Senfleben explained she is the sole provider for her family after losing her husband, and denying the driveway improvements would cause financial injury by losing current and potential tenants. She emphasized the urgent need for improvements before winter weather.

The discussion continued with the applicant's expressing frustration about changing requirements and referencing previous interactions with village staff. Board members maintained they need detailed plans showing exact dimensions, building locations, lighting specifications, and how the design addresses village infrastructure.

deCourcy-Bower commented regarding the light pole, and said the driveway doesn't align with the Village's features. He said every time he looks at it, he sees something else that needs to be amended. He went on to say that the way it is proposed there isn't enough information to go off of.

Motion (deCourcy-Bower/Schneeberger) to deny. Carried (5-0).

Pfannerstill clarified that denial doesn't prevent the applicants from resubmitting with more detailed plans and offered to help work toward a resolution.

7. Plan Commission review and consideration of amendment to the Planned Unit Development for the Sandhill Development-

Jim Siepmann from Siepmann Realty, accompanied by his son Christopher presented an update on Sandhill phases 1 and 2 and requested amendments for phases 3 and 4.

For the update on phases 1 and 2, Siepmann showed that of the original plan, buildings shown in green are built and sold, orange squares represent 7 buildings (14 units) yet to be built, yellow indicates unit 46 under contract, and pink/red shows their model with an offer pending. They have sold 40 units to date.

Siepmann announced they will eliminate two buildings in phases 1 and 2 to improve the project. Near units 37-38 and 35-36 where three buildings were planned, they'll only build two as the area was too tight. Additionally, the planned four-family building at units 5-6 will become a two-family instead, as four-family units aren't selling well, and the drainage swale and trail location don't accommodate another building.

For phases 3 and 4, Siepmann requested approval to amend the PUD from the approved 50 units (in 25 two-family buildings) to 36 single-family condominium units. He explained this change responds to buyer feedback preferring the privacy of single-family homes over attached units. Several current Sandhill residents have expressed interest in moving to single-family units if available.

The development options include finding one developer for all units, using 3-5 premium builders, or individual sales. They want to maintain architectural consistency with common elements to integrate with existing buildings, avoiding contemporary or incompatible designs.

Siepmann emphasized the street layout and storm sewer locations remain exactly as pre-approved. The trail system, including the public perimeter loop and internal connections, stays the same. Open space will be maintained in prairie style matching phases 1 and 2. Building pads are designed generously at 65 feet wide by 85 feet deep to accommodate side-entry garages. Given the site's significant topography, they'll mandate daylight or exposed basements to work with natural grades.

Responding to questions about demographics and pricing, Siepmann estimated homes would cost \$1.1-1.2 million for 2,000 square feet, likely attracting an older demographic similar to other area single-family condo developments. The homes would fall under the same HOA structure with a master association for all Sandhill and micro-associations for individual phases.

De Courcy Bower suggested they could either present a selection of pre-approved home designs or develop detailed design standards for board comfort in delegating individual approvals to staff, similar to previous developments like Sanctuary and Windrush. Siepmann agreed to return with design standards.

Motion (DeCourcy-Bower/Hallquist) to approve the start of the amendment process for the PUD. Carried (5-0).

The board clarified this approval allows beginning the amendment process for phases 3 and 4 to become single-family condominium units, with design standards and other details to return for future review.

8. Announcements -

- President Pfannerstill began announcements by again noting the passing of Marty Frankie, husband of absent board member Ann Wallschlager, asking everyone to keep Ann and the family in their prayers.

- Brief announcements included that the holiday train is coming (with Ryan to provide dates), Hartland Lights is approaching, and the recent Fire Department pancake breakfast was very well attended. The Chair thanked everyone who showed support for that event.
- Pumpkin Party in the Park and an upcoming "creepy crawly Halloween thing" event this weekend.
- Pfannerstill concluded with personal remarks about taking his service seriously despite occasional joking. He apologized for the lengthy meeting and acknowledged the stress of difficult situations. He expressed appreciation for serving with the board members and thanked them for their patience and service, noting that while he tries to help reach resolutions, sometimes it doesn't work out but hopefully they'll get there in the future.

9. Adjourn -

Motion (deCourcy-Bower/Schneeberger) to adjourn. Carried (5-0).

Adjourned at 8:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Recording Secretary,

Deidre Bush  y, Deputy Clerk