

PLAN COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 11, 2019

The Village of Combined Locks Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Commission Chairman Al Leicht. Other commission members in attendance included: Tim Mulry, Jim Hamilton, Cathy Vander Zanden, Dave Casper, John Weyenberg, Jeff Maynard, and Karen Menting.

Also in attendance were Village Administrator Racquel Shampo-Giese, Kaukauna Utilities representatives Jeff Feldt, Eric Miller, and Dave Pahl, Electrical Consultants, Incorporated representatives, an estimated 24 audience members, and Judy Hebbe of the Times Villager.

The first item on the agenda was to review and consider approval of the August meeting minutes. C. Vander Zanden made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. J. Hamilton seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to review and consider a recommendation to approve a certified survey map to divide 134/136 Green Way Drive into separate parcels. Jill Nitschke explained that she is the owner, and the original plan for the property was for her mother to live in the other side of the duplex. Her mother has since moved to an assisted living apartment instead. Ms. Nitschke wishes to divide the property and sell the other half of the duplex. It was noted that there are separate water and sanitary sewer lines from the structure to the mains in the right of way, and this detail is noted on the CSM. It was also noted that the shared wall is a building code compliant firewall. J. Maynard made a motion to recommend approval of the CSM. C. Vander Zanden seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was a public hearing regarding a special exception request from Kaukauna Utilities to locate a new substation on Janssen Street in Combined Locks. Chairman Leicht reviewed the public hearing process and recent changes in state statutes with the audience and asked that comments be limited to Combined Locks residents. This was met with some opposition from Commission member Menting. The audience was quickly polled to find out if there were any non-residents in the audience who would like to speak. None of the non-residents stated that they wished to speak during the public hearing. Representatives from Kaukauna Utilities provided a presentation of their special exception request to rebuild and expand the substation located on State Street near Janssen Street. The substation serves more than 5,000 customers in Combined Locks, Little Chute and Kaukauna, and it is one of three interconnect substations to the transmission grid. The existing substation, approximately 100' away from the proposed new location, is 47 years old and is causing increasing maintenance expense and may become unreliable soon. The need for the rebuild/expansion is for safe accessibility, reliability and modernization. The reasons it cannot be rebuilt in place are: lack of accessibility, limited spacing, poor operational design (in today's terms), extended outages to Midwest Paper Group, unnecessarily replacing the 138kV substation, and additional land acquisition from Midwest Paper Group. It was explained that expansion and rebuilding to the southwest has significant environmental, operational and financial impacts. Kaukauna Utilities has sited the new substation 72' away from the road, which they believe is the "sweet spot" to consider neighbor requests and accessibility to the substation without significantly increasing the cost to rebuild the substation. Chairman Leicht then opened the floor to the public. Questions and concerns were received from Karen Mueller, Amanda VanDeLeygraaf, Conner Mueller, Jackie Jaeger, Ryan Mueller, George Ulmen as well as Plan Commission members Karen Menting,

Cathy Vander Zanden, Tim Mulry, Dave Casper, and Jeff Maynard. Questions and concerns included: would you want to live across the street from a substation; 72' is closer than you think; substation lighting is currently blocked by a house that will be removed – how will that affect neighboring property owners; 20-25% decrease in property value according to a realtor; EMF concerns; specific health conditions of one of the neighbors; Village and Kaukauna Utilities should care more about people than the money needed to spend on this substation rebuild; citations from several health organization studies regarding EMFs; is compliance measured regularly; timing of last EMF measurement; purchasing current mill property as an optional site for the substation; EMF strength as you move further away from the substation; noise level of new substation; additional 27' to available to move substation further away from neighboring properties; retaining wall location; necessity of Hill Street; KU purchase of all residential property in the area; move the substation to a completely different location; and request to move the substation south so that it is 100' away from the street. Kaukauna Utilities representatives reiterated that their request is to site the substation as presented as it is the best location for safe access and allows all of the components to be lined up with the same bus. Chairman Leicht asked for any final comments. Hearing none, D. Casper made a motion to close the public hearing. C. Vander Zanden seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

D. Casper then asked if the terms special exception and conditional use are used interchangeably. The Administrator explained that the Village's attorney has confirmed that the two terms are interchangeable.

C. Vander Zanden made a motion to approve the special exception request from Kaukauna Utilities with the following conditions: masonry wall to be 10' in height, masonry wall color to be earth tone or natural color instead of the red clay color as shown in the renderings, and heavy/thick landscape buffer to be planted on the north and west sides of the substation wall. D. Casper seconded the motion. K. Menting made a motion to amend the location of the substation from 72' from the street to 100'. J. Maynard seconded the motion, and it failed on a roll call vote (4 nay, 3 aye, 1 abstain). The original motion passed on a roll call vote (5 aye, 2 nay, 1 abstain). It was noted that the Village Board will vote on the special exception at its 09/17/19 meeting scheduled for 6:30pm.

Due to the length of the meeting, the review of RFP for parks planning was tabled.

In other general business, the next meeting was scheduled for 09/25/19 at 6:00pm. Agenda will include presentation of a Planned Unit Development concept plan and discussion of the parks planning RFPs received.

J. Hamilton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. J. Maynard seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.