

Town of La Pointe Regular Planning and Zoning Town Plan Commission Meeting Minutes

430 pm, December 3rd, 2025 at Town Hall

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85817354068?pwd=WWY4REFXZ3dLaVROOXIMOWV3WVB4dz09>

Members Present: Chair Paul Wilharm, Charles Brummer, Jim Peters, Suellen Soucek, Aimee Baxter

Staff Present: ZA Richard M Kula, TA Max Imholte

Public Present: Heidi Lahm-Huber (via zoom)

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Members present reflected above

II. Public Comment (less than 1 minute)

PWilharm and the TPC Team welcomed Aimee Baxter to the Town Plan Commission.

III. Zoning Administrator Report (Verbal & Written)

RKula summarized the accomplishments during the month of November. (The written report is attached.) In summary, during the month, RKula completed providing the Town Assessor all of the 2025 construction related permits 6 days before the deadline, started an in-depth review of the Public Comments received on the Zoning Ordinance Re-Write further refining the potential mixed-use zone and the quantity of campers located on a lot. He had initial conversations with 5 property owners for which zoning type complaints have been received and conducted one additional site visit. Overall, during the month, he conducted 7 site visits in support of permit requests and issued 7 land use permits while preparing 4 additional data packages for TPC review at this meeting. Finally, he continued to prepare for the Lesson's Learned Open house that is being planned for December 10th. The Town's Building Inspector and an Ashland County representative from their Zoning Department will both be in attendance. Overall, the invitations were sent to approximately 43 contractors on both the mainland and on the Island.

IV. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

a. Regular TPC Meeting - November 5th, 2025 - JPeters made a motion to approve. SSoucek seconded. All ayes, except Aimee who abstained, motion passes.

V. Old Business

a. Review, Discuss and possibly approve land use permit applications:

- i. 428 Deer Woods Lane (Brad Nicholas Private Driveway Front of Lot Determination)** RKula reviewed the proposed project and provided the TPC Members with a project review summary. The main question is what is the official front of Lot 3. This project is to extend a private road. The main question is about a dwelling that is on Lot 3 and its existing setbacks. There was discussion on which road was first and that should be the front of the lot. TPC consented to agree

that the already existing Deer Woods Lane is the front of the lot. There are no issues with the setbacks of the existing dwelling.

- ii. **1197 Big Bay Road (Mary Smith Primary Dwelling)** RKula reviewed the proposed project and provided the TPC Members with a project review summary. RKula is asking for a conditional approval. All is ready to approve but the site was just staked out this afternoon (notified 90 minutes before this meeting) and although the sanitary permits have been requested, it hasn't been approved yet. Setbacks need to be measured. With the next meeting not until January, and with everything else pretty much in place, conditionally approving this makes the most sense. Motion to approve with the ZA to visit the site and confirm setbacks, JPeters, SSoucek second. All ayes, motion passes.
- iii. **3469 Big Bay Road (Land Use Permit Extension)** RKula reviewed the proposed project extension and provided the TPC Members with a project review summary. RKula walked through the historical approvals up to date and shared what the property owner shared as to the reasons why it has been delayed. The property owner indicated that it will be complete by summer 2026, but definitely no later than December 19, 2026. CBrummer asked about the shipping container. They need to be permitted. RKula took the IOU to look into it (short and long term) and coordinate with the property owner. Additional discussion took place on setbacks that RKula reviewed from a very high level. RKula brought this to the TPC because of all of the complexities and multiple extensions. Motion to approve for a one year extension, JPeters, SSoucek seconded All ayes, motion passed.
- iv. **2661 Big Bay Road (Linda Castle Property Reconfiguration)** RKula reviewed the proposed project and provided the TPC Members with a project review summary. Property owner would like to reconfigure lots. Ran into an issue of being less than the minimum (2.67 acres versus the required 3.0 acres.) They have been discussing purchasing neighboring acreage to meet or exceed the 3.0 acre requirement. As a motion wasn't required, the TPC provided concurrence with the proposed plan, if all property owners are in agreement.

b. Zoning Ordinance Re-Write – Next Steps after 3 Question & Answer

Sessions – JPeters discussed that we have been meeting and have gotten through the first 3 Sections of the Zoning Ordinance. At the next TPC meeting, we would bring in the modified changes that have been made so far so that TPC members can start digesting the modifications. PWilharm indicated that we are now meeting Tuesdays and Thursdays (the TPC Workgroup) to attempt to speed things up. Some changes in the Zoning Ordinance may require changes to the Rental Ordinance. Work will continue into the new year.

c. Response Letter to Property Owner Regarding Complaints Received for Wedding Events at 951 Whitefish Lane

– RKula put a fresh copy in everyone's mailbox, but there have been no changes. RKula worked with Katey Abbott and Max as well as the Town Attorney in preparing the final letter. There are attachments to the letter that include the results of Steve Schraufnagel site visit (September 23rd) and photos from that site visit. We have identified the issues in the letter and the corrective actions. At this point, with TPC blessing, we would send the letter certified return receipt tomorrow. Steve, Katey and RKula are available to meet with the property owner at his convenience to go through each comment and corrective action. JPeters made a motion

to proceed with the letter; SSoucek seconded. All ayes, motion passed. JPeters and SSoucek believe that it was a very well written letter and RKula agreed; it was a great team effort.

- d. Lessons Learned Open House (Zoning (La Pointe & Ashland County (invited), Town of La Pointe Building Inspector, Contractors, Property Owners) – December 10th @ 12:30 pm – 2 pm** – RKula indicated it was posted in town around November 18th as well as emailed to 43 contractors. Steve Schraufnagel and Kerasha Flint are arriving on the Island early to attend a couple of site inspections before the meeting. We will go through the outline and listen for feedback. How can we improve the process in 2026. JPeters asked if we were going to send a reminder to the potential participants? RKula indicated that he would be sending a reminder. It will also be available on YouTube and livestreamed. Anyone can attend. It has been posted at the Post Office, Library and at Town Hall since November 18th and online since about November 19th. We are trying to get word spread around town.
- e. Complaints Received – Status Update** – RKula stated that as we work through the process he will provide an update that is grouped together. Since we met on November 5th, we sent out letters to all property owners on November 12th. Since then RKula has been able to have a conversation with all of the property owners. He has been collecting information and going through the files. Some are further along than others in the process. Max and I did a new site visit a couple of weeks ago. They are not complete yet. During December, RKula would like to complete 2 or 3, if possible. PWilharm asked if any property owner had outright admitted the violations. RKula indicated that there isn't any outright admissions, but rather it is just collecting data at this point and evaluating it. JPeters asked if these issues are something that he can handle as ZA or if they will need to be with the TPC. RKula responded that it is too early to tell yet. SSoucek appreciates that we are looking into the complaints. JPeters asked if they were all written complaints. RKula confirmed they are.
 - i. Fence in Right of Way**
 - ii. Home Business in Zoning District R-3**
 - iii. Commercial Storage in Zoning District W-1**
 - iv. Building Setbacks (Variance)**
 - v. Potential Zoning & UDC Violations**
- f. CUP Process – Discuss Online Training/Potential Joint Meeting with Town Board** – Place holder for now, will be on the agenda for January.
- g. Tech Memo #3 – Next Steps** - Place holder for now, will be on the agenda for January.
- h. Holding Tank Options – Update** - Place holder for now, will be on the agenda for January.
- i. “Do I Need a Permit?” – Update on creating an Information Permit Summary and Q&A for the Public** - Place holder for now, will be on the agenda for January but it ties into the Lesson's Learned agenda.

- j. Chapter 205 Building Code** - Place holder for now, will be on the agenda for January but it ties into the Lesson's Learned agenda. CBrummer asked if, during the Lessons Learned, if we are going to bring up the part of UDC that includes agricultural buildings and garages. How do other communities handle it? It is a community-by-community decision. We can always go beyond the State requirements. The concern is not having buildings constructed using inferior products and to ensure that good building techniques are employed. We will see what feedback we get at the Lesson's Learned Open House.
- k. 6th Street Vacate Request Process** – RKula indicated that we had a property owner request 6th Street be vacated. RKula distributed a package. He talked with the Town's attorney that goes through about 6 steps. Page 2 shows an exhibit of 6th Street. It is about 40' by 330' or so. If TPC approves it, it goes to the Town Board. Town Board doesn't approve it at this stage but signs the Resolution to continue to move it forward. The data package RKula shared with TPC provides examples of the materials that would have to be prepared. There was a question about the two different colors on the exhibit. Further clarification will need to be provided. A new survey will have to be prepared as the current is from April 17th, 1992. RKula highlighted a conversation with the property owner. He is preparing a summary of the cost and developing a timeline/detailed schedule. CBrummer has no issues going forward and is happy to see there is a process. PWilarm, in looking at the Park Falls example, didn't see that the community was being compensated for the vacation. That may be a question for the attorney. RKula indicated that it is a work in progress. JPeters made a motion for the TPC to recommend the vacation of 6th Street to the Town Board; SSoucek seconded. All voted aye. Motion passed.
- l. Setbacks for Lake Front Lots** – Place holder for now but RKula is looking at other counties for examples; Iron County, WI and Kenosha County, WI to name a couple. This is to determine how other counties are considering the front and the back.

VI. New Business

VII. Future Agenda Items

- a.** Carry forward information from previous agenda items. Items under New Business can be moved to Old Business.
- b.** Permit Extension – 1-year versus 2-years (or different)

VIII. Extended Public Comment (less than 5 minutes)

- None -

IX. Next Scheduled Meeting – Regular TPC Meeting - January 7, 2026 @ 430 pm

X. Adjournment @ approximately 5:17 pm

Paul Wilharm, Town Plan Commission

Upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through appropriate aids and services. For additional information or to request this service, contact the Town Clerk. Note: It is possible that members of other governmental bodies of the municipality (and possibly a quorum) may attend this meeting to gather information. No action will be taken by any governmental body at this meeting; other than the governmental body specifically referred to in this notice.