



MINUTES

CITY PLAN COMMISSION

Members

- Mayor Wiza
- Alderperson Kneebone
- Commissioner Arntsen
- Commissioner Beacom
- Commissioner Rice
- Commissioner Schuler
- Commissioner Stroik

Date and Time:	December 15, 2025 5:00 PM	Location:	Community Room 933 Michigan Avenue, Stevens Point, WI
			<u>OR</u>
			<u>Zoom Teleconferencing</u>

Opening Section:

1. Roll Call

- Meeting called to order at 5:00PM.
- Members present: Mayor Wiza, Alder Kneebone, Commissioners Arntsen, Beacom, Rice, Schuler, Stroik

Chairperson welcomed Commissioner Laura Shady-Strike, noting this was her first meeting serving on the Plan Commission.

Discussion and Possible Action on:

2. A request from Portage County to amend the Stevens Point Comprehensive Plan. Said request amends the future land use designation of the property located at 825 Whiting Avenue (Parcel ID 281230805101103) from 'Institutional/Government' to 'Commercial/Office/Multi-Family.'

- Background: Staff provided background information regarding the request, noting that a prior Plan Commission vote resulted in a tie, which required the item to be brought back for a clear recommendation. Staff explained that the amendment is necessary to align the Comprehensive Plan with zoning and proposed use of the property following a potential sale to a private operator. Staff further explained that state statute allows community facilities to be publicly or privately operated and that inclusion of commercial uses provides consistency

with the existing R-4 zoning district. Staff recommended approval.

- Discussion:
 - Commissioners discussed the relationship between the Comprehensive Plan and zoning consistency.
 - Questions were raised regarding the impact of privatization versus the limited scope of the Plan Commission's role.
 - Commissioners discussed long-term flexibility of the site and whether the amendment aligns with comprehensive planning goals.

- Public Hearing:
 - Alan Buchanan, 1208 Black Bear Trail, spoke opposed to the amendment, citing voter-approved referenda supporting public ownership of the facility. He expressed concern that changing the future land use designation undermines public trust and could lead to privatization inconsistent with prior public commitments.
 - Mary McComb, 2100 Elk Street, spoke opposed, stating the existing Institutional/Governmental designation is appropriate and consistent with long-standing City planning. She expressed concern that changing the designation weakens the integrity of the Comprehensive Plan.
 - Mildred Neville, 1709 Jefferson Street, spoke opposed, raising concerns about procedural issues, accuracy of information presented regarding the proposed buyer, and the pace of the process. She urged the Commission to delay action until concerns are resolved.
 - Maryanne Lasheski, 1209 Wisconsin Street, spoke opposed, citing concerns related to environmental impacts, loss of green space, and potential negative effects on nearby residents.
 - Kevin Ramakrishna with Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren, spoke about safeguards within the purchase agreement, including rights of first refusal and provisions intended to maintain the site's continued use as a nursing facility.
 - Eric Olsen, 2025 West River Drive, spoke opposed, emphasizing that the Comprehensive Plan represents a long-term public agreement and that referendum outcomes demonstrate strong public interest in maintaining public ownership and institutional use.
 - Alderperson Jackie Guthrie, District 2, raised concerns about whether the proposed amendment aligns with the City's stated goals of being livable, connected, resilient, and sustainable, and questioned the broader community impacts of the change.
 - Nancy Roppe, 39 Angelo Court, spoke opposed, expressing concern about the impact on emergency services and potential consequences of privatizing healthcare-related facilities.
 - John Pavelski, Portage County Executive, spoke in support of the amendment, citing financial challenges associated with County ownership, the vetting of the proposed buyer, and safeguards in place to ensure

continued operation of the facility.

- Karlene Ferrante, 1324 Portage Street, spoke opposed, stating the applicant had not met the burden of proof required to demonstrate that the amendment is in the public's best interest under the Comprehensive Plan.
- Raymond Cal, Stevens Point, spoke opposed, urging the Commission to honor referendum results and maintain public ownership and institutional designation of the property.
- Dr. Ray Reser, Portage County Board Chair, spoke in support of the amendment, stating that staff findings and recommendations were met and emphasizing that the Plan Commission's role is limited to land use consistency.
- Dave Ladick, County Board Supervisor, 4517 Nickel Avenue, spoke in support of the amendment, stating that staff analysis was thorough, the request is consistent with zoning, and the amendment allows continuity of the existing nursing facility use.
- Alex McCumber, 2633 Helen Street, spoke opposed, stating the amendment was not adequately justified as being in the public interest and expressing concern about long-term land use impacts.

- Discussion:

- Commissioners reiterated differing viewpoints on affordability, public services, parking impacts, and long-term land use flexibility.

- Action:

- Motion: Commissioner Arntsen moves approval of the request to amend the future land use designation of the subject property as presented.
- Second: Commissioner Stroik seconds the motion.

- Vote:

- Aye: Beacom, Rice, Schuler, Stroik, Wiza
- No: Arntsen, Kneebone
- Motion passes, 5-2.

Closing Section:

3. Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned at 6:32 P.M.