



**MINUTES**  
**PLAN COMMISSION**  
**City Hall Forum - 100 State Street, Beloit, WI 53511**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Tuesday, December 6, 2023**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Ramsden called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Commissioners Ramsden, Anderson, Flesch, Jacobsen, Janke, and Councilor Day were present. Commissioners Elliott and Abarca were absent.

**2. MINUTES**

**2.a. Consideration of the minutes of the November 21, 2023 Plan Commission meeting**

Commissioner Jacobsen moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Flesch. Motion prevailed, voice vote (5-0).

**3. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

No public hearings were scheduled for this meeting.

**4. REPORTS**

**4.a. Consideration of the vacation of the alley located between St. Lawrence Avenue, Forest Avenue, Ritsher Street, and Division Street**

Julie Christensen, Community Development Director, presented the staff report and recommendation.

Allison Semrau, 2029 Forest Avenue, stated that she has lived at the property for 30 years. Ms. Semrau said that everyone uses the alley, and there is nothing going on in the alley. She stated she never had an issue or anything stolen off her property. She indicated that she uses the alley to access the back half of her lot. She outlined State law regarding vacations and suggested that the City could not vacate this alley due to her written objection.

Chairperson Ramsden asked how Ms. Semrau uses the alley. Ms. Semrau said she put up a new play set and would not be able to get back there, if there wasn't an alley. She used it to demolish a garage and cut down trees. The neighbors use it to unload their cars.

Ms. Christensen provided an explanation on the State law Ms. Semrau cited. Chairperson Ramsden asked if this applies to the alley. Ms. Christensen said if there is a written objection to the vacation of a street, road, or paved alley, it cannot be vacated. However, there is a separate objection section for unpaved alleys. In that case, if there is a written objection and the alley is the only access to off-street parking

spaces, the alley cannot be vacated. However, in this case, Ms. Semrau has a second access to off-street parking on Forest Avenue. Therefore, you would consider this vacation just like any other application.

Dace Zoltners, 2058 St. Lawrence Avenue, stated that she has issues with the alley being open because she has to pick up alcohol bottles and empty shotgun shells. Ms. Zoltners said the alley is a nuisance and causes problems in the neighborhood.

Linda Slatter, 1330 St. Lawrence Avenue, explained that she has owned the property since 1977. Ms. Slatter said she has never had an issue with the alley. Ms. Slatter said they would have never been able to get the swing set into the back yard. She objects to closing the alley.

Yolanda Peer, 2030 St. Lawrence Avenue, said that she has had vandalism to her property and someone threw a rock at the window and broke it. Ms. Peer stated that she had a lock on her shed, and it was broken off. She said she would like the alley closed because people walk through the alley and litter in her yard.

Donald Daniels, 2052 St. Lawrence Avenue, stated that he has lived at the property since 1965. Mr. Daniels said people throw their alcohol bottles on their property. He said people harass the neighbor's dogs.

Allison Semrau, 2029 Forest Avenue, stated that even if they close the alley, people are still going to come through the alley, and that happens at all properties. Having the alley is a second access to their property. Ms. Semrau said that she feels that the stuff that is going on in the alley is going to continue happening regardless if it is closed or not.

Commissioner Anderson asked how the alley gets divided up if the vacation is approved. Ms. Christensen said that the property owners each get their half of the alley, and Alliant Energy will continue to have access to get back there. Owners could install fences along their new property line. Commissioner Anderson asked if closing it would change any of their concerns. Ms. Christensen said they could block off the portion of property they will get as part of the alley vacation.

Commissioner Anderson asked what is the greater good of closing the alley. Ms. Christensen said generally we don't consider an alley vacation unless a petition was submitted by the neighbors. Commissioner Anderson asked if they were to build a neighborhood today, would they build an alley. Ms. Christensen said that she does not think there is a development trend for building alleys in new neighborhoods in Beloit.

Commissioner Flesch asked what percentage of the neighbors petitioned to vacate the alley. Ms. Christensen said mostly it was the property owners on St. Lawrence, and 11 of 17 property owners signed the petition.

Chairperson Ramsden stated that all of the reasons make sense and he agrees with those that are in favor of it and against it. Chairperson Ramsden said that he agrees to leave the alley because it has always been there, and the reason he would want it removed is because everyone wants the alley closed off.

Commissioner Flesch moved to approve the vacation of the alley, seconded by Commissioner Anderson. Motion prevailed, roll call vote (5-0).

**5. STATUS REPORT ON PRIOR PLAN COMMISSION ITEMS**


Ms. Christensen updated the Plan Commission on actions taken by City Council related to an item previously reviewed by Plan Commission.

**6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Julie Christensen outlined the future agenda items.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Flesch made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Anderson at 7:47 PM. Motion carried, voice vote (5-0).

  
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Mike Ramsden, Chairperson