

**MINUTES**  
**PLAN COMMISSION**  
**City Hall Forum - 100 State Street, Beloit, WI 53511**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Wednesday, September 18, 2024**

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

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

**2. MINUTES**

Commissioner Winkelmann made a motion to approve the Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Abarca. Motion carried, voice vote (5-0).

Chairperson Ramsden indicated that they would be moving item 4b, Final Plat for Prairie Corners to following item 3a.

**3. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**3.a. Consideration of Resolution 2024-028 approving an Extraterritorial Preliminary Plat of Prairie Corners in the Town of Beloit**

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

Commissioner Winkelmann asked about the city water being supplied to the township and if that is typical. Ms. Christensen confirmed that it is, noting that the city acquired the water utility from Alliant Energy, which has historically served areas beyond the city limits, including parts of the Town of Beloit. The Water Resources Department has been collaborating with engineers on this project to ensure everything is executed properly.

Commissioner Winkelmann asked if this was uncommon. Ms. Christensen responded that they will need an easement for the water, which isn't something you see frequently, but it aligns with how the water utility operates. Unlike the city's sewer ordinance, which mandates connections and prohibits service beyond our boundaries, the water situation is different. Alliant Energy formerly provided service to the Town of Turtle, Town of Beloit, and City of Beloit.

Chairperson Ramsden opened and closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Flesch made a motion to approve the Extraterritorial Preliminary Plat, seconded by Commissioner Winkelmann. Motion carried, voice vote (5-0).

- 3.b. **Consideration of an Extraterritorial Final Plat of Prairie Corners in the Town of Beloit**  
Community Development Director, Julie Christensen, presented the staff report and recommendation.

Commissioner Winkelmann made a motion to approve an Extraterritorial Final Plat, seconded by Commissioner Flesch. Motion carried, voice vote (5-0).

- 3.c. **Consideration of Ordinance No. 3855 amending the Zoning District Map of the City of Beloit for the property located at 2426 Prairie Ave**  
Community Development Director, Julie Christensen, presented the staff report and recommendation.

Chairperson Ramsden opened and closed the public hearing.

Chairperson Ramsden expressed his concerns about designating this property as commercial given its surroundings, and he indicated that he would be voting against the proposal. He felt this property is more appropriate for residential.

Commissioner Elliott made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 3855, seconded by Commissioner Abarca. Motion carried, roll call vote (4-1).

- 3.d. **Consideration of Planned Unit Development (PUD) Master Land Use Plan for the property located on 3500 Eagles Ridge Drive**  
Community Development Director, Julie Christensen, presented the staff report and recommendation.

Chairperson Ramsden asked Ms. Christensen whether the staff report indicates that the development requires two access points, and if this is mandated by Beloit ordinance. Ms. Christensen stated that the PUD requires every development to have two access points, which also serves the purpose of facilitating fire response. Chairperson Ramsden said that it rules out the single access point off Gateway Boulevard. Ms. Christensen said yes it does.

Commissioner Winkelmann noted that the ordinance does not prohibit having both access points off Gateway Boulevard. Ms. Christensen said that there is still a concern regarding a long dead end if both access points are situated there.

Chairperson Ramsden opened the public hearing.

Ian Owen, 1725 Raven Drive, a five-year resident of Eagles Ridge subdivision, conveyed concerns shared by fellow residents regarding the anticipated increase in residents and vehicles, which could pose safety issues at the intersection of Eagle Ridge Drive and Gateway Boulevard. He pointed out that visibility at that intersection is already compromised due to the elevation of the property.

Additionally, he raised concerns about the street proposed as part of the development, predicting it would lead to increased traffic and noise on Eagles Ridge Drive. He mentioned that the subdivision feels there is insufficient parking, contributing to congestion, noise, and light pollution. Mr. Owen expressed worries about environmental impacts, citing an inadequate buffer between the new development and existing properties. Given the limited information provided during the presentation, residents are requesting increased setbacks and enhanced landscaping to create a clearer separation between the two areas.

Ryan Koehn, residing at 3701 Prairie Falcon Pass, expressed ongoing concerns about the city's failure to address certain needs, particularly regarding incomplete sidewalks and bike paths. He highlighted the safety issues related to traffic on those streets, noting that he and his wife often have to leave the sidewalk to access public pathways. While they appreciate the green space in the area, the potential increase in density raises concerns about preserving that space for local residents. He suggested that there is room for developers to create their own parks to enhance the development, if it proceeds.

Jennifer Gunderson, residing at 3734 Prairie Falcon Pass, mentioned that she and her husband often have to walk in the street because there are no sidewalks connecting to the park. She expressed concern that the proposed development would lead to more families walking in the street to reach the park. Additionally, she raised issues about potholes on the road, worrying that increased traffic may encourage drivers to use the neighborhood as a shortcut, which poses safety risks. She believes there is significant potential to better utilize the existing space and that adding more people too quickly would worsen the current problems.

Solomon Rudy, residing at 3750 Eagles Ridge Drive, mentioned that he lives near the end of Gateway. He has observed an increase in traffic since the industrial development began, noting that many drivers take shortcuts by going east off Gateway to avoid traffic lights, particularly when heading to places like Amazon or Spraytek. He is concerned that the eastern driveway portion of the development will become the primary route for those units, causing residents to cut through the neighborhood to reach their jobs. This is especially concerning given the heavy traffic on Gateway, noting that making left turns across traffic during rush hour is particularly challenging. He also expressed concerns about the bike path not connecting to the park.

Terri Rousseau, 1602 Hawks Pass, expressed her agreement with the previous speakers and wanted to emphasize that the subdivision is still growing. She believes that adding such density to the area, especially considering the size of the completed subdivision, exceeds what the community can handle. Regarding safety, she highlighted concerns about the intersection at Gateway Boulevard and Eagles Ridge Drive, noting the challenges of navigating traffic from both directions, along with the presence of semi-trucks and speeding vehicles. With three other driveways from existing apartment

complexes in close proximity, she feels this would further complicate the intersection's safety. Additionally, she pointed out that the development would intrude on the privacy of current residents, with new buildings overlooking their backyards, decks, and patios. She believes this development would negatively impact the peace, well-being, and safety of both current and future residents of the subdivision.

James Robertson, residing at 3725 Golden Eagle Drive since 2011, remarked that he has witnessed significant development in the area, especially before the arrival of Amazon and Spraytek. He has observed an increase in truck traffic trying to navigate through residential streets, and noted that there has been an installation of "no truck" signs on roads that used to be country lanes recently. He expressed hesitation about approving any plans without thoroughly evaluating the area's topography and suggested that officials should drive down those roads to understand the current conditions and sidewalk availability. He pointed out that during winter, snow removal services often prioritize other roads, leaving his street as a potential ice hazard. He also questioned when the development would address the need for more entrances for incoming residents, emphasizing that increased traffic remains his primary concern.

Chris Day, The Alexander Company, shared that they are a second-generation real estate development and property management firm based in Madison, Wisconsin. He and his partner Collin have been with the company for 10 and 20 years, respectively. As a full-service development and property management group, they provide in-house services that encompass property development, construction oversight, design, and serving as the architect of record for their projects. Once construction is completed, they maintain an in-house operations team that includes on-site property management and maintenance staff, along with compliance personnel and support roles at their corporate office.

Batterman's will serve as their site engineer, and they plan to hire local contractors from the community. The company has three primary goals for this project: addressing the lack of quality affordable workforce housing in the community, enhancing workforce retention, and supporting low-income housing initiatives. Mr. Day explained that they are seeking a PUD to allow for multiple buildings on site. They have considered the appropriate density transition starting at Gateway, with the apartment buildings across the street leading into the new neighborhood. Their concept involves two-story buildings with 12 to 16 units each, designed to transition sensitively into the surrounding single-family homes.

In the second phase, they plan to collaborate with local home builders to layout future lots for single-family and duplex-style units on approximately five acres as they move toward the new neighborhood. Their aim is to match the existing neighborhood in terms of building types, styles, and exterior finishes.

Tim Anderson, a resident of Eagles Ridge, expressed his concerns about the numerous open lots along Eagles Ridge Drive and how this development could alter the character of the neighborhood. He urged others to look beyond the company's website and read external reviews of The Alexander Company, as he believes they are largely negative and that many others share his sentiments.

Chairperson Ramsden closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Elliott believes that more work needs to be done before the project can move forward and inquired about the timeline for when construction would begin. Ms. Christensen indicated that he would need to consult the developer. Mr. Day responded that their plan is to secure financing with the goal of breaking ground early next spring. Commissioner Elliott acknowledged the need for housing but expressed concern that the developers have not taken the time to address the community's concerns.

Commissioner Elliott then made a motion to deny the zoning change for the PUD, which was seconded by Commissioner Winkelmann.

He noted that Gateway Boulevard provides a separation between the current apartment complexes and Eagles Ridge. While he recognizes the housing demand in Beloit, he suggested that there may be other suitable locations for development. He is open to considering those options, but feels that starting construction in the spring leaves too little time to adequately address the concerns raised.

Commissioner Flesch noted the concerns regarding park and play area accessibility for residents, emphasizing the need for onsite recreational facilities rather than those located farther away. Mr. Day responded that while they have considered this in the past, they prefer the parks to be city-owned and plan to discuss this with city staff.

Commissioner Flesch also mentioned that a traffic impact analysis will be necessary. Ms. Christensen indicated that this has not been addressed thus far. Commissioner Flesch recommended that they conduct such an analysis, as it could influence the requirements for the intersection at Gateway and Eagles Ridge. He emphasized the importance of considering the existing complexes on the west side of Gateway Boulevard, along with their access points and proximity to the intersection.

Commissioner Abarca shared his traffic concerns, mentioning that after examining Google Earth, he thinks the road may not be sufficiently wide to accommodate the increase in residents. He highlighted that exiting onto Gateway Boulevard, particularly with the other apartments across the street, could create substantial traffic congestion. He is in favor of conducting a traffic impact study and suggested postponing the item to allow for further evaluation and solutions.

Commissioners asked if there would be a charge for parking, and Chris Day indicated there would not be. In response to a question from the Commission, Chris Day explained the difference between Section 42 and Section 8 housing.

Ms. Christensen added that Section 42 is a subsidy for developers, where tax credits are sold and invested into the project. In return for these credits, developers must rent to individuals within a specified income range, which for this development is generally higher than what we've seen in developments like those on Sixth Street or the former YMCA site. While it is considered low-income housing, it is not at the lowest income levels.

Commissioner Elliott expressed concerns about how the new building might impact nearby property values. Mr. Day responded that they have not found any studies, data, or research indicating that a multi-family housing development negatively affects home values in the area.

Chairperson Ramsden stated that one of his responsibilities on the Plan Commission has been to listen to the concerns of other citizens, and he has noted significant opposition to the project from the neighborhood. While he is not against increasing the affordable housing stock in the city, he feels that when enough residents express worries about their property values and quality of life, it is important to take those concerns seriously. Therefore, he will voting against the PUD.

Commissioner Winkelmann proposed tabling the item to allow for further review, including a traffic impact analysis, additional information on a play area and park, input from Public Works regarding off-site issues, and a closer examination of parking numbers.

Commission Elliott agreed to withdraw his motion to deny, and Commissioner Winkelmann withdrew his second.

Motion to layover was made by Commissioner Winkelmann the item to allow for further review, including a traffic impact analysis, additional information on a play area and park, input from Public Works regarding off-site issues, and a closer examination of parking numbers. Commissioner Abarca seconded the motion. Motion carried, voice vote 5-0.

3.e. **Consideration of Ordinance No 3854 amending the Zoning District Map of the City of Beloit for the property located at 3500 Eagles Ridge Drive**

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

Chairperson Ramsden opened and closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Flesch made a motion to lay over the Ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Jacobsen. Motion carried, voice vote (5-0).

**4. REPORTS**

**4.a. Consideration of a four-lot Certified Survey Map for the properties located at 3500 and 3600 Eagles Ridge Drive**

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

Commissioner Abarca made a motion to lay over the CSM, seconded by Commissioner Elliott. Motion carried, voice vote (5-0).

**4.b. Consideration of a Resolution 2024-027 approving a two-lot Certified Survey Map for the property located at 2909 Ford Street**

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

Commissioner Winkelmann made a motion to approve the two-lot CSM, seconded by Commissioner Flesch. Motion carried, voice vote (5-0).

**4.c. Consideration of a request to annex 1990 E Bradley Street into the City of Beloit from the Town of Turtle**

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

Commissioner Abarca made a motion to approve the annexation, seconded by Commissioner Flesch. Motion carried, voice vote (5-0).

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

Julie Christensen provided an update on items previously reviewed by the Commission.

**6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Julie Christensen outlined the future agenda items. The next meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2024.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Flesch made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Abarca at 8:57PM. Motion carried, voice vote (5-0).

  
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Mike Ramsden, Chairperson