

TOWN OF CRESCENT PLAN COMMISSION

February 21, 2024 Minutes

7:00 PM, Crescent Town Hall

Call to Order:

Chairman Pazdernik called the meeting to order at 7:12 at the Crescent Town Hall. The meeting was properly posted and distributed in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meeting law and the facility is handicap accessible.

Committee members present:

Michael Pazdernik, Chair; Jonathan Jacobson (acting Secretary), Niina Threlfell Baum, and Connie Anderson. Absent were David Holperin, Jim Altenburg, and Lindsay Novak.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Threlfell Baum. Second by Anderson. Ayes: all. Nays: none.

Approval of February 17, 2024 Minutes:

With two minor edits to be made by acting Secretary Jacobson, a motion was made to approve the January 17, 2024 minutes by Threlfell Baum, second by Pazdernik. Ayes: all. Nays: none.

Discussion/Decision regarding reducing Town lot size below the current 5 acre minimum:

Chair Pazdernik kicked off the discussion by outlining current Town restrictions and where discussion left off during the February 17 meeting, then opened discussion for attending residents to share.

Daniel and Jodie Aguilar were in attendance to share their perspective on parcel size. Using the Oneida County GIS Mapping service, they had conducted a review of a significant number of properties in the Town, along Crescent Road and in other areas, and commented on a large number of properties that are less than 5 acres in size. Discussion followed that many of those properties had been grandfathered in prior to the 5-acre minimum established in 2006.

Aguilar's also questioned the splitting of a larger acreage tract into smaller parcels and what constituted a subdivision vs a private owner looking to split their property. Discussion followed regarding potential inequity in lot sizes if a developer should be allowed to develop smaller lots in a subdivision, than a private property owner could.

Threlfell-Baum stated that she believes there to be more equity if the minimum lot size applied to both private property owners and any future subdivision development. Jacobson agreed, then read from the current Ordinance defining both Major and Minor Land Divisions (Section 13.7.01) to add clarity to the discussion.

Pazdernik, conducted a non-binding, verbal survey during the meeting, asking Commission members to state their opinion on what they believed the minimum lot size should be. The ad hoc survey resulted in split opinions of size with Anderson and Pazdernik preferring larger sized lots than did Threlfell-Baum and Jacobson. Jacobson referenced a subdivision he had lived in previously where lot sizes were $\frac{3}{4}$ acre and larger, with his observation being that the natural aesthetic was very pleasant, natural-feeling, and held abundant space for trees and natural features. Discussion followed regarding the natural, Northwoods aesthetic that Crescent residence want and expect—aesthetic that the Plan Commission prioritized in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan—and how minimum lot sizes (whether large or small) would impact this priority.

Following additional discussion on lot size and protocol for moving the conversation to the Town Board level, Jacobson made the following motion: "Motion that the Plan Commission recommend a 1.5 acre minimum to the Town Board that would apply to both private property owners and future subdivision developers alike." During discussion both Anderson and Pazdernik stated they believe that size to be too low however, Threlfell-Baum seconded the Motion. Given the split, and the acknowledgement that the Town Board will make the final decision on minimum lot size, Pazdernik agreed with the Motion while Anderson maintained her dissent. With a 3-1 vote, the Motion will be recommended to the Town Board for consideration in a future meeting. It was also determined that an Addendum should be added to these Minutes identifying potential Pros/Cons of larger or smaller minimum lot sizes that were discussed during the meeting, to provide the Town Board with additional reasoning for consideration.

Addendum follows below.

Motion to adjourn:

Motion to adjourn by Threlfell-Baum, second by Anderson. Ayes: all. Nays: none.
Meeting adjourned at 8:07.

Submitted by: Jonathan Jacobson, Acting Secretary

ADDENDUM

Reasons for minimum lot sizes OF 1.5 acres:

Lower cost for land supports affordability (a component of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan)
More homes on smaller lots would support the Town tax base
Families can pass property on to their children and help them get a lot for building their home
Providing more options and flexibility for private properties owners
Future subdivisions would be aesthetically pleasing at 1.5 acres between parcels

Reasons for minimum lot sizes LARGER than 1.5 acres:

More undeveloped green space maintains rural atmosphere (a component of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan)
Likely to curtail much interest in subdivision development—to maintain rural aesthetic
Reduce number of potential new homes on smaller lots
Potentially reduced pressure on road infrastructure