



The **Plan Commission Committee Meeting** of the **Village of Birchwood** was held on **Thursday, October 8, 2026**, at **5:30 p.m.** at the Birchwood Village Hall, **101 N Main Street, Birchwood, WI 54817.**

MINUTES

1. VanGilder called Meeting to Order (meeting is recorded)
2. Pledge of Allegiance-Recited
3. Roll Call -**Present**—R. VanGilder, B. Boatman, S. Roppe, G. Hayes-- **Absent**-B. Darkow
4. Current Agenda
 - a. Motion by VanGilder 2nd by Hayes to approve current agenda. Carried 4-0.
5. Public Comments
 - a. Citizen comments on agenda items only (3 minutes per person)- L. Zillmer voiced concern over developing the industrial park such as protecting the area for a possible second well and the wellhead protection plan. Zillmer doesn't feel taxpayer funds should be used to develop the Industrial Park.
6. Northwest Regional Planning – Sheldon Johnson presented a packet for review.
 - a. Discussion on the benefits, costs, and process of conducting a Low-to-Moderate Community wide Income (LMI) Survey for the Village of Birchwood to qualify for CDBG funding to connect the water loop. Sheldon explained that Beffa has a customer residential database from the garbage services which would be used to conduct the survey in a strategic manner. Johnson didn't recommend doing an online survey. He commented that Beffa felt Village staff could send out the surveys. Discussion on the timeline for the application process. Johnson explained that the numbers are driven by the responses from the survey. The CDBG grant pays 2/3 grant of the project up to a million. NWRP fee to assist with the application/grant would be approximately \$5000-\$8000 and depends on how much of the work is done in house. He explained that if awarded the grant, there is probably another \$30,000 in administration fees. Boatman asked for a written estimate from NWRP. Motion by VanGilder, 2nd by Roppe to send to the BOT the approval of going forward with the Low to Moderate Income survey. Carried 4-0.
7. Industrial Park Development Discussion
 - a. Discuss long-term development goals for the Industrial Park and determine whether utility extensions support the Village's vision. -VanGilder stated that the first part of the puzzle is to get the utilities into the Industrial Park. This would close the water loop and provide redundancy in the system. The DNR has recommended the Village do this. The closed loop would ensure the tower wouldn't be shut off from the well if there was a break in the system. VanGilder explained that closing the loop could open up an opportunity to build affordable homes. VanGilder suggested possibly constructing manufactured mobile homes

with a concrete surface and garage, duplexes or townhomes. Roppe added that using a developer for affordable housing vs low-income vs what Will Wallace is doing may be another option. VanGilder explained that the lots could be sold individually with a covenant to ensure uniformity. VanGilder suggested lotting it off for affordable housing for the Village after the utilities are installed. Johnson recommended focusing on the water loop and the safety of the entire community when applying for the grant. Roppe added that the main objective is to close the loop for redundancy in the water system, it just happens to go through the Industrial Park. Discussion on the placement of sewer lines. VanGilder added that Fee doesn't think a lift station would be needed. The engineer will look into this to make sure that is correct and to determine what needs to be done before any project numbers can be determined. Motion by VanGilder 2nd by Boatman to send the approval of the water and sewer line along with the lotting of the Industrial Park and turning it into a residential area to the BOT. Carried 4-0.

8. Water Main Looping Project Discussion

- a. Discuss public infrastructure benefits of looping the dead-end water main near LaPoint Drive. -The DNR mandates a water loop if a potential water main break would affect more than 25 customers. See discussion on previous agenda item. Motion by VanGilder, 2nd by Roppe to recommend the pursuit of the infrastructure funding as an opportunity for the water main looping and utility extension. Carried 4-0.

9. Birchwood Lakes Stormwater Concept Review - Christopher Drost

- a. Review regional stormwater retention concepts proposed for commercial storage development and evaluate compatibility with the Village's long-term goals-Drost explained that according to his illustrations the natural water flow will go to the West and South. Drost feels that the ¼ acre South and East of the Easement and new road is the logical place to run the stormwater. Drost asked the Board to gift or charge a small fee for them to receive the land. Drost would take care of the excavating costs. He added that their plan all depends on what the Village plans to do with the Industrial Park. Eric (MSA) agreed that a retention pond will be needed and the area Drost suggested is close to where he would recommend it be placed. He commented that if Drost is willing to do the excavation and construction of the pond that will encapsulate 13 lots plus a roadway through what the Villages has- and make the pond appropriately sized for future development- it is a win for the Village as well. He added that the DNR does look favorably on a single pond vs many ponds. From an engineering perspective he feels it does pay to have a regional pond. VanGilder agreed that if it benefits both parties, that would be great. Drost stated they want to wait to find out what the Village is planning to do before starting the pond. Eric explained that typically Drost would do the excavation and construction of the pond, but the Village would retain ownership and maintain it. Drost will inform his group that the proposed plan is for the Village to have 13- 10,000 sq ft lots to help determine the correct size of the pond.

10. Blue Hills Investments

- a. Discussion and Recommendation regarding Blue Hills Investments Development Agreement.-VanGilder explained that Blue Hills bought 13 lots with the agreement they build 2 homes a year. They have already built on the outside lots. Wallus (Blue Hills) doesn't feel that building homes between the existing duplexes are going to sell. The original buyer's agreement stated that the Village could buy the lots back at 90% of the selling price. VanGilder added that this may be an opportunity for the Village to see if the owner of the duplexes would like to build another duplex. A fence could be constructed between the duplexes and homes. VanGilder added that if another TID was created, these 7 remaining lots could be included in it. VanGilder commented that Wallus is still complying with the agreement. Motion by VanGilder, 2nd by Boatman to recommend the BOT pursue looking into purchasing the 7 lots from Blue Hills Investment - no offers to be made until more research is done. Carried 4-0.

11. Tabled--Ehlers Presentation – Josh Low was unable to attend.

- a. Discuss the potential creation of a Tax Increment District (TID) and evaluate whether it could support future development within the Industrial Park area. VanGilder explained that all the projects discussed would be included in a new TID if created. Tabled until next meeting.

12. Motion by Roppe, 2nd by Hayes to adjourn. Carried 4-0.

The meeting is open to the public and is handicapped accessible. Agendas are posted in three public places which are the Village Hall, Pioneer Market and Deli, and Birchwood United States Postal Service Office notice boards, and on the village website www.birchwoodvillage.wi.us to comply with Resolution 175-15.