

Town of Black Earth
Minutes of Plan Commission Meeting
Tuesday, November 4, 2025

1. Meeting call to Order. Plan Commission Chair Steve Parrell called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Plan Commission members Peter Weil, Joann Bennett, Tom Ripp, Bruce Johnson, Pat Helmenstine, and Clerk Stephanie Zwettler were present. Also in attendance: Tom Turk, Barb Parrell, Brenda Kahl, Jason Handel, Scott Parrell, Levi Yoder, Andy Mast, Roger Lane, Terry Frey, Thomas Fogel, Steve and Lisa Fogel, Joas and Rachel Bontrager, Chris Knipfel, Edward O'Connor, Pam Sutcliffe, Howard Weiss, Brenda Pulvermacher, Andrew and Michelle Harris, and Kurtis Hahn.
2. Proof of Posting. An affidavit of posting was provided.
3. Approval of the Agenda. Tom Ripp moved and Peter Weil seconded a motion to approve the agenda. Motion carried. 6-0
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting – October 7, 2025. Joann Bennett moved and Tom Ripp seconded the motion to approve the minutes from October 7, 2025, as presented. Motion carried. 6-0
5. Levi Yoder, north of 5250 John Wilkinson Rd – land division and zoning changes to create (2) residential lots, from FP-35 to RM-16 and RM-8, and include the transfer of (1) development right; Dane Co. Petition Number DCPREZ-2025-12211.

Chair Steve Parrell acknowledged the petition and letters opposing the rezone that had been submitted to Dane County Zoning and asked the audience for comments on the application.

- Andrew Harris stated that Plan Commission members with a density unit should recuse themselves from voting, as he believes this specific TDR violates multiple policies.
- Pam Sutcliffe said the proposal is much better than a subdivision and pointed out that everyone got to have their dream, so why can't they all be good neighbors now??
- Chris Knipfel opposes the rezone and stated that traffic will increase, especially due to the farm business and trucks. He opposes the TDR and driveway and believes the development will negatively impact property values..
- Steve Fogel said the splits are going to be farmed, which aligns with what the proposal aims to do.
- Tom Fogel gave an overview of the history of land splits with area farms and stated that the main reason for selling land in this rezone is to continue preserving farmland and keep the rural character of the area.
- Brenda Pulvermacher inquired about the goals and purposes of the TDR program..
- Plan Commission member Tom Ripp read the TDR section from the Land Use Plan.
- Plan Commission member Peter Weil described the TDR adoption process and the published notices.
- Joas Bontrager explained the reason for the map revision..
- Tom Fogel noted the appraisal cost of his property and doubts that property values will decrease.

- Kurt Hahn commented that he prefers the countryside as it is and was not expecting an Amish community.
- Levi Yoder presented the quoted costs for both driveway options.
- Neighbors discussed road safety for buggies, but also traffic speed, pedestrians walking dogs, and the speed study results posted on the town website..
- Michelle Harris asked if people or customers would be coming to the John Wilkinson Rd farms to conduct business.
- Plan Commission member Pat Helmenstine asked about zoning for a church.
- Roger Lane, Dane County Zoning Administrator, explained the Conditional Use Permit process, why the Rural Mixed zoning district was recommended for this rezone, and answered related questions..
- Plan Commission member Bruce Johnson said that the main goal for farmers is to protect farmland..
- Plan Commission member Tom Ripp agreed that the applicants are trying to farm the land.

Chair Steve Parrell called for a motion. Joann Bennett moved and Tom Ripp seconded the motion to recommend approval of the land division and zoning changes for 33 acres from FP-35 to RM-16 and 11.5 acres from FP-35 to RM-8, and include the transfer of (1) development right on DCPREZ-2025-12211, as revised. Motion carried. 6-0

6. Discussion of future agenda items.

7. Adjourn. Bruce Johnson moved and Tom Ripp seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Zwettler, Town Clerk