

**Special Plan Commission
of the City of Onalaska**

Tuesday, April 9, 2019

1

1 The Special Meeting of the Plan Commission of the City of Onalaska was called to order at 2:00
2 p.m. on Tuesday, April 9, 2019. It was noted that the meeting had been announced and a notice
3 posted at City Hall.

4
5 Roll call was taken, with the following members present: Mayor Joe Chilsen, Ald. Jim Binash,
6 City Engineer Jarrod Holter, Jan Brock, Paul Gleason, Skip Temte, Craig Breitsprecher, Steven
7 Nott

8
9 Also Present: City Administrator Eric Rindfleisch, Planning Manager Katie Aspenson, City
10 Legal Counsel Amanda Jackson, Ald. Diane Wulf

11
12 **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from previous meeting**

13
14 Motion by Ald. Binash, second by Craig, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting
15 (March 26, 2019) as printed and on file in the City Clerk’s Office.

16
17 On voice vote, motion carried.

18
19 **Item 3 – Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per individual)**

20
21 Mayor Chilsen called three times for anyone wishing to provide public input and closed that
22 portion of the meeting.

23
24 **Consideration and possible action on the following items:**

25
26 **Item 4 – Discussion & Consideration of the Onalaska Unified Development Code**
27 **(UDC)/Zone Rewrite Project**

28
29 A. Development of Uses Table:

- 30 1. Propose Draft Principal Uses
31 2. Propose Draft Accessory Uses
32 3. Discuss Use Definitions – Existing vs. Needed
33 4. Discuss Conditional Uses – Potential for Permitted with Standards

34
35 Katie said Rita Trapp and Jeff Miller of HKGi will be leading this afternoon’s work session.

36
37 Rita said it would be helpful to put all the uses in the same table so that one may see how uses
38 are applied across the various districts. Rita noted commission members had received copies of
39 the Principal Uses Table. Rita said she wants to address if the correct uses are identified, noting
40 there are instances in the existing code where there are definitions for uses, and other instances
41 where there are none. Rita said she also wants to discuss whether or not standards are needed for
42 uses.

Reviewed 4/16/19 by Jarrod Holter

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43
44 Rita noted the city's current definition of a Principal Use is as follows: "*The main use of land or*
45 *building as distinguished from subordinate or accessory use.*" An Accessory Use is defined as
46 "*A subordinate building or use which is located on the same lot on which the principal building*
47 *or use is situated and which is reasonably necessary and incidental to the conduct of the primary*
48 *use of such building or main use, when permitted by district regulations.*" Rita said items such
49 as swimming pools and fences are Accessory Uses, and Principal Uses are the primary reason
50 why someone is utilizing the property. Rita said Plan Commission members will receive a table
51 at the next meeting with all the uses that will be discussed today. That table will identify where
52 the uses would be recommended to be permitted or conditional permitted, with standards.

53
54 Regarding Draft Principal Uses, Rita said uses are currently listed in every district. One cannot
55 easily see how uses are different between districts. It is cumulative in some districts, meaning
56 one must look back at a different district to see if a use is allowed. Current lists are very
57 detailed.

58
59 Craig asked Rita if she is talking about underlying zones regarding looking back at a prior use.

60
61 Rita cited the example of the B-2 District, noting it says "*Any use allowed in the B-1 District,*"
62 which means one must look back at the B-1 District.

63
64 Rita said HKGi is proposing consolidating uses into tables, which have been updated utilizing
65 the American Planning Association's Land Based Classification System. HKGi is proposing
66 seven categories to group uses of similar type, and uses are at a higher level with more
67 information provided in Definitions. Rita cited the example of having "Manufacturing, Heavy,"
68 or "Manufacturing, Light" instead of listing in the table every potential type of light
69 manufacturing.

70
71 The seven categories under Draft Principal Uses are as follows:

- 72
- 73 • Residential (Household Living, Group Living, Lodging)
 - 74 • Public, Social and Health Care
 - 75 • Commercial (three subcategories)
 - 76 • Manufacturing, Trade & Warehousing
 - 77 • Arts, Entertainment & Recreation
 - 78 • Natural Resources & Agricultural
 - 79 • Utilities & Transportation
- 80

81 Rita said she is asking Plan Commission members the following questions:

- 82
- 83 • Regarding uses, do the types/categories make sense? Is there anything missing?

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- 84 • Are more definitions needed?
85 • Regarding use specific standards, which uses require standards?

86
87 Rita addressed Residential – Household Living and said HKGi is proposing the following uses:

- 88
89 • Dwelling, single family
90 • Dwelling, manufactured home
91 • Dwelling, mobile home
92 • Dwelling, two-family
93 • Dwelling, zero lot line
94 • Dwelling, attached townhouses or rowhouses
95 • Dwelling, apartment mixed use
96 • Dwelling, live/work
97 • Dwelling, apartment
98 • Planned Residential Developments such as cluster developments, garden apartments
99 • Existing residences

100
101 Craig asked what the difference is between a mixed-use apartment and an apartment.

102
103 Rita said an apartment mixed-use is a building that has both some type of commercial or office
104 use and also apartments. Rita said a definition for this use will be necessary.

105
106 Steven asked how existing residences is different from all of the above defined ones.

107
108 Rita said the existing residences use would be if someone had an existing single-family home
109 located, for example, in a manufacturing or a commercial district. Rita said they are sometimes
110 zoned, and they are allowed to continue in their current place. Rita added this use likely should
111 be defined.

112
113 Paul asked Rita to define for him what she considers a manufactured home to be.

114
115 Jeff said mobile homes are defined by Housing and Urban Development as homes constructed
116 prior to the early 1970s. Anything after that time needs to meet the certifications until they are
117 referred to or defined as manufactured homes.

118
119 Paul noted there are several hybrids of modular homes that can be assembled and cannot be
120 transported, and said he assumes manufactured homes still are defined as structures with wheels
121 underneath them.

122
123 Rita said manufactured homes and mobile homes have very specific definitions and must meet
124 criteria, adding that anything else likely is considered a single-family dwelling.

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125
126 Jeff said an attached townhome in theory could be considered modular.
127
128 A question was asked if Dwelling, live/work is the same as Dwelling, apartment mixed use.
129
130 Rita said the two could be similar, but generally Dwelling live/work is tying the actual living
131 space and the working space together. Rita said they are internally in the same space, and there
132 might be a standard stating 60 percent of the space must be devoted to work space and the
133 remainder to living space. By comparison, a mixed used might be unrelated to each other, such
134 as a café on the ground floor and apartments above it. Live/work means the living and working
135 part are related to each other.
136
137 It was noted this is a way to specifically talk about home occupation.
138
139 Rita said it could be and noted home occupations still would have other things because a single-
140 family dwelling would not have a home occupation in it.
141
142 Jeff said it likely is possible to define apartment mixed use and live/work in the same use.
143
144 Ald. Binash asked if a home in which an individual operating a daycare in his/her home be
145 considered live/work. Ald. Binash also noted the Plan Commission recently approved allowing
146 an individual to give massages in her home, and he asked if this would be defined as live/work.
147
148 Rita cited rowhouses attached, townhomes, and apartments as live/work examples that have both
149 uses. Rita told Ald. Binash she believes he is speaking of single-family homes, and she said it
150 would be called a home occupation. Rita said Ald. Binash's examples would be considered
151 accessory uses, and HKGi would differentiate between them.
152
153 Craig said he realizes there will be standards recommended and/or requested in some of the
154 categories. However, Craig also asked how far the city may go with standards before it becomes
155 arbitrary and somewhat capricious.
156
157 Amanda said live/work is someone residing where they work, and a home occupation is where
158 someone works where he/she live. Amanda said that while the city does not wish to
159 overregulate, there must be minimum standards to allow the live/work use.
160
161 Rita said HKGi believes it is important that there are standards that are measurable and
162 enforceable. Rita said she and Jeff are looking to the Plan Commission to ensure that standards
163 are not excessive.
164
165 Amanda said that prior to the enactment of Act 67, the city would look at features such as
166 landscaping and parking that effect the health, safety, and welfare of citizens.

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167
168 Craig said his focus was more on, how does the city establish an appropriate percentage of space
169 to be devoted to each, and also what gives the city the right to do that as opposed to a property
170 owner.

171
172 Paul said he can see a situation in which a mixed-use building could hold commercial, residential
173 apartments, and larger live/work units.

174
175 Ald. Binash cited the example of a citizen putting cement in the entire backyard and also
176 constructing a garage. The runoff went directly into a neighbor's yard, where it cannot be
177 absorbed into the ground, and Ald. Binash asked if this is something that needs to be addressed
178 as to how much one may do in his/her backyard to prevent something like that occurring
179 somewhere else.

180
181 Rita said the example which Ald. Binash had just mentioned is on the list of discussion points.

182
183 Rita addressed Residential – Group Living and said HKGi is proposing the following uses:

- 184
- 185 • Apartment hotel
 - 186 • Assisted living facility
 - 187 • Community living arrangements (includes child welfare agencies, group foster homes for
188 children, community-based residential facilities)
 - 189 • Care and residential service facilities and such similar facilities as defined under Chapter
190 50 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, except community-based residential facilities
 - 191 • Fraternity or sorority
 - 192 • Hospice
 - 193 • Lodging House
- 194

195 Rita said HKGi suggests that most of the uses be defined. The city currently only has standards
196 listed for care and service residential facilities. Rita said the Plan Commission might want to
197 look at standards for other uses depending on where they are allowed to be.

198
199 Paul asked how an apartment hotel differs from a lodging house.

200
201 Jeff's answer was inaudible on the recording.

202
203 Paul said it appears to him one might be larger than the other.

204
205 City Administrator Rindfleisch said it is based on residency versus non-residency, noting that
206 someone staying in an apartment hotel would have a short-term residency in a hotel versus a
207 pass-through and no one establishing a residency.

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208

209 Jeff addressed senior living, noting that codes oftentimes do not call it out specifically. Jeff said
210 HKGi did not want to eliminate the care and service residential facilities, which are included in
211 the city's current code, and told commission members it has many definitions of different types
212 of housing, including senior housing. Jeff said he and Rita agree this needs to be broken out
213 more.

214

215 Ald. Binash asked if hostels would be covered under tourist homes.

216

217 Rita said hostels likely are covered under Residential – Lodging, which includes the following
218 proposed uses:

219

- 220 • Bed and breakfast establishment
- 221 • Hotel
- 222 • Motel
- 223 • Nonprofit lodging facilities for patients and families
- 224 • Small hotel or inn
- 225 • Tourist home

226

227 Rita promised to see if hostels are covered.

228

229 Paul asked what the difference is between a motel and a hotel.

230

231 Rita said it relates to where a guest's car is parked in relation to where his/her room is located.
232 Motel guests drive their cars up to the door of their room, and hotel guests park in the parking lot
233 and walk to their room.

234

235 Paul said there are motels with exterior doors facing parking and interior hallways, and he asked
236 if it would be considered to be a hotel.

237

238 Jeff said motels typically have separate entries.

239

240 Rita asked if hotels and motels need to be treated differently.

241

242 Jeff's comments were inaudible on the recording.

243

244 Rita addressed Public, Social and Health Care, and said HKGi is recommending the following
245 uses:

246

- 247 • Ambulatory surgery, urgent care or outpatient treatment center
- 248 • Cemetery, interment or cremation

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- 249 • Clinic, medical or therapeutic
- 250 • Club, lodge or meeting place of a noncommercial nature
- 251 • Correctional facility
- 252 • Day care facility (child or adult)
- 253 • Diagnostic or medical laboratory
- 254 • Funeral home
- 255 • Hospital
- 256 • Social, cultural or recreational facility
- 257 • Governmental administrative building
- 258 • Nursing, supervision, and other inpatient rehabilitative services
- 259 • Place of worship
- 260 • School, college/university/trade
- 261 • School, elementary or secondary
- 262 • School, nursery or preschool
- 263 • Social assistance, welfare, and charitable services

264

265 Mayor Chilsen inquired about how methadone clinics should be categorized.

266

267 Jeff said they would fall under Clinic, medical or therapeutic.

268

269 Amanda asked where pharmacy would fall.

270

271 Rita said pharmacy falls under another category called “Convenience” or “Pharmacy Store”
272 (under Commercial). Rita said she and Jeff have moved around Medical a few times, and that
273 while some parts of Medical are institutional, some are not. Rita said having them in the same
274 location is helpful.

275

276 Steven asked if perhaps cremation services better aligns with Cemetery or Funeral Home.

277

278 Rita said she does not believe the service part – meaning, the act of doing the cremation – is
279 included.

280

281 Craig noted cremations have evolved into part of the funeral home performance.

282

283 Rita said the actual act of having the cremating the deceased’s remains generally does not occur
284 inside.

285

286 Craig said it does, noting there are locations in Onalaska and La Crosse where cremations are
287 occurring in the same building and on the same property.

288

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289 Rita said she and Jeff will further examine whether all the uses should be within the same
290 district.

291

292 Craig said they are within the same district regardless and it is a matter of determining which
293 category they go under within that district.

294

295 Skip noted that the two categories HKGi has for Ambulatory and Clinic are combined together in
296 the same place. Skip noted Gundersen Health System in Onalaska is a clinic that also has Urgent
297 Care in the same location where the clinic is.

298

299 Jeff said a small clinic would be appropriate in the downtown district. Jeff's additional
300 comments regarding Ambulatory were inaudible.

301

302 Skip asked if HKGi considers the Gundersen facility located in Festival Foods a clinic.

303

304 Jeff said yes, noting it is located within the store.

305

306 Rita said she and Jeff need to look at scale differences.

307

308 Skip noted Festival Foods stores have banks and clinics in them.

309

310 Katie noted those particular structures are zoned Light Industrial, which allows the
311 aforementioned uses outright permitted. Katie said the goal is to move away from having a
312 Light Industrial use and instead have a Commercial use that better defines what is appropriate
313 and what is not.

314

315 Craig asked if perhaps it is more appropriate to examine use rather than scale.

316

317 Rita said yes, but only to some degree. Rita said the use needs to be further defined when HKGi
318 believes there needs to be a definition of scale. Rita said, "When we go to apply these and we
319 think, 'I don't want to have that scale in this district,' then we need to better define the use so we
320 can explain what the difference is and be really specific."

321

322 Craig said it can be something in the conditions.

323

324 Rita said it could be in the conditions or in line items.

325

326 City Administrator Rindfleisch cited the example of Better Hearing Center, which is located on
327 Main Street, and said it would be zoned differently than if a full Urgent Care facility were there.
328 City Administrator Rindfleisch noted parking and access are different issues and said he believes
329 it is a question of scale. City Administrator Rindfleisch said, "The use of it would be the same
330 inside, but how do you define that scale difference of what ... You wouldn't mind having a small

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331 office with a couple cars a day versus a large office with multiple vehicles and multiple stops and
332 traffic concerns.”

333

334 Craig told City Administrator Rindfleisch he believes it goes back to primary use and said there
335 are a lot of uses at a major clinic that are being practiced within that facility. However, the
336 primary use is much different.

337

338 City Administrator Rindfleisch said services such as dentistry or podiatry are being practiced in a
339 clinic, and he asked, “How do you define a podiatrist with two cars a day coming through or at
340 one time? Or a major medical system providing foot care with hundreds of cars coming through
341 a day? I’m not sure we can get away from scale, but I would concur that the definition between
342 the scale should not be square footage, because where’s that line?”

343

344 Rita addressed Commercial – Food and Beverage Services and said HKGi is proposing the
345 following uses:

346

- 347 • Bar or alcohol drinking place
- 348 • Brewpub
- 349 • Caterer
- 350 • Snack or nonalcohol bar
- 351 • Restaurant
- 352 • Restaurant with drive-through or drive-in

353

354 City Administrator Rindfleisch said establishments such as brewpubs, breweries, wineries, and
355 distilleries are different not just because of the na beverage produced, but the State of Wisconsin
356 treats them differently for different purposes. City Administrator Rindfleisch said he does not
357 know if it is as simple as defining brewpubs versus the different establishments to cite state
358 statute. The State of Wisconsin will define them with different opening and closing hours, and
359 he asked Rita and Jeff to determine how the city would define them differently.

360

361 Amanda’s comments were inaudible on the recording.

362

363 Ald. Binash said an individual had wanted to have a shrimp business within the last couple years
364 in the area – this person was raising the shrimp to sell in the area – and he asked if such a
365 business is covered under Food and Beverage Services.

366

367 Rita said she does not believe it is covered under Food and Beverage Services, telling Ald.
368 Binash it likely would fall under Agricultural Production.

369

370 Katie said staff has fielded inquiries regarding concession stands, which are more directly tied to
371 the city’s public uses. Katie said food trucks also would be tied in.

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372

373 Jeff told Katie both are listed under Accessories.

374

375 Paul noted there is a concession stand located in front of Festival Foods during the warm-
376 weather months and asked if these concession stands are separately permitted.

377

378 Katie said, noting that food is permitted in the Light Industrial District.

379

380 Rita addressed Commercial – Retail Sales or Services and said HKGi is proposing the following
381 uses:

382

- 383 • Animal hospital or veterinary clinic
- 384 • Animal kennel
- 385 • Automobile fueling and service station
- 386 • Automobile repair and service, minor
- 387 • Automobile repair and service, major
- 388 • Automobile sales, leasing and service
- 389 • Beer, wine or liquor store
- 390 • Convenience or pharmacy store
- 391 • Department store, warehouse club or superstore
- 392 • Finance and insurance establishment
- 393 • Grocery store
- 394 • Heavy consumer goods store
- 395 • Laundry and dry cleaning
- 396 • Pawn shop
- 397 • Personal care and services (such as hair salons, nail salons, massage parlors)
- 398 • Retail store, not listed
- 399 • Retail store, with drive-through
- 400 • Specialty food store (such as bakery, delicatessen, butcher shop)
- 401 • Storage facility

402

403 Amanda inquired about stores such as Hobby Lobby.

404

405 Rita said a store such as Hobby Lobby probably would fall under Department store, warehouse
406 club or superstore.

407

408 Jeff said the intent of Retail store, not listed is not to be too specific so that most stores would fit
409 under this category.

410

411 Katie asked if there are issues with having Storage facility under Commercial – Retail Sales or
412 Services as opposed to having it under the Industrial category.

Reviewed 4/16/19 by Jarrod Holter

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413
414 Rita said she believes this is about how individuals interact, which means someone is personally
415 purchasing the privilege of storing items. By comparison, under Industrial someone either is
416 making something for someone else or is selling business to business. Rita said while it still is
417 necessary to define where it is appropriate, in terms of what the use is, it is where people are
418 personally interacting with a business.

419
420 Ald. Binash asked if perhaps curbside liquor pickup should be addressed in the codes, noting the
421 City of La Crosse allows such sales.

422
423 Amanda told Jeff grocery stores bring out food for customers and now want to bring out
424 alcoholic beverages to customers.

425
426 Katie asked if it belongs in the Zoning Ordinance or perhaps Licensing.

427
428 Skip asked for an example of an automobile fueling and service station, and he said he does not
429 believe they still exist in the City of Onalaska, although there is one in the City of La Crosse.

430
431 Mayor Chilsen said the city must plan for one.

432
433 Rita addressed Commercial – Business and Technical Services and said HKGi is proposing the
434 following uses:

- 435
- 436 • Laboratory, research/scientific/medical
 - 437 • Office or medical equipment supplier
 - 438 • Business support services
 - 439 • Professional, medical or administrative office
 - 440 • Publishing
 - 441 • Studio/gallery, art or performance
 - 442 • Studio, visual or sound production
- 443

444 Skip asked Katie if a barbershop is retail sales or a professional technical service.

445
446 Katie said a barbershop likely would fall under a personal care service.

447
448 Skip inquired about a flower shop and the combination of a flower shop/barbershop (Flowers by
449 Guenthers).

450
451 Katie said both likely would fall under either retail sales or services.

452

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453 Rita addressed Manufacturing, Trade & Warehousing and said HKGi is proposing the following
454 uses:

455

- 456 • Manufacturing, heavy
- 457 • Manufacturing, light
- 458 • Brewery, winery or distillery
- 459 • Makerspace
- 460 • Outside storage and manufacturing area
- 461 • Printing
- 462 • Scrap or salvage storage yard
- 463 • Storage and sale of machinery and equipment
- 464 • Construction contractor yard
- 465 • Warehouse and distribution facility
- 466 • Wholesale trade establishment

467

468 Amanda asked where a business incubator would fall.

469

470 Rita said it likely would depend on what types of uses a business incubator is doing.

471

472 Craig said he believes situations involving business incubators should be kept as wide open as
473 possible.

474

475 City Administrator Rindfleisch said he agrees with Craig, adding he believes it might be logical
476 to define it and call it out separately.

477

478 Rita addressed Arts, Entertainment & Recreation and said HKGi is proposing the following uses:

479

- 480 • Adult-oriented entertainment business
- 481 • Indoor recreational facility, commercial
- 482 • Indoor recreational facility, public
- 483 • Outdoor recreational facility, commercial
- 484 • Outdoor recreational facility, public
- 485 • Active park or playground
- 486 • Theater, dance or music performance facility
- 487 • Theater, drive-in

488

489 Rita addressed Natural Resources & Recreation and said HKGi is proposing the following uses:

490

- 491 • Agricultural – raising of crops
- 492 • Agricultural – raising of livestock

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- 493 • Arboretum
- 494 • Commercial greenhouse or nursery
- 495 • Extraction of sand, gravel, or other materials
- 496 • Forestry
- 497 • Wildlife or nature preserve/conservation area

498

499 Rita said the shrimp business to which Ald. Binash had referred earlier likely belongs here, but a
500 new line item is needed.

501

502 City Administrator Rindfleisch said his first thought is shrimp is livestock as it is a live creature,
503 but the interpretation of livestock is that it is outside versus the inside growth of a fish farm or
504 shrimp. City Administrator Rindfleisch said crops also possibly could have the same
505 internal/external definition.

506

507 Ald. Binash inquired about citizens who wish to own chickens.

508

509 Rita said that is an accessory use and told Ald. Binash that use is on a different table. Rita said
510 HKGi does not want people having chickens without having something else on their property.

511

512 Rita addressed Utilities & Transportation and said HKGi is proposing the following uses:

513

- 514 • Airport
- 515 • Ambulance or medical carrier service
- 516 • Waste collection, storage or processing (sewer, solid, hazardous)
- 517 • Freight terminal or transshipment facility
- 518 • Freight rail yard
- 519 • Helipad or helistop in conjunction with a medical facility
- 520 • Municipal earth or sanitary landfill operation
- 521 • Public and private utilities
- 522 • Public passenger transportation terminal (air, bus or rail)
- 523 • Telecommunication structure or tower
- 524 • Water measurement and water control facilities
- 525 • Water reservoir

526

527 Rita said she and Jeff will prepare definitions to go with the chart, and also work on identifying
528 specific standards with city staff. Rita said Plan Commission members will receive a full chart
529 and the definitions for review.

530

531 Rita next addressed the Draft Accessory Uses and said HKGi suggests the following:

532

- 533 • Uses will be generally permitted or permitted with standards, not conditional.

Reviewed 4/16/19 by Jarrod Holter

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- 534 • Uses proposed to be modified and reorganized for clarity.
- 535 • New accessory uses being proposed include:
 - 536 ○ Agriculture – bees, chickens & roadside stand
 - 537 ○ Billboard or outdoor advertising
 - 538 ○ Community garden
 - 539 ○ Food truck or cart
 - 540 ○ Outdoor dining area

541

542 Rita noted the following Draft Accessory Uses can be found in the current code, and she said
543 definitions will be added, as needed:

544

- 545 • Accessory dwelling unit
- 546 • Accessory structure
- 547 • Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- 548 • Central utility plant/generator
- 549 • Family day care home
- 550 • Farm dwelling for those resident owners and laborers actually engaged in the permitted
551 uses
- 552 • Fence or hedge
- 553 • Garage sale
- 554 • Home occupation
- 555 • Outdoor display or sales area
- 556 • Outside storage
- 557 • Outside storage of firewood
- 558 • Parking and loading area facilities
- 559 • Parking structure
- 560 • Public transportation facilities
- 561 • Radio broadcast service facility or other non-mobile service telecommunication facility
- 562 • Radio or television antenna tower
- 563 • Refuse or recycling container
- 564 • Satellite television dish or earth station
- 565 • Sign
- 566 • Mobile service support structure or facility
- 567 • Temporary tent, canopy, or similar membrane-material structure
- 568 • Walkway, enclosed, covered or uncovered or span connecting buildings over public or
569 private street or parking lot
- 570 • Wind energy system

571

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572 Katie said some of the things shown as accessory uses fall more toward property maintenance
573 and how they are being used, adding city staff and legal counsel are preparing a separate
574 property maintenance ordinance.

575
576 Medical Campus District Uses under evaluation include:
577

- 578 • Daycare facility (child or adult)
- 579 • Community or educational facilities, such as conference room, classroom, laboratory or
580 library
- 581 • Park, playground or outdoor fitness facility
- 582 • Place of worship

583
584 Rita said some of these items typically would not be found in an accessory use table and told the
585 Plan Commission that she and Jeff need to rectify how the Medical Campus District works with
586 the accessory use table.

587
588 Craig inquired about wind energy and solar energy.

589
590 Rita told Craig solar energy is its own line item.

- 591
- 592 B. Evaluation of Zoning Districts:
- 593 1. Clarify Definition of Base/Custom vs. Overlay Zoning Districts
 - 594 2. Analysis of Current Application of Zoning Districts on Zoning Map by Category (R,
595 B, M, P, etc.)
 - 596 3. Discuss Purposes of Each District
 - 597 4. Discuss Uses Allowed in Each District
 - 598 5. Discuss Need for Potential New Districts and Districts to Eliminate
 - 599 6. Discuss Potential Rezoning Areas

600
601 Jeff noted the city currently has both Base and Special (Custom and Overlay) Districts, and he
602 said HKGi is proposing moving forward with Base and Overlay (Design and Resource
603 Protection) Districts. A Base District would be defined as “A zoning district that defines uses
604 and standards for a portion of the city. The regulations established in the Base District shall
605 apply unless expressly superseded by overlay district provisions.” An Overlay District would be
606 defined as “A zoning district that extends over one or more base zoning districts for the purpose
607 of protecting certain resources or influencing district character. In the instance of conflicting
608 requirements, the stricter of the conflicting standards shall apply.”

609
610 Jeff noted the city’s current zoning districts are as follows:

611 Residential	District	Purpose Statement
612 R-1	Single-Family Residential	No
613 Reviewed 4/16/19 by Jarrod Holter		

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614	R-160	Special Single-Family Residential	Kind of
615	R-2	Single-Family and/or Duplex Residential	No
616	R-4	Multifamily Residential	No
617	R-MMH	Manufactured and Mobile Home	Kind of
618	Commercial/Mixed Use	District	Purpose Statement
619	TND	Trad. Neighborhood Development	Yes
620	T-C	Trans. Commercial/Business Dist.	No
621	B-1	Neighborhood Business	No
622	B-2	Community Business	No
623	MCD	Medical Campus	Yes
624	Manufacturing	District	Purpose Statement
625	M-1	Light Industrial	Yes
626	M-2	Industrial	No
627	M-3	Heavy Industrial	No
628	Other	District	Purpose Statement
629	A-1	Agricultural	No
630	P-1	Public & Semi-Public	No

631
632 The Residential Districts' purposes are as follows:

- 633
- 634 • **R-1:** Dwelling, single-family
 - 635 • **R-160:** Dwelling, single-family
 - 636 • **R-2:** Dwelling, single-family; Dwelling, two-family; Dwelling, zero lot line (2)
 - 637 • **R-4:** Dwelling, single-family; Dwelling, two-family; Dwelling, attached townhome or
 - 638 rowhouse; Dwelling, apartment
 - 639 • **R-MMH:** Dwelling, manufactured home; Dwelling, apartment
- 640

641 Jeff said two questions he wants to address today are, one, what are the appropriate districts for
642 attached townhouses and rowhouses (missing middle housing)? And two, manufactured home
643 parks are zoned in multiple districts – should they all be rezoned to R-MMH? Jeff showed Plan
644 Commission members a diagram with what is considered “missing middle housing:” duplex,
645 triplex & four-plex, courtyard apartment, bungalow court, townhouse, multiplex, and live/work.

646
647 Craig said he believes the mixed-density concept is very successful in the City of Onalaska
648 because it enhances the overall beauty of the community. Craig said, “My fear is if we start
649 breaking everything out too much, all of a sudden we start segregating types of houses when I’m
650 not sure that that’s ever been the vision of this community. I think what we have now kind of
651 helps eliminate or mitigate some of the bad pockets that can develop. But with that being said,
652 there are things that have to be separate. So I guess cautiously is how I would approach this.”

653

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17

654 Katie said developers who want to construct a structure larger than a twindo must be zoned
655 Multifamily, which means the developer typically will ask for a rezoning. Katie said it is
656 difficult for the neighborhood residents to understand, telling Plan Commission members they
657 immediately assume apartments will be constructed when they hear the word “multifamily.”
658 Katie said the structure might be a triplex or a four-plex and told Plan Commission members she
659 believes there is more confusion because every structure greater than two is called Multifamily.

660
661 Katie said, “I think we have to call to question of, are we spot-zoning versus not? You can have
662 single-family and your intermix of twindos, and I think that works [because] we’ve seen a
663 combination thereof. My suggestion is creating an R-3 District, but we limit it by density. We
664 say you can only have a maximum of eight units on a particular parcel, and you have to have [a
665 certain] amount of green space, because we already do that today. For a single-family residential
666 you have to have so much square feet in order to build your residence to account for necessary
667 setbacks, in between buildings, your rear, your front, your side lot lines. If we look at it from the
668 same perspective, we would obviously make those lots to have to be larger so that you can have
669 better defined setbacks not just from yourself to the property line, but [also] if you have multiple
670 structures yourself to another property so that you build that into the district. So I think that if
671 we have something in between where we cap it on a number of units end, you truly leave
672 multifamily for what people think they’re going to get.”

673
674 Craig said, “Which they perceive as the big apartment complex.”

675
676 Katie referred to an image that she said shows ways to have more density on a single-
677 family/twindo level scale. Katie said it is how the structure is constructed, and she told Plan
678 Commission members the city may prescribe that, to a degree, by having minimum lot sizes and
679 maximum number of dwellings. The city currently already does this single and two-family
680 structures.

681
682 Craig said he favors the concept of leaving many development opportunities open in areas.
683 Craig also asked if R-160 would be eliminated.

684
685 Katie said the intent of R-160 was to allow for smaller lot sizes and reduced setbacks.

686
687 Paul said the rear setback might have been reduced slightly under R-160, and he asked if both the
688 front and side are the same. Paul said there is little distinction between R-1 and R-160, adding it
689 was put in at his request decades ago and applied to a particular piece of property he described as
690 irregular in both shape and layout. Paul noted approximately one-third of the lots on this
691 property did not meet R-160 even though the entire property was R-160. Paul noted no one has
692 attempted to utilize it since then as houses have grown in size and there is little interest among
693 builders to construct smaller homes.

694
695 Craig asked if this is a good time to make changes.

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696

697 Paul said he believes it is time to be creative, but added he still wants to see something that
698 accommodates smaller single-family homes if and when there is a desire for them.

699

700 Craig noted there are smaller lots located in the city.

701

702 Paul noted there are 40, 45, and 50-foot lots in the older section of the city.

703

704 Skip noted there are 30-foot lots in that section of the city.

705

706 Katie said they are nonconforming lots, but they are allowed to follow certain setbacks if they
707 were platted prior to a certain date. Katie said when the new district was created, it was written
708 into the ordinance that only that development could utilize R-160. Katie said, “I would look at
709 the fact that based on that development and the reduction in setbacks with the intent of having
710 smaller lot sizes would be a perfect example of how we would use a Planned Unit Development.
711 It allows you as the developer to have your vacant area of land, and you carve that up however
712 way you want it. We see those people doing that today, so I think what was done back then was
713 essentially the Planned Unit Development process because if you had an idea of what you
714 wanted – the smaller lots, the smaller houses, reduced setbacks – and there was a certain area
715 where it applied, and it was specific to that area. We had actually put it back in the code because
716 it somehow got replaced or eliminated years back. The [original] ordinance specifically called
717 out that no one else could do it except that development. When we put it back in here, you can,
718 but now you’d have to rezone to it.”

719

720 Skip said he is amused by the fact the current National Geographic “is all about cities,” and
721 planners and architects are saying single-family homes must vanish in the future in favor of
722 apartments with ground-floor retail and businesses and offices below them. Skip said he finds
723 the disconnect “very humorous” as the Plan Commission is discussing single-family homes.

724

725 Paul told Skip what applies in major metropolitan markets such as Los Angeles and Chicago
726 does not apply in Onalaska, noting the city has “cheap land” in comparison to many of those
727 areas. Paul also noted a vast majority of people in this area aspire to own a single-family,
728 detached home, and he said he favors having as much flexibility as possible to accommodate
729 different types of housing. Paul said R-160, which he described as an experiment, might not be
730 the answer at this time, and he challenged anyone to drive around the city and tell him where the
731 R-160 areas are located.

732

733 Jeff asked if creating a new district to allow medium-scale housing should be considered. These
734 housing types could be located next to single-family homes and duplexes without apartments
735 being allowed.

736

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19

737 Paul said he believes it would be logical “to draw lines somewhere between duplex and 200
738 units.”

739
740 Craig told Katie he likes the concept of a PUD process.

741
742 Ald. Binash inquired about property that is annexed to the city, asking if the city would have to
743 look at the zoning of how a particular area is annexed.

744
745 Katie said someone with bare land or existing, the city would match them to whichever zoning
746 district was the best fit.

747
748 City Administrator Rindfleisch a property would become legal nonconforming if, for example, a
749 residential structure already was constructed but did not meet the city’s requirements for the
750 same zoning. Regarding Residential zoning, City Administrator Rindfleisch said he is seeking
751 Plan Commission input regarding R-MMH, and he told commission members he is suggesting
752 that the city’s existing mobile home parks, which currently are not zoned R-MMH, be rezoned
753 appropriately.

754
755 Mayor Chilsen inquired about the placement of an art district, meaning performing arts and
756 visual arts.

757
758 Jeff said it likely would have to be a mixed-use district.

759
760 The Commercial/Mixed Use Districts’ purposes are as follows:

- 761
- 762 • **T-C/Business (allowed in addition to B-1 uses):** Department store; Dwelling, apartment
 - 763 • **B-1:** Bar or brewpub (not allowed in T-C); Automobile fueling & service (not allowed in
764 T-C); Automobile sales, leasing & service (not allowed in T-C); Automobile repair &
765 service, minor (not allowed in T-C); Snack or non-alcohol café; Restaurant, non-drive
766 through or drive-in; Grocery store; Specialty food store; Retail store; Finance and
767 insurance establishment; Personal care and service; Dwelling, apartment
 - 768 • **B-2 (allowed in addition to B-1 uses):** Caterer; Restaurant with drive-through or drive-
769 in; Department store or superstore; Automobile repair & service, major; Pawn shop; Pet
770 shop; Heavy consumer goods store; Business support services; Storage facility, personal;
771 Pet hospital or veterinary clinic; Pet kennel; Dwelling, apartment
 - 772 • **TND:** Snack or non-alcohol bar; Liquor store; Convenience or pharmacy store; Heavy
773 consumer goods store; Retail store; Day care facility; Studio/gallery, art or performance;
774 Makerspace; Dwelling, single-family; Dwelling, attached townhomes or rowhouses;
775 Dwelling, apartment, including mixed use & live/work
- 776

777 Skip referred to a small colored parcel on a map on display for the Plan Commission and said
778 there are four lots zoned B-1 on Wilson Street between 11th Avenue and 12th Avenue. Skip told
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20

779 Jeff houses were constructed there in the 1920s and said he believes the zoning was done in error
780 and therefore should be changed.

781

782 Jeff said HKGi has mapped inconsistencies such as the one Skip mentioned.

783

784 Jeff asked if the city needs to have T-C and B-1, or perhaps is there something in between so that
785 there is only one district that is a neighborhood-focused business district. Jeff said the intent of a
786 neighborhood business district or use is that it is compatible and appropriately screened so that it
787 fits in with the nearby neighborhood houses. Jeff referred to the map and noted there are several
788 areas zoned Neighborhood Business (B-1) along State Trunk Highway 35, and there is some
789 Community Business zoning (B-2) in the downtown district. Jeff noted there is both B-1 and B-
790 2 zoning located next to each other along Sand Lake Road, and he said HKGi is attempting to
791 understand the use of applying B-1 versus B-2, and if the city needs all these districts.

792

793 Amanda asked what the value is of having T-C zoning when the only difference between T-C
794 and B-1 is a department store.

795

796 Jeff noted Bar or brewpub, Automobile fueling & service, Automobile sales, leasing & service,
797 and Automobile repair & service, minor are not allowed in T-C.

798

799 Jarrod told Plan Commission members T-C predates his employment with the City of Onalaska,
800 and also that former Mayor Shirleigh Van Riper had plans to start renovating along Main Street –
801 specifically, transitioning homes over to business areas – in the mid-1980s. Jarrod said T-C
802 zoning was thought of as a way to start business uses, but still be “very overly protective of the
803 neighborhood interests” and also the residents, many of whom attended public hearings
804 regarding the rezonings. Jarrod cited Dr. Leo Bronston’s development located along County
805 Highway PH as an example of an area where residents have been very involved and looked at
806 uses for that development. By comparison, Jarrod said a B-1 or B-2 use might allow something
807 residents in a neighborhood might not want. As a result, it becomes difficult for the Plan
808 Commission to approve a rezoning request. Jarrod said T-C zoning was meant to allow some
809 uses in a neighborhood of which the residents would approve.

810

811 Paul said he remembers that T-C was meant to be more restrictive than B-1, adding he was
812 surprised to see that department stores are allowed in T-C districts.

813

814 Katie told Paul department stores allowed conditionally in the T-C district. Katie also said the T-
815 C district has more design criteria (e.g. landscaping, higher setbacks, architecture).

816

817 City Administrator Rindfleisch said one of the benefits of rewriting the Zoning Code is that the
818 city does not have to defend the past, but rather rewrite for the future. City Administrator
819 Rindfleisch referred to one of the questions HKGi has posed to the Plan Commission (“*Could
820 these districts be reduced to three scales – mixed use/neighborhood, community/highway, and*

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21

821 *regional?”*) and the area zoned M-1 is inappropriately titled and likely should be zoned Mixed
822 Use/Commercial, to some degree. However, City Administrator Rindfleisch said it likely is on a
823 different scale than the three points that are listed. The areas are commercial, but they are zoned
824 M-1 and should instead have a Commercial zoning so that developers may see it is zoned
825 Commercial and understand what the city is attempting to apply – particularly in the mixed-use
826 portion of the existing areas zoned Commercial.

827
828 Jeff referred to two other question posed to the Plan Commission (“*Where are appropriate areas*
829 *for auto-oriented vs. pedestrian-oriented businesses?”* “*Where are appropriate areas for*
830 *buildings that are larger scale and higher traffic drivers?”*) Jeff noted the code does not have a
831 definition for a department store and said this presents a problem because it does not state what
832 size a department store located on Main Street should be versus another location. Jeff said that
833 while HKGi is not necessarily advocating to eliminate T-C zoning, there are perhaps three types
834 of areas in the city that are business-oriented. Jeff referred to Jarrod’s comments regarding how
835 commercial fits into the neighborhood rather than the neighborhood fitting in around the
836 commercial. Jeff said mixed-use is integrated, while community/highway would be STH 35 and
837 also perhaps Sand Lake Road. Jeff noted the largest retail area in the city is not zoned for
838 business, but rather manufacturing, and he said, “Our thought is, how do we rezone that area to
839 be a business district? Is it one of the existing ones, or is it a new one?”

840
841 Katie said the city’s Light Industrial zoning allows everything, and its B-1 and B-2 districts
842 allows more industrial-type uses.

843
844 City Administrator Rindfleisch said, “I think now it’s built up to, as we look at redevelopment
845 opportunities, if it’s still zoned the broadest scope under Light Industrial M-1, in theory someone
846 could tear down a thriving commercial business, and instead of doing a higher density mixed use
847 could put in a manufacturing facility with solar and smoke and whatever else. That’s where I’m
848 suggesting that, especially the areas that are already built, if you want to maintain it in a
849 particular way with a particular object for the area, I think now is the time to rezone
850 appropriately.”

851
852 Katie said the city’s goal is not to zone out anyone, but rather to take the approach of, what is the
853 most appropriate zoning district that matches the uses.

854
855 The Industrial Districts’ purposes are as follows:

- 856
- 857 • **M-1:** Manufacturing, light; Makerspace; Storage and sale of machinery and equipment;
858 Construction contractor yard; Wholesale trade establishment; Laboratory; Business
859 Support services; Professional, medical or administrative offices; Indoor or outdoor
860 recreation facility; Theater, dance or music performance facility; Clinic; Bar; Caterer;
861 Snack or nonalcohol bar; Restaurant; Retail sales and service, except storage facility;
862 Dwelling, apartment

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- 863 • **M-2:** Animal hospital, clinic or kennel; Automobile service or repair (major/minor);
864 Publishing; Manufacturing, light; Makerspace; Brewery, winery or distillery; Printing;
865 Warehouse and distribution facility; Adult use establishment; Theater, dance or music
866 performance facility; Commercial greenhouse or nursery; Storage and sale of machinery
867 and equipment; Wholesale trade establishment; Laboratory
- 868 • **M-3:** Animal hospital, clinic or kennel; Automobile service or repair (major/minor);
869 Publishing; Manufacturing, light; Makerspace; Brewery, winery or distillery; Printing;
870 Warehouse and distribution facility; Adult use establishment; Theater, dance or music
871 performance facility; Commercial greenhouse or nursery; Storage facility;
872 Manufacturing, heavy; Outside storage and manufacturing area; Scrap or salvage storage
873 yard

874

875 Jeff posed the following questions to the Plan Commission: What are the differences between the
876 districts? Could these be reduced to two? Is M-1 really a B-3 district?

877

878 Amanda asked Jeff if the districts would be Light Industrial and Heavy Industrial if Industrial is
879 condensed to two districts, or perhaps Industrial and Heavy Industrial.

880

881 Jeff told Amanda the districts likely would be Light Industrial and Heavy Industrial, noting there
882 have been significant changes in manufacturing technologies. Jeff said Light Industrial districts
883 can be flexible and have other uses – even non-industrial uses. Jeff said the goal would be to
884 have industrial dominate these districts for tax base and employment reasons.

885

886 Amanda asked if the Plan Commission would like to see the State Trunk Highway 16 corridor as
887 primarily a B District, and if its members also would like to see only two industrial
888 manufacturing districts.

889

890 Craig said he believes it would be logical to do so.

891

892 Rita asked if the city needs two industrial districts.

893

894 Steven said he would like the city to have a Heavy Industrial District even though it is not a large
895 area.

896

897 Jeff said as of now, he and Rita believe most of the existing districts are base districts, and they
898 are looking at the PUD separately. The PUD is currently in the Zoning District chapter, but Jeff
899 noted not every city treats it as a zoning district as it can be treated as a development process or
900 procedure that allows more flexibility to create a unique development. However, it does not
901 always have to be a zoning district. Jeff said he and Rita are trying to determine whether or not
902 the PUD remains as a zoning district or another tool within the Zoning Code or the Unified
903 Development Code. Jeff noted the Economic Development Overlay is only applied in three

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23

904 properties located on the east side of the city, and he said he has heard that perhaps that district is
905 not needed in the future.

906

907 Katie said both the Plan Commission and the Common Council have approved removing it on a
908 case-by-case basis.

909

910 Jeff noted the Conservation Cluster Development Overlay has not been applied to any property
911 in the city thus far.

912

913 Craig asked if perhaps it could be incorporated into a different zone that takes in that area.

914

915 Katie told Craig there are other means that could bring it in, and she noted there have been
916 instances, including Crestwood Estates, in which the PUD process was utilized instead of this
917 district.

918

919 Craig said he always viewed the PUD as a process and not a district.

920

921 City Administrator Rindfleisch said he believes the city has been treating the PUD as a process,
922 and the Downtown Planned Unit Development (D-PUD) was a process in a very specific area.

923

924 Jeff said the City of La Crosse Airport Overlay District will remain in the code, but will not be
925 changed as part of this project. Jeff said he and Rita believe Resource Protection Overlay
926 Districts are appropriate overlay districts. The Historic and Archaeological Preservation District
927 has not yet been applied anywhere, and the Shoreland District would be new.

928

929 C. Community Engagement Approach for May

930

931 Rita said a discussion may begin about eliminating districts and changing districts, telling Plan
932 Commission members she and Jeff likely would not talk about exactly where they would be
933 applied, “but getting from the general community that it makes sense.” Rita proposed holding an
934 open house in early May at which citizens could examine this project and learn some of the
935 directions being taken. Rita said there likely would be a board of each type of district to spark
936 discussions with citizens, and she said the open house likely is the ideal time to obtain feedback
937 on “hot button” areas. Rita noted one category is accessory uses on residential properties, and
938 other topics include accessory dwelling units, urban agriculture, accessory structures. From a
939 business perspective, Rita said she and Jeff have identified parking and screening and
940 landscaping as discussion topics.

941

942 Mayor Chilsen said, “Any time we make any decisions and ask for the public’s input, we’d better
943 make sure that we understand that what they want is really what should be driving the decisions
944 here.”

945

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24

946 Rita said she would limit the amount of online activity because there is the potential for citizens
947 to misinterpret what is being said. Rita said the goal would be to speak to stakeholders, who
948 would encourage citizens to attend the open house. Rita also said an open house will give her,
949 Jeff and city staff the opportunity to answer questions and present the correct information.

950
951 Skip asked if the maps can be updated prior to the open house.

952
953 Katie said staff will prepare maps with the most up-to-date zoning and municipal boundary
954 limits. Katie said the public meeting likely would be held at the Omni Center so that more
955 people may attend. Katie said staff will discuss potential dates with Rita and Jeff, Plan
956 Commission members will receive those dates, and a date will be chosen when there will be a
957 quorum. Common Council members also will be encouraged to attend. The La Crosse Area
958 Builders Association (LABA) and La Crosse-area realtor associations also are interested in
959 finding out more details.

960
961 Steven asked to standardize the color coding on the maps.

962
963 Craig said he believes it would be helpful to understand what the city's current zones are and the
964 inconsistencies that HKGi has pointed out.

965
966 Rita said Module 2 will take all the information gathered from today's meeting to create the
967 zoning districts, the use table, and definitions. Module 2 also will involve walking through
968 potential zoning maps and how rezoning might occur.

969
970 Jeff said that although he has a scheduling conflict May 21, perhaps Rita could meet with the
971 Plan Commission by herself.

972
973 Katie asked Plan Commission members to submit dates they are available to meet in May.

974
975 **Adjournment**

976
977 Motion by Jarrod, second by Steven, to adjourn at 4:10 p.m.

978
979 On voice vote, motion carried.

980
981
982 Recorded by:

983
984 Kirk Bey