

**TOWN OF GIBRALTAR  
PLAN COMMISSION  
MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2007  
7:00 P.M.  
GIBRALTAR TOWN CENTER**

*Approval Pending*

**Call to order:** The meeting of the Gibraltar Plan Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Tom Birmingham, chairman.

Members present: Tom Birmingham, Jim Jauquet and Linda Merline

Members absent: David Boyd and Digger DeGroot

**Approve minutes:** It was moved by Merline and seconded by Jauquet to approve the minutes of February 12, 2007 as written. Motion carried unanimously.

**Open discussion and correspondence:** Birmingham stated that he received a resignation from Digger DeGroot. Birmingham thanked Digger for his years of service to the Commission. No correspondence has been received.

**Community image survey:** Birmingham explained that the County has formed Citizens Oversight Committee for the County Comprehensive Plan. Birmingham has been appointed to the committee with Merrell Runquist as the back-up appointee. The meetings are held monthly. Becky Kerwin of the Door County Planning Department has sent a memorandum regarding the exploration of developing town design standards. The first step towards defining and developing standards would be a community image survey that would include both positive and negative examples. Birmingham queried the commission as to whether this would be a worthwhile exercise. Jauquet encouraged participation in the process. Gary Cadwallader felt that Bernstein's work, which included a structural survey, would be an invaluable resource. Birmingham agreed to participate in the process but recommended proceeding carefully and with a dialogue. The County would lean more to an overall design standard not related to historic standards. Birmingham will follow up with Runquist on the photo survey and how to proceed for a cross section of opinions.

**Revised proposal for Historic Character Preservation Ordinance:** Birmingham stated last month's discussion left off at redefining the boundaries. Jauquet did not have time to check on the legal description. Jauquet stated that he, his wife Andrea and Karl Stubenvoll attended the Historic Preservation Workshop in Madison. Karl Stubenvoll felt it would be beneficial if the historic subcommittee could reconvene and go over important issues covered at the workshop. Jauquet distributed workshop notes that he had taken. Items of note include:

- If there is a registered historic site within a community the town is required to have a commission and historic preservation ordinance.
- Your mission should define the district.
- Be realistic about how much area is included in the district.
- The ordinance should explain the historic context of the village.
- Do not focus on regulations; try to be helpful in protecting areas for the common good.
- All laws restrict someone or something. Commission has to adopt an attitude of helpfulness rather than regulation.
- 167 communities have ordinances and commissions – rarely do they have litigation.
- Be careful to answer misconceptions, use an advocacy campaign.
- Decisions have to be based on guidelines – defensible reasons.
- Model design guidelines are being upgraded for the State of Wisconsin.

- Our legal counsel needs to know what laws support our ordinance.
- Tape recordings of historic commission hearings must be kept for 10 years.

Jauquet recommended enhancing the ordinance with the new information and a defined area. Birmingham thanked Jauquet for the report.

Ray Slaby asked if he could make a few comments on the preservation ordinance.

- Section 4 - Slaby felt the removal process should be available to be brought up from any town board supervisor to request discussion at a town board meeting, not just the chairman.
- Section 6 - Would like to see commission plan in the ordinance. Structure designation should be voluntary. The town should absorb costs for implementation, if passed on to the user it might be a hardship.
- Slaby would only support the ordinance if it were voluntary.

Simplicity of design in keeping with the low-key charm of the downtown area was recommended by Cadwallader. He also stated there needs to be a strategy to quell fears and offer constructive support vs. criticism. Cadwallader suggested outside architect review to help depersonalize the review process.

Merline stated that the ordinance is not intended to cause economic hardship but more to foster civic pride. The commission should attempt to assist the owner in finding resources. Merline recommended returning the document to the sub committee to make it a friendlier ordinance, not intimidating.

Connie Judd suggested a “corner of the past” type of idea. Slaby said a small community could be recreated on 20-40 acres and possibly funded by grants. Jauquet stated the workshop did not discuss that idea. Merline stated the goal of the commission is to see the buildings in their original location.

Cadwallader questioned who, the Plan Commission or an expanded sub committee, should make the changes to the ordinance. He added that with the resources from Madison it could be competently brought to an acceptable place.

Birmingham thanked everyone for their comments. The ordinance, Birmingham stated, needs to get to the place for acceptance by the community. Revisions will begin by revisiting the basic comments of keeping it small and stating the intent in the best form possible.

**Committee Reports:** Birmingham will contact Runquist regarding vacancies on the Utilities sub committee. The Ephraim/Gibraltar agreement expired leaving a district merger and the stormwater plan yet to be done by the sub committee.

**Set next meeting agenda:** The next meeting is scheduled for April 24<sup>th</sup>. Birmingham will talk to Boyd and Stubenvoll about the best approach on follow-up on this agenda.

**Adjourn:** It was moved by Jauquet and seconded by Birmingham to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hagen, CMC  
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer