

**VILLAGE OF SPARTA
PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
February 2, 2026 @ 6:30 PM
276 W. Division St. (Sparta Village Complex)**

- 1) CALL TO ORDER
- 2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- 3) ROLL CALL
- 4) ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA
Consent Agenda:
 - a. Approve Regular Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of December 15, 2025
- 5) APPROVAL OF CONSENT & BUSINESS AGENDA
- 6) PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS
- 7) COMMUNICATIONS –
 - a. Meeting Recordings
 - b. Planning Commission Vacancy
- 8) PUBLIC HEARING –
 - a. None.
- 9) NEW BUSINESS –
 - a. Chair, Vice-Chair, & Secretary Selection
 - b. Chicken Permit Revision Discussion
- 10) UNFINISHED BUSINESS –
 - a. None.
- 11) PUBLIC COMMENT
- 12) VILLAGE MANAGER REPORT
- 13) COMMISSION COMMENT
- 14) ADJOURNMENT

VILLAGE OF SPARTA

PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
December 15, 2025 @ 5:30 PM
276 W. Division St. (Sparta Village Complex)

Present: Chairperson Emilie Henry, Vice Chairperson Rose Frederick, Commissioners Robert Carlstrom, and Robert Whalen. Christina Owens (arrived at 5:32 pm)

Absent: Gary Moody, Bob Liscombe

Also present: Village Manager Jim Lower, Village Clerk Kristen Phelps,

1. CALL TO ORDER
 - a. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Chair Henry
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
 - a. The Pledge was recited.
3. ROLL CALL
 - a. Formal roll call was taken. Those in attendance/absent are noted above.
4. ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA
 - a. Consent Agenda: Approve Regular Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of October 6, 2025
5. APPROVAL OF CONSENT & BUSINESS AGENDA
 - a. Motion to approve business agenda and consent agenda as presented by Whalen, supported by Frederick. **Motion passed 4-0.**
6. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS
 - a. None
7. COMMUNICATIONS
 - a. Manager Lower spoke.
8. PUBLIC HEARING
 - a. Ord. 25-04 An Ordinance amending definitions in sections 82-45, 46, 57, & 58 as well as permitted uses in section 82-252, and location of parking areas in section 82-464
 - i. Open at 5:32 by Chairperson Henry
 1. Joan Kenoshmeg 155 N Union (1055 Indian Lakes NW) Commented
 2. Jackie Landon 1644 6th St NW GR Commented
 3. Kenneth Enos 10820 Phelps Commented (see attachment)

4. Kristie Dougan 298 Pine St. Commented
5. Chuck Latour 195 South St. Commented
6. Brook Burg 10870 Phelps NW Commented
7. Alex Buffo 141 Amelia St. Commented
8. Tim Driscoll 10869 Phelps Ave Commented
9. Ricky Johnson 29 Centennial Commented
10. Chuck Yates 25 Pleasant Commented
11. Josh Brigs 1917 Pine Island Commented
12. Joan Kenoshmeg 155 N Union (1055 Indian Lakes NW)
Commented

ii. Closed at 6:12 pm by Chairperson Henry.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Ord. 25-04 An Ordinance amending definitions in sections 82-45, 46, 57, & 58 as well as permitted uses in section 82-252, and location of parking areas in section 82-464
 - i. Motion to approve Ordinance 25-04 as presented by Owens, with support by Frederick. **Motion passes 5-0**

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. None.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. None

12. VILLAGE MANAGER REPORT

- a. Manager Lower spoke

13. COMMISSION COMMENT

- a. None

14. ADJOURNMENT

- a. Meeting adjourned at 6:37 pm by Chairperson Henry.



#9a

ACTION MEMO

Staff Communication

DATE: February 2, 2026
TO: Planning Commission Chair and Planning Commission Members
FROM: James A. Lower Village Manager
RE: Chair, Vice-Chair, & Secretary Selection

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Per MCL 125.3817 Section 17 the officers of the planning commission (Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, and Secretary) must be selected by the planning commission annually.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The planning commission will need to decide who to fill these roles with. It is customary to open the floor for nominations for each position and then proceed from there.



ACTION MEMO

Staff Communication

DATE: February 2, 2026
TO: Planning Commission Chair and Planning Commission Members
FROM: James A. Lower Village Manager
RE: Chapter 82- Sec 82-106 Keeping of Animals

Background

It has been nearly six years since the Village began allowing the keeping of chickens on single-family residential properties. Overall, the implementation and enforcement of the ordinance have gone well, with only limited issues reported. A small number of residents have kept chickens for many years without incident and have recently asked whether the Village would consider allowing more than the current maximum of six chickens.

This request has prompted a broader review of the existing ordinance and its practical effects.

Under the current regulations:

- Lots **5,500–5,999 sq. ft.** are permitted up to **4 chickens**
- Lots **6,000 sq. ft. or greater** are permitted up to **6 chickens**
- Lots **under 5,500 sq. ft.** are not permitted to keep chickens
- The minimum lot size under current zoning is **5,500 sq. ft.**

From a practical standpoint, staff does not see a meaningful difference between allowing four versus six chickens on lots between 5,500 and 6,000 square feet.

Proposed Revisions

Staff recommends simplifying and modestly expanding the ordinance as follows:

1. **Chicken Limits by Lot Size**
 - **5,500–7,999 sq. ft.:** Up to **6 chickens**
 - **8,000 sq. ft. or greater:**
 - Up to **6 chickens initially**
 - After **one year of successful compliance**, the property owner may apply to increase the limit to **up to 12 chickens**

This approach rewards demonstrated compliance while maintaining safeguards for surrounding properties.

2. **Hen House and Pen Size**

- Current limits:
 - Hen house: **25 sq. ft.**
 - Pen area: **40 sq. ft.**
- Proposed limits:
 - Hen house: **50 sq. ft.**
 - Pen area: **80 sq. ft.**

Staff recommends allowing the larger structures at the outset so residents do not need to expand facilities later if they intend to apply for additional chickens after the compliance period.

3. **Egg Sales, Breeding, Fertilizing**

- The current ordinance prohibits the sale of eggs, breeding chickens, or federalizing of eggs for commercial sale.
- In practice, these provisions are difficult to enforce.
- Staff recommends revising the ordinance to strike these provisions.

Any such activities would already need to comply with state and federal regulations, and we are not allowing enough chickens for this to be a realistic concern. The Village does not need to duplicate or enforce those standards locally or have unenforceable provisions in our ordinance.

Conclusion

The proposed changes would simplify the ordinance, align regulations with real-world conditions, reward responsible chicken owners, and reduce unnecessary enforcement burdens—while maintaining appropriate protections for neighboring properties and overall neighborhood compatibility.

If the planning commission likes/agrees with these ideas, then we can incorporate them into an update to the ordinance at a future meeting.