Members Present: Phil Schneider, David Willingham, Tom Costello, John Stencil and Kathy Mai.
Staff Present: CeCe Tesky and Yvonne Johnson. Approximately 12 members of the public in attendance.

Chairman Willingham called the public hearing to order at 3:00 P.M. The purpose of the public hearing was a conditional use request to allow a multi-family dwelling unit on the following described real estate:

Lot 3 CSM 751 in the NW ¼ - SE ¼, Section 23, T33N, R8W.

Property owner: Jodi Ritsch and Josh Hansen
1320 Barry Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54701

Tesky read the notice of public hearing which was posted per the requirements of a Class (2) notice. The town clerk, DNR, and owner were notified by Certified Mail and neighboring property owners within 500’ were notified by First Class Mail. Chairman Willingham explained the purpose of the hearing and the way the meeting would be handled.

Tesky explained that the proposal is for a 4 unit condominium unit with a storage unit to be built on the north side of the road.

Willingham asked for anyone present who wished to speak in favor of the proposal. Cecelia Stencil, the clerk for the town of Big Bend stated the town board approved the application last month. There is currently a condo unit on Island Lake and there have not been problems. This will benefit the township in regard to tax base and tourism.

Willingham asked for anyone present who wished to speak against the proposal. Daryl Lorberter stated it is a large unit going into a small area. He questioned where the parking and septic system would be located. He expressed concern that this would affect Fireside Lodge. Lorberter stated the lake quality has been affected by the drought and the creek has filled in. He was also concerned about Mud Lake filling in.

Bob Ritsch spoke in favor. Ritsch explained that the units would not be rentals. They plan to place covenants on the property to protect it from being rentals. They currently own the 2 small cabins on the lot. They are non-conforming and aging. These cabins were divided off from the resort. Ritsch identified the buildable area on the CSM. They
COMMITTEE APPROVED
hope to use the property more during the winter months which would help the local businesses. Ritsch explained that they plan to owner occupy 2 of the units and sell 2 units. They plan to install a septic system with Steve Golat and build a storage building on the north side of the property. He felt the increase in traffic would be minimal and that tourists and businesses need each other.

Patricia Darsow was present in opposition. Darsow explained that she has lived on the lake for 32 years. She felt this would be an exploitation of this lot. The structure will be massive-on a 300 acre lake. Darsow said there will be more than 2 people per unit. There is a lot on the lake now that is used by 5 full families. There will be many water toys and trailers. Darsow was concerned that covenants are hard to enforce, as evidenced by they current covenants that don’t allow permanent trailers which is not being enforced. She stated the lake is dying-the depth is swallowing-and more trees are falling in due to the waves. She stated the water quality is dropping.

A letter of support was read. The letter was from Wayne Seefelt.

Susie Menard was present in opposition. Menard stated she has been on the lake for 20 years. She questioned why the 2 cabins are being replaced by 4 units. The back doors will be at the road. She questioned if decks or steps were being allowed for on the roadside. She doesn’t feel there would be adequate parking for vehicles and boats. The road is supposed to be 66’, but in reality is about 15’ wide. Menard was also concerned about impervious surfaces limitations.

A letter of support was read. The letter was from Rusty and Ann Brand.

Brent Lahr spoke in opposition. Lahr owns lot 1 of the subdivision and is in the business of renting cabins. There rental season is usually on 12 weeks. He stated the states does not limit the number of rental days is they are approved for such use.

Cecelia Stencil stated she had two calls in favor. They were from Gail Helwig and Ron Salter.

Robert Brandstadt said he owns Fireside Lodge and they are currently struggling and don’t need the competition.

Josh Hansen stated he wanted to derail the rental talk. These units are planned as dwelling units. He wanted it understood that they would be 4 separate dwelling units.

Andy Schlafer said he lives 6 doors from this proposal. He said he did not receive a notice from the township about their decision. Setbacks are there for a reason and said if they are asking for a variance from the norm, they are hurting neighboring property values.

Stencil stated the town meeting was posted legally and that the town is not required to send notice to individual owners.

Tony Lendt stated he has high ground and would like to ask for the same thing.
Woody Wall said his home is for sale now and he is concerned about 2 more units being added to the market.

Letter of opposition was read. It was from Hertzfeldt.

Patricia Darsow stated the Ed and Mary Sanchez are also opposed.

Brent Lahr asked if there was an application for the property to be rental. The road is gravel and is a private easement.

Susie Menard would like to see the road easement issue be addressed.

Chairman Willingham asked 3 times for anyone else in favor or opposed to speak. There being no further testimony, Chairman Willingham closed the public hearing at 3:55 P.M. to reopen the zoning meeting.

Willingham suggested it would be helpful to do a site visit. The committee would consider the issues raised at the public hearing including rental and sublease of the units. Willingham pointed out that the committee is not here to protect existing businesses from competition. Willingham read the staff recommendations. Scheduled a site visit for September 10th at 3:00 P.M. at the property and will then reconvene at the Town of Big Bend Hall immediately following the onsite. Written comments can still be submitted.

Yvonne Johnson
Assistant Zoning Administrator