

**MINUTES OF THE VILLAGE OF JOHNSBURG  
MAY 14, 2025 RECONVENED MEETING OF THE  
SPECIAL ZONING COMMISSION MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Larsen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Commission Members Present**

James Barrett  
Steve Dixon  
Daniel Loud (absent)  
Roger Block  
Ken Calhoun (later in the meeting)  
Tom Benck

**Staff Present:**

Village Administrator Claudett Sofiakis  
Assistant Administrator Vinny Lamontagna  
Village Attorney Michael Smoron  
Village Engineer Tim Hartnett

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Michael Ulibarri of 4212 Riverview Drive expressed support for the project.

Joseph Huemann of 3811 Spring Grove Road expressed support for the project and remarked that it will not have a big impact on the school, fire and library districts.

Dan Mitchell of 1817 Sunnyside Beach Drive expressed that he is pleased about the project and stated that as the Director of the Fox Waterway Agency, he believes the project will help further the agency's mission to promote the waterway.

Brad Fox of 5714 Meadowlark Lane expressed support for the project and stated that he will be selling some of the condo units for Mr. Oliver

Commission Member Calhoun attended at this time.

Greg Kelly of 3312 Cardington Way commended Mr. Oliver for taking on the project and stated that he believes the project will be an economic driver for the Village and will turn a blighted property into an asset. Mr. Kelly stated that he resides across the street from the project and he does not anticipate any traffic problems due to the seasonable use of the property when school is not in session.

**COMMISSION DELIBERATION**

Chairman Larsen explained that the purpose of the hearing is to consider text amendments to Chapter 16 Conditional Uses, adding Section 16.9 Automobile Condominiums, Automobile Clubhouse Display Facilities. He explained that since the initial hearing in March, the petitioner has made additional modification to the proposed text amendments and cautioned that the text amendments, if approved, will apply to all B-2 zoned properties in the Village.

Commission Member Barrett asked the petitioner to explain the modifications made to the proposed text amendments. Mr. Oliver explained that he researched other facilities in Illinois and incorporated language used in those applications. He discussed the change referencing automobiles to vehicles to accommodate the storage of other vehicles. Explained that many of the people that buy the condos typically like to display their collectibles.

Commission Member Calhoun questioned if the vehicles are required to be registered. Mr. Oliver stated they will be required to be registered. He stated that he proposes to include language in the covenants that will enable Hidden Harbor staff to inspect the units every 30 days and for Village staff to participate in the inspection.

Mr. Oliver reviewed his proposed site plan and discussed the change to some of the units to accommodate the storage of cars and other vehicles in the units. Additionally, a change was made to include a row of units which can be used to store large recreational vehicles. He stated that he is classifying those units as mini-motor caves.

Commission Member Barrett stated that everyone is very supportive of the project. He clarified that the Commission is being asked to consider the activity as a conditional use in the B-2 zoning district and asked for clarification regarding the implications of the change. Attorney Smoron explained that when a use is declared a conditional use, it is considered a permitted use in the district provided that you meet the criteria.

Commission Member Barrett pointed out the location of other B-2 zoned properties situated along the main roadways in the Village and in the downtown district. He expressed that he does not wish to do something that could harm the Village and questioned if action on the request will set a precedence. Attorney Smoron confirmed that it will set a precedence. He explained that the petitioner is asking the Commission for language that is much more expansive than was originally proposed and pointed to language included in the petitioners amended draft which provides for the storage of memorabilia and valuables and explained that the language is broad and difficult to enforce.

Commission Member Barrett stated that he is not a fan of expanding the units to accommodate the storage of recreational vehicles and miscellaneous items. He expressed his concerns with asking the Commission to approve a storage facility in our downtown area and stated that he is more comfortable with limiting the activity to boat storage as a component of the marina. Commission Member Barrett added that he is concerned that Phase II of the development will not occur and the Village will be left with a storage facility. Mr. Oliver suggested striking the language that allows for the storage of collector memorabilia or other valuables and expressed that he was agreeable to restricting the mini-motor caves to the storage of vehicles only.

Commission Member Benck stated that it should be clarified that the vehicles need to be titled. He expressed his support to enable the owners of the motor caves to store vehicles and recreational vehicles but the challenge is to determine how to characterize it so that it does not create complications associated with other B-2 properties. He added that the covenants need to be written in a way to prohibit certain activities such as the owners painting their vehicles on site. Mr. Oliver stated that the covenants regulate business activity on the property.

Mr. Oliver explained that the timing of the development is important because the operations are seasonal and he needs to break ground this Fall in order to take on boat storage next Spring. He stated that if his approval is delayed it will delay the project a year and asked that the Commission move the project forward to the Board. Mr. Oliver stated that he anticipates Army Corp approval in a month and McHenry County DOT approval will be in place by the end of summer. He added that he desires to demo the Jugger Dune building and proceed with a site preparation permit this fall. Mr. Oliver stated that he will pursue all of the improvements and build everything at once rather than phase the project as originally proposed. Commission Member Barrett expressed the importance of pursuing all of the improvements concurrently because he cannot support the idea of something that would result in only storage units in the downtown area. Commission Member Barrett expressed concern that the site plan will continue changing. Village Engineer Tim Hartnett stated that any change to the plan will require the petitioner to republish and come back before the Commission for approval. Mr. Oliver expressed his understanding of the requirement to republish and return before the Planning and Zoning Commission for any change that may occur. He stated that he is on a time limit and needs to progress through the process and added that he just sent preliminary engineering and stormwater calculations to the Village for review. Mr. Hartnett stated that it will take a couple of weeks to complete an initial high level review.

Commission Member Dixon questioned if Mr. Oliver has all of his contractors in place should he receive all of the required approvals. Mr. Oliver stated that he does have his contractors in place.

Commission Member Benck stated that he would like to see the entire development built at once and would like to see strong covenants. Mr. Oliver stated that the Commission's approval is not the final approval and the project will be further scrutinized at the Board level. Commission Member Calhoun stated that the Commission does need to make sure that they are comfortable with the language included in the text amendment as it will apply to all properties with B-2 zoning throughout the entire Village. Commission Member Barrett concurred. Chairman Larsen stated that the Commission needs to have adequate time to make sure they are confident in their decision.

Commission Member Barrett discussed the definitions included in the proposed text amendment and expressed concern with the language that allows for the storage of collectable and personal items. Commission Member Block agreed. Mr. Oliver stated that he is okay with only allowing the storage of vehicles in the mini motor caves and to prohibit the storage of collectables and other items.

Commission Member Benck stated that there should be language that prohibits outside storage. He added that the use should be required to be part of a planned development requiring specific architectural features.

Commission Member Block remarked that the language developed provides helpful guidelines for future requests and expressed support to allow the petitioner the opportunity to move forward. He added that he supports the inspection provisions which allows the Village to participate in the inspections.

Commission Member Barrett pointed out that the conditional use runs with the property forever and if the current project doesn't succeed it can turn into other storage units that are not desired.

Commission Member Block moved to approve the proposed text amendment. Commission Member Calhoun stated that the language should require vehicles to be titled and registered to owner of the unit. Commission Member Calhoun seconded the motion. Commission Member Barrett expressed a preference to see the final version before approving. Commission Member Block amended his motion to add the requirement that vehicles must be titled and registered to the owner of the unit; remove the reference to storage of personal property, collectables, memorabilia and valuables; and prohibiting outside storage. Commission Member Calhoun seconded the amended motion. All Commission Members present voted aye. Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Commission Member Calhoun moved to adjourn the meeting. Commission Member Dixon seconded the motion. All Commission Members presented voted aye on the roll. Motion to adjourn was carried at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Claudett Sofiakis*  
*Village Administrator*