



Public Hearing Item 2: Conditional Use Permit

Planning & Zoning Committee • July 7, 2026

Proposed Use: Tourist Rooming House

Applicable Section(s): 12.110.02; Table 12.110.02(1); 12.125.10(1); 12.125.11(1)

Zoning District(s): RR-1 Rural Residence

Property Owner(s): Schuchardt, Mercer; Schuchardt, Emma

Applicant(s): Schuchardt, Mercer; Schuchardt, Emma

Property Location: Located in the Southwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 20, Town 13 North, Range 7 East

Town: Newport

Parcel(s) Affected: 365.02

Site Address: N8434 County Highway O

Background:

Mercer and Emma Schuchardt, owners and applicants, request the Planning and Zoning Committee review and approve a Conditional Use Permit for a Tourist Rooming House on the aforementioned property. Section 12.155.05(12)(a) of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance defines a Tourist Rooming House as, “A single-family dwelling licensed by the state used as a lodging place or tourist cabin or cottage rented to tourists or transients for the purpose of overnight lodging for a period of not less than 1 night and not more than 30 consecutive days other than ongoing month-to-month tenancy granted to the same renter for the same unit.” A Tourist Rooming House requires a Conditional Use Permit per Table 12.110.02(1) of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance. Parcel 365.02 is listed as Lot 1 of Certified Survey Map No. 6269 and is 5 acres in size. There is an existing single-family residence on site and the property is primarily wooded. The parcel is zoned RR-1 Rural Residence and planned for Agricultural or Open Space land use on the Columbia County Future Land Use map. The septic system was installed in 2004 and is current on maintenance requirements. There are no wetlands present on the property, and a small band of floodplain along on the southern end of the parcel. Land use and zoning of adjacent properties is below.

Adjacent Land Uses and Zoning

Direction	General Land Use	Zoning
North	Agriculture	A-1 Agriculture with A-4 Agricultural Overlay
East	Woodland and Agriculture	A-1 Agriculture with A-4 Agricultural Overlay
South	Agriculture	A-1 Agriculture with A-4 Agricultural Overlay
West	Woodland and Single-Family Residence	A-1 Agriculture

Analysis:

The Columbia County Zoning Code outlines several requirements for a Tourist Rooming House in Section 12.125.11(1) in addition to the Conditional Use Permit. The requirements of this subsection are incorporated in the Recommended Conclusions of Law under Item 8. The property owners are proposing to rent out the home on a short-term basis when they are not using it themselves. Additional restrictions that the property owner intends to impose are included with the preapplication, such as quiet hours and clean-up procedures. Some of these have

been incorporated as conditions of consideration below. It should be noted that the septic system is sized for 4 bedrooms, however the floor plans show that there are 6 bedrooms. A permit was issued in 2012 for an addition to the home; however, the addition included two new bedrooms that were not disclosed to the Department. Ordinance language outlines maximum occupancy based on the size of the sanitary system servicing the home; therefore, a maximum of 8 individuals is included with Condition 11. Additionally, the owners have expressed interest in expanding the septic system to allow for full occupancy of the 6 bedrooms, which would permit as many as 12 individuals. Condition number 11 allows for a maximum of 8 persons until the system is upgraded, at which time occupancy can increase based on the size of the system. At no time shall occupancy exceed 12 persons. The applicant has included two versions of the “house rules” with the applications to account for both occupancy limitations. The owners live greater than a one hours’ drive away, so a 24-hour local has been filed with the Planning and Zoning Department.

Town Board Action:

The Newport Town Board met on May 12, 2026 and recommended approval of the Conditional Use Permit with conditions.

Standards for Review:

The proposed use complies with the General Criteria of Section 12.150.07(4) of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance. See Attachment A for more details.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the Conditional Use Permit for a Tourist Rooming House, subject to the adoption of the following recommended Findings, Conclusions, and Conditions.

Recommended Findings of Fact:

1. Upon review of the guidelines in Section 12.150.07(4) of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance, and with the explanation of the criteria in Attachment A of the Staff Report, the Committee finds the following:
 - a. Mercer and Emma Schuchardt are the owners of the subject property.
 - b. Mercer and Emma Schuchardt are the applicants for a Conditional Use Permit.
 - c. Mercer and Emma Schuchardt are requesting a Conditional Use Permit to operate a Tourist Rooming House within the RR-1 Rural Residence zoning district.
 - d. The property is already developed with a single-family residence on site.
 - e. The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the proposed use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or general welfare of the occupants of surrounding lands.
 - f. The use will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so as to be compatible, and be appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity, and that such use will not change the essential character of the same area such that the use will substantially impair or diminish the use, value, or enjoyment of existing or future permitted uses in the area.
 - g. The erosion potential of the site, based on topography, drainage, slope, soil type, and vegetative cover is minimal.
 - h. There is no existing or anticipated water pollution including sedimentation, and no impacts on floodplain and wetlands.
 - i. Access to streets and highways is suitable, and ingress and egress is designed to minimize traffic congestion and the potential effect on traffic flow.
 - j. The Conditional Use shall conform to the standards of the applicable district(s) in which it is located.

Recommended Conclusions of Law:

1. The subject property is located in the Town of Newport and is zoned RR-1 Rural Residence.
2. A Tourist Rooming House is a conditional use within the RR-1 Rural Residence zoning district.
3. The proposed use is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance.
4. Mercer and Emma Schuchardt are the petitioners for a Conditional Use Permit. The petition followed the procedures of Section 12.150.07(3) of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance.
5. The petitioners are proposing to use an existing single-family residence as a Tourist Rooming House, which is allowed as a Conditional Use under Table 12.110.02(1).

6. The Newport Town Board has reviewed and recommended approval of the Conditional Use Permit, with conditions, in accordance with Section 12.150.07 of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance.
7. The Columbia County Planning and Zoning Committee has the authority under Sections 12.150.03(2)(b) and 12.150.07 of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance to conduct public hearings, review, and decide on requests for Conditional Use Permits.
8. The standards of Section 12.125.11(1) of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance as noted below are applicable:
 - (a) Occupancy shall be presumptively limited to two persons per bedroom. The number of bedrooms cannot exceed the number of bedrooms used to calculate the septic system permit. As part of the conditional use application, an applicant may request an alternative occupancy limit if they can provide substantial evidence that the requested alternative occupancy limit will not adversely affect public health, safety and welfare. An alternative occupancy limit request must also have the recommendation or approval by the town board of the affected town.
 - (b) The number of guest vehicles allowed on site is limited to the number of bedrooms in the tourist rooming house. On-street parking is prohibited. No recreational vehicle or tent may be used for living or sleeping purposes.
 - (c) Must meet all requirements associated with a single-family dwelling in Section 12.125.10(1). The appearance or use of the tourist rooming house shall not be altered in a manner that would cause the premises to differ from its residential character either by the use of colors, materials, construction, lighting, signs, or the emission of sounds, odors, dust or vibrations that carry beyond the premises.
 - (d) The availability of the tourist rooming house to the public shall not be advertised on site.
 - (e) Must be licensed by the State of Wisconsin.
 - (f) Must hold liability insurance covering the use as a short-term rental.
 - (g) In addition to any state required license fee, each operator of a tourist rooming house shall provide Columbia County with an annual fee to enable the County to confirm compliance with the standards of this chapter and fulfill state reporting requirements.
 - (h) The Conditional Use Permit shall not be transferable to another owner.
 - (i) Conditional use permit may be subject to revocation or alteration if the Planning and Zoning Committee finds that these standards, the recommended Conditions adopted by the Planning and Zoning Committee, or the standards for all conditional use permits in Section 12.150.07(4) are not being met.

Recommended Conditions for the Decision:

1. The Conditional Use Permit is not transferable to another owner.
2. Pets shall remain contained on the property at all times, either via leash/lead or within a fenced enclosure.
3. No accessory structure or camping unit shall be used for living or sleeping purposes.
4. Quiet hours shall be established between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am. Quiet means that noise levels at the property line shall not exceed 55 dBA.
5. All fires shall be in a proper fire pit structure and shall be extinguished during established quiet hours.
6. The use of fireworks shall be prohibited.
7. The use of firearms shall be prohibited.
8. Special events or gatherings in which more than 12 people are present shall be prohibited. Gatherings that include people that are not valid guests shall only take place outside of quiet hours. During quiet hours, the only persons on site shall be registered guests, not to exceed eight (8).
9. Parking shall be provided on-site, on either the paved driveway surfaces or in the garage, with a maximum of five (5) vehicles allowed. All off-street parking shall be on a paved or gravel surface and shall be arranged to facilitate easy ingress/egress of all vehicles.
10. Occupancy associated with the Tourist Rooming House shall be limited to eight (8) persons. Occupancy may be increased if septic system is upgraded, at which time occupancy will be limited to two persons

per bedroom, based on the number of bedrooms used to calculate the septic system permit. At no time may occupancy exceed twelve (12).

11. The Planning and Zoning Department and Town Clerk shall be provided proof of liability insurance covering the use as a short-term rental.
12. The Planning and Zoning Department and Town Clerk shall be provided with a 24-hour contact number. The 24-hour contact shall live within a 30 minute drive of the residence.
13. A sign no larger than 12” by 18” shall be placed near the primary entrance door with a 24-hour contact number in case of a complaint or emergency. If the owner does not live within one hour’s drive of the tourist rooming house, there shall be a local contact person.
14. A state sales tax number must be obtained and provided to the Planning and Zoning Department and Town Clerk.
15. Property shall remain free from citation and charges for nuisance, disorderly conduct, or other illegal activity.
16. Garbage and recycled materials shall be properly stored and regularly removed from the property.
17. The owner’s website or other advertising shall state there are conditions associated with this use to maintain a predominately single-family, owner-occupied character of the surrounding area.
18. The availability of the Tourist Rooming House to the public and tourists/transients shall not be advertised on site.
19. A fire inspection shall be completed annually.
20. The appearance or use of the Tourist Rooming House shall not be altered in a manner that would cause the premises to differ from its residential character either using colors, materials, construction, lighting, signs, or the emission of sounds, odors, dust or vibrations that carry beyond the premises.
21. The owner shall comply with and obtain all necessary permits required by applicable federal, state and local regulations.
22. The Planning and Zoning Department shall have the right of inspection for the purpose of determining compliance with this permit during normal working hours or upon reasonable notice outside of normal hours.
23. If the Planning and Zoning Committee finds that the review criteria of Subsection 12.150.07(4) of the Columbia County Zoning Ordinance, or the conditions stipulated in the Committee Decision are not being complied with, the Planning and Zoning Committee, after a public hearing, may revoke the Conditional Use Permit.
24. In addition to any State required license fee, each operator of a Tourist Rooming House shall provide the County with an annual fee and an annual report on a form furnished by the County to confirm compliance with any applicable requirements or conditions of approval.
25. Any agreement(s) or condition(s) pertaining to this Conditional Use Permit between the Town of Newport and Mercer and Emma Schuchardt are hereby incorporated as part of this Conditional Use Permit; however, the County is not responsible for enforcing said agreement(s) or condition(s), unless an individual point of the agreement(s) or condition(s) is specifically included above as a condition of approval. Any additional Town agreements or conditions are listed below. In the event that the Town submits a finding of noncompliance with any of the item(s) listed below, for which the County has not assumed direct enforcement authority, upon written request by the Town, the County reserves the right to review the Conditional Use Permit.
 - a. The Town’s short-term rental ordinance shall be followed.

Section 12.150.07(4): Criteria for review of all Conditional Uses

Re: Public Hearing Item 2: Schuchardt CUP

**Staff comments are italicized after each review item.*

Review Criteria. In reviewing the conditional use permit the Planning and Zoning Committee shall use the following as guides for making a decision.

- (1) The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the proposed use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or general welfare of the occupants of surrounding lands. *The use as a vacation home is similar to other single-family uses in the area but the occupancy is short term and typically not by the owner. Issues which could be seen as having the potential to be detrimental appear to be able to be adequately mitigated by the application of conditions of approval.*
- (2) The use will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so as to be compatible, and be appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity, and that such use will not change the essential character of the same area such that the use will substantially impair or diminish the use, value, or enjoyment of existing or future permitted uses in the area. *The single-family residence is existing, and nothing will be done to the house to change its appearance. There will be no change to the physical character of the area. Operating within the conditions of approval will ensure that the proposed use will not substantially impair or diminish the use, value, or enjoyment of existing or future permitted uses in the area.*
- (3) The erosion potential of site based on topography, drainage, slope, soil type, and vegetative cover. *The development is existing; therefore, the potential for erosion is limited.*
- (4) The prevention and control of water pollution including sedimentation, and the potential impacts on floodplain and wetlands. *The site is already developed.*
- (5) The site has adequate utilities, including if necessary acceptable disposal systems. *There is an existing system serving the residence, and it is current on maintenance requirements.*
- (6) Access to streets and highways is suitable, and ingress and egress is designed to minimize traffic congestion and the potential effect on traffic flow. *Ingress and egress to the site is from an existing driveway. The level of activity from the proposed use will not create congestion or affect traffic flow above and beyond the existing use on the property as a single-family residence.*
- (7) The Conditional Use shall conform with the standards of the applicable district(s) in which it is located. *The proposed Tourist Rooming House must comply with the conditions of approval as well as the standards set forth within the Columbia County Zoning Code, specifically 12.125.11(1).*

