



# WHEATON CITY COUNCIL PLANNING SESSION MINUTES

MAYOR PHILIP J. SUESS

COUNCILWOMAN ERICA BRAY-PARKER | COUNCILWOMAN LEAH BRICE | COUNCILMAN SCOTT BROWN  
COUNCILMAN BRADLEY CLOUSING | COUNCILWOMAN LYNN ROBBINS | COUNCILMAN SCOTT WELLER

WHEATON CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 303 W WESLEY STREET, WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60187

Monday, December 8, 2025

## I. Call to Order

The Wheaton City Council Planning Session was called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Mayor Suess following the conclusion of a public hearing. The following were:

Physically Present: Mayor Suess  
Councilwoman Bray-Parker  
Councilwoman Brice  
Councilman Brown  
Councilman Clousing  
Councilwoman Robbins  
Councilman Weller

Absent: None

City Staff Present: Michael G. Dzugan, City Manager  
William Kolschowsky, Assistant City Manager  
Dawn Didier, City Attorney  
Robert Lehnhardt, Director of Finance  
Erik Berg, Management Analyst  
Halie Cardinal, Public Relations Coordinator

## II. Approval of Planning Session Minutes – November 24, 2025

The Council approved the November 24, 2025, Planning Session minutes.

## III. Group Care Home Draft Ordinance, Chapter 26/Article VI

City Manager Dzugan provided an overview of the City's group care home (GCH) regulations. Regulations for GCHs were first enacted in 1993 and focus on GCHs that seek a City license and lack a state or federal license. The chief concern of regulations is to ensure the safety of residents of the GCH and neighbors. In developing this ordinance, staff sought expert legal guidance and consulted federal legislation such as the Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The proposed ordinance also incorporates research from the State of Illinois on GCH best practices.

City Manager Dzugan then reviewed the draft ordinance. The term "group care home" is meant to encompass multiple terms – halfway houses, transitional housing, recovery homes, etc. – that refer to a residential dwelling serving individuals with specific needs. The City would issue a license for the GCH provided it meets the City's criteria and does not already have a state or federal license. The ordinance includes additional standards for a GCH, including staffing ratios, background checks, financial stability, and clear admission and discharge procedures. A GCH that has a license from a different governmental entity must register with the City for building inspection purposes.

A GCH would pay the nonrefundable application fee, license issuance fee, and annual renewal fees, should the license be approved. Staff would review the application within thirty days of its submittal,

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and, if the GCH meets the criteria established by the ordinance, then its license would be approved by the Director of Planning and Economic Development. The term for a license would be one year and must be renewed annually. An applicant has the right to appeal any denial, revocation, or nonrenewal to the City Manager, who would then forward it to the Council for review.

In response to a Council question, City Manager Dzugan stated the ordinance allows the Director of Planning and Economic Development to consult with other relevant staff before making a determination.

City Attorney Didier clarified, in response to a Council question, that the City would give the owner an opportunity to rectify building code or life safety issues before issuing fines to the owner of the GCH.

In response to a Council question, City Attorney Didier stated that a GCH for persons with disabilities that meets the City's definition of "family" – under which four unrelated members can live in a single dwelling unit – would not need to apply for a City license. But, if the number of unrelated occupants exceeds four, then the City can require the GCH to apply for a City license.

City Manager Dzugan stated that staff would review Council and public comments, conduct further research, and present an ordinance to Council at a later meeting.

### **IV. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **V. City Council/Staff Comments**

Councilwoman Bray-Parker reflected on her participation in the Reindeer Run and thanked the Wheaton Park District and the Lions Club for their efforts in hosting the event. Mayor Suess added that this year's Reindeer Run had one of the highest turnouts ever, at 1,380 runners.

### **VI. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully,

Erik Berg