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TOWN NEWSLETTER

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FALL

2006

FIVE CORNERS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

By: Gary L. Wickert, Town Supervisor

So much has happened so quickly in the ongoing daytime soap opera between the City of Cedarburg and the Town, that one of your Town Board's biggest challenges is keeping Town residents informed. It is my hope that this short article will be just one small step toward that end. Explaining the City's actions in recent history is no small task, however, as much of what they have done and continue to do seem to defy explanation. In a quote from the 1990 movie, *The Two Jakes*, Jack Nicholson said, "You can follow the action, which gets you good pictures. You can follow your instincts, which'll probably get you in trouble. Or, you can follow the money, which nine times out of ten will get you closer to the truth." The truth behind the City's behavior of late is revealed when you take the time to follow the money.

The Town is on a roll. We have kept your taxes in check and we have a spectacular and robust Five Corners town center planned and underway. The Five Corners Master Plan was developed with the help of and consultation from experts – including environmental experts – and a twelve person citizen committee which includes the former president of the Cedarburg Chamber of Commerce, the former Chamber executive director, owners of downtown Cedarburg businesses, and long-time town residents, as a response to a large number of proposals for business development in the Five Corners area received by the Town over the past few years. Since much of the Five Corners area is in an environmental corridor (due to wetlands in the area), very little of the land there is suitable for development, and the Town's challenge was maximizing the land which is available for development with high-quality buildings that hid paved surfaces and provided retail and professional office space. This commercial center is limited in scope and aimed at creating tax revenue without adding children to the schools or other traditional burdens on municipal government associated with residential development. Over the past decade we have successfully labored to preserve the Town's rural character in 99% of its 25 square mile territory, while concomitantly planning and creating a vibrant town center. The plan is perfect – except for one small problem. The City would like to extend its sewer and water to



Gary L. Wickert (pictured above)

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NOTES & REMINDERS

Town Hall will be closed on the following days:

Thursday, November 23 & Friday
November 24. Friday, December
22 & Monday, December 25. Fri-
day, December 29 and Monday,
January 1.

Hunting Permits are required in the
Town of Cedarburg and are avail-
able at the Town Hall.

Town Ordinance prohibits the
burning of yard waste and leaves.
Only clean wood may be burned.
Please compost or use the Town
facility for the disposal of yard
waste.

Daylight Savings Time Ends Sun-
day, October 29th.



(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

this area, annex it, and develop it themselves.

Last fall, the City annexed nearly 300 acres of prime Town land, including a chunk of land stretching from Baehmann's Golf Center on Washington Avenue east to Cedar Creek, and crossing Highway 60 to the north just west of Highway I. At the same time, the town had been attempting to negotiate a boundary agreement with the city which will protect the town's Five Corners business district and its residents' tax base. The town's initial efforts to even discuss a possible boundary agreement with the city were rebuffed, as was a simple request for a 30 day moratorium on annexation until the possibility of a boundary agreement could be explored. With no other options to explore, the town was forced to oppose the annexation by filing a civil complaint – the traditional method of contesting such annexation overtures in Wisconsin. However, State laws that disfavor Towns from contesting annexations and additional annexations eroded the potential for success in that contest, so the Town voluntarily dismissed it and the annexations became permanent.

On March 15, 2006, the City declared its intent to exercise its extraterritorial zoning (ET'Z) jurisdiction over the Five Corners area. Around this time, they also voted to restrict lot sizes to 35 acres or more, preventing farmers who have worked hard their entire life from selling their land to developers. After a public outcry, the City backed off, but now claimed that the DNR had asked them to take steps to thwart the development. A News Graphic editorial by Matt Schroeder quickly pointed out that this simply wasn't true.

Located to the southwest of the Town Hall, the approximately 95 acre Prochnow landfill was an active landfill operated by the City and Town in the 1960's. Any potential contamination flows to the south/southeast toward the City's water wells – not to the north toward the Five Corners Development. The DNR has indicated that a large athletic field complex on this property would be the perfect use of the property, but the City has other ideas in mind. Does anybody really think the DNR or the EPA would have approved the development of the Grafton State Bank, Subway, Manpower, a Chinese restaurant or the Cedarburg Town Hall if, as the mayor suggests, public health and safety were an issue? All Town officials and staff drink daily from the Town Hall well water.

One cannot blame the City for wanting the dynamic Five Corners area for their own development. It will be the paradigm of a town center. But no matter how often we repeat the phrase that Cedarburg is "one community" – which is true - the City's extraterritorial zoning and plat approval authority has effectively frozen development in the Five Corners area, frustrating developers who have already invested a lot of money in the area and potentially frightening other developers who had grand plans in conjunction with the Five Corners Master Plan. When cities exercise such extraterritorial authority, state law requires that a joint committee – known as a Joint Extraterritorial Zoning Committee (JETZCO) and comprised of three city residents and three town residents – be created to vote on any development in the disputed area. Recent news stories detail the difficulty this group of six has had in getting together. But the reason for the difficulty leads us back to the City. The Town and City disagree as to how the JETZCO is to function, and there is very little law on the subject to guide us.

Rest assured that the Town has not taken any of this laying down. Blessed with good legal advice and a disproportionate amount of experience in these matters, the Town has taken action to ensure that the interests of town residents are protected as the vision of the Master Plan moves forward. Although it is like David standing up to Goliath, the Town acted quickly this year to create a Town Center Overlay District (TCOD) over the entire Five Corners Master Plan area. This means that no zoning changes or plat approvals will be necessary for future development in this area. Alas, there will be nothing for the City to disapprove or reject. Furthermore, it is the Town's position that the City failed to give themselves the requisite enforcement and permitting powers which they need in order to prevent the Town from enforcing and administering its own zoning ordinances. Oops. Any attempted amendment of their ordinance to correct these deficiencies must go before the six person JETZCO Committee, which most assuredly will not pass them. Therefore, the Town will be moving forward with its plans as expeditiously and judiciously as possible. You can expect a lot of discussion about allegedly contaminated wells, about aggressive growth, and about evaporating rural character. The truth, however, is that the City wants the Five Corners area for itself. Seemingly adversarial relationships are natural with growing pains such as these. The process isn't pretty to watch, but the results will be spectacular for all Cedarburg residents.

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Town Code Recodified

The Town of Cedarburg Code of Ordinances recodification was approved by the Town Board at their October 4, 2006 Town Board meeting. The recodification project began in the summer of 2004 when a Request for Proposals was sent to three national codification firms. After reviewing cost proposals and references from the three firms, the Town awarded the project to General Code of Rochester, New York. General Code then spent approximately four months generating an editorial analysis of the Town Code, including conflicting state statutory sections that had been amended through the years. The Town Plan Commission and Town Board spent many months at evening meetings reviewing the editorial analysis by General Code and making appropriate amendments. Once the Town concluded their review and provided their comments, General Code reformatted, digitized and produced a draft Code of Ordinances. The Town Board, at their September 13, 2006 Town Board meeting, set a public hearing for October 4, 2006 to formally approve the recodification of the Town Code. All amendments were made available at Town Hall for public inspection prior to the October 4, 2006 public hearing.

To review the newly recodified Town Code of Ordinances, please go to the Town of Cedarburg web page at www.town.cedarburg.wi.us and select the Town Code link on the left side of the web page.

Fiscal Year 2007 Budget

The Town Staff and Town Board began the Fiscal Year 2007 Operating Budget process earlier than normal this year. The process began by creating formal policies or guidelines for follow for this budgets in the policy frame-insight to the the Town's ated and pro-ers from large swings in tax collections/increases by mandating minimum undesignated reserve balances in the general fund and ancillary funds.



the Town to budget and all future. This work provides public on how budget is cre-tects the taxpay-

The Town will be holding several budget meetings in the month of October and will be having a formal budget public hearing in either late October or early November. If you have any questions regarding the process or the budget itself, please review the Town web page for further information or contact Town Hall.

From the Office of the Building Inspector

By: Roger Kison, Building Inspector

With the newspaper accounts of a slowdown in new homes being built, a look back into the Town's past numbers was in order

Since 2000 the total number of homes built is 180. This includes 11 for 2006 which is 6 behind last year at this time. The highest amount in one year was 2000 which was 39. The past 3 years has remained consistent with an average of 26 new homes per year.



A few reminders:

* Check smoke detector batteries; all homes should have one detector per floor, including basement. A smoke detector in each bedroom is highly recommended.

* Digger's hotline number is 1-800-242-8511. Please call before starting your exterior addition, deck, accessory building or pool project.

* If any future structures are being built near creeks, ponds or streams, please contact Ozaukee County Department of Planning, Resources & Land Management at 262-238-8313. For any permits they may require.

David and Lisa Graff Awarded Town of Cedarburg 3rd Annual Preservation Award!

David and Lisa Graff of 7925 Kaehler's Mill Road were recently awarded the 3rd Annual Town of Cedarburg Preservation Award for their efforts in preserving 800 square feet of an original 1870's era farmhouse on their property. Landmarks Chairman F. Eric Utz and the other Landmarks Commissioners presented the award to the Graff's during a reception which featured local architects from Kubala-Washatko, neighbors and the Landmarks Commission.

Dan Benicke Reaches 30 Years with Town!

The Town Board provided a \$100 gift certificate to Cabella's and a cake to Dan to thank him for his continued service to the Town.



Visit Subway at 5 Corners to see Santa Claus on December 8-10, 15-17, 22 & 23!

Subway at 5 Corners is open extended hours for your convenience. Open from 8 am to 9 pm. Monday through Saturday and Sunday from 8 am to 8 pm



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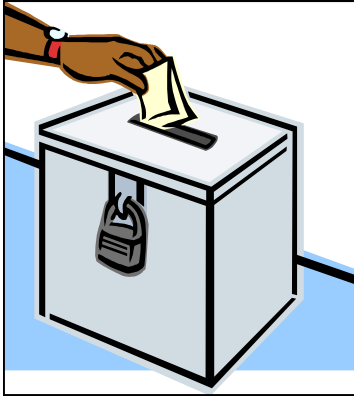
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GENERAL ELECTION INFORMATION

The Fall General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2006

At the General Election, voters have the option of voting a straight party ticket or voting for candidates of more than one political party. A straight party vote will mark a vote for all candidates in that political party.



Absentee ballots for the November 7th General Election will be available approximately 30 days before the election. Absentee Ballots can be obtained at the Town Clerk's Office located at 1293 Washington Avenue or by mail. An "Application for Absentee Ballot" form is required to obtain an Absentee Ballot and is available at the Town Hall or the Town website (www.town.cedarburg.wi.us). Upon receipt of your application, a ballot will be mailed to you. Absentee voting is also available in the Town Hall until 5:00 P.M. on the day before election.

Voter registration is required in the Town of Cedarburg. You must provide proof of Town of Cedarburg residency in order to register to vote. Voter registration can be accomplished at the Town Clerk's Office, or at the polls on election day. You also have the option of registering by mail; however, you must include a copy of your identification (i.e. drivers license) or your registration cannot be processed. The Voter Registration Application is available on the Town website or the Town Hall.

If you are unsure of whether or not you are currently registered, please contact the Town Clerk's Office at 377-4509.

The Town of Cedarburg has two polling places. If you live in Ward 1, 2, 3, 4 or 10, you would vote at the Town Hall located at 1293 Washington Avenue. If you live in Ward 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9, you would vote at the Country Keg, 1814 Washington Avenue. The polls open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m. for all elections.



Entity	Web Address
Town	www.town.cedarburg.wi.us
City	www.ci.cedarburg.wi.us
Chamber	www.cedarburg.org
School	www.cedarburg.k12.wi.us

**2007 TOWN BUDGET PUBLIC
HEARING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2006
7:00 P.M.
CEDARBURG TOWN HALL
1293 WASHINGTON AVENUE
CEDARBURG, WI 53012**

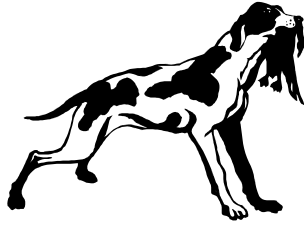


RECYCLING CENTER HOURS
THURSDAYS 12:00 NOON - 6:00 P.M.
SATURDAYS 9:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.



Hunting within the Town

As the Town continues to develop, the areas where it is permissible to hunt or discharge a firearm are becoming less numerous. Town ordinances (Section 9-2-1), state statutes and WDNR regulations provide the guidelines by which a person can hunt or discharge a firearm within the Town of Cedarburg. Several of the key Town Ordinance requirements are explained below. Please contact the Town Hall for a full copy of the Regulation of Firearms ordinance.



- No firearms shall be discharged within **150 yards** of any residence dwelling.
- No person shall hunt or discharge a firearm within the Town unless that person has in his/her possession a Firearm Discharge Permit signed by the person and the landowner of the property on which the firearm is being used.



The banks of Cedar Creek are private property. A person may walk and hunt from within the water of a navigable stream, following

the WDNR's "Keep your feet wet" rule. Hunters must be aware that if the game is shot while standing within the stream and lands on the bank of the stream, permission is required from the property owner to retrieve it.

According to s. 943.13, of the Wisconsin Statutes, it is illegal to:

- Enter land of another without the express or implied consent of the owner or occupant of the land.
- Enter or remain on land after having been notified by the owner or occupant not to enter or remain. A person has received notice from the owner or occupant if he or she has been notified personally, either orally or in writing, or if the land is posted.

Regulations will be enforced by Town Constables, the Ozaukee Sheriff's Department or WDNR wardens.

New Brush Chipping Schedule

The Town of Cedarburg has modified its times for chipping brush. The Town will perform brush chipping from **April 1st to October 15th**. The volume of chipping requests received from October 15th to March 31st is so low that it is not cost effective to mobilize our brush chipping operation. The procedure for having your brush chipped will remain the same as in the past. Requests should be called in to the Town Hall. When there are a sufficient number of requests (usually 5 or 6), the crew is sent out with the chipper. The requests are processed according to date and location. Chips will be dumped at the Town of Cedarburg recycling yard for public use.



Cedarburg Fire Department Annual Safety Day

The Cedarburg Fire Department will be hosting its annual Safety Day on Saturday, October 14, from 12 to 3 p.m. at Firemen's Park in Cedarburg. It is open to all members of the public and there is free admission.



The Cedarburg Fire Department's annual Safety Day covers all aspects of public safety for residents of every age. Representatives and equipment from many federal, state, and local public safety agencies will be present, and demonstrations, hands-on events, and kids activities will be held throughout the afternoon. Features include two helicopters (Army and Flight-for-Life), vehicles from the Milwaukee Mile, and demonstrations of auto extrication, canine search and rescue, and tasers.

Watch the *News Graphic* for a complete listing of participating organizations and activities.

Introducing Dave Flowers, New Town Supervisor and Michelangelo of Environmentally Friendly Wastewater Treatment Systems

By: Joshua A. Smith, Town Administrator

Republic of Korea. Bucharest, Romania. Puerto daz, Venezuela. McMurdo Naval Station, Antarctica. Cuernavaca, Mexico. These places represent a once-in-a-lifetime trip for many people. For new Town Supervisor Dave Flowers, they represent just another day at the office. Nicknamed "Mr. Cleanup" by the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* in a February 20, 2000 article, Dave has been called on by the US Government, foreign governments and private companies to handle environmental messes worldwide. In addition to his international work, Dave has also been involved in cleaning up Lake Ontario, worked on an environmental mitigation project in the Detroit River/Lake Erie area and designed improvements to a large wastewater treatment/advanced irrigation recycling facility north of San Francisco Bay. Did we mention he was also integrally involved in cleaning up Boston Harbor?



New Town Supervisor Dave Flowers, is a twenty-five year resident of Cedarburg.

An environmental engineer by trade, he concentrates on the design and construction of environmentally-friendly wastewater treatment systems.

Examples of these systems can be seen at Kettle-Moraine High School (Jackson), and the Riveredge Nature Center (Newburg).

Impressive as the above-noted accomplishments are, his work performed closer to home may be his most remarkable. Dave responded to Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School's need for handling their wastewater since they did not have access to a local wastewater collection system. A daunting challenge, considering there were no prototypes of this system anywhere in the Upper Midwest – except his own. In another *Journal Sentinel* article dated July 7, 2002, the one-year report card after the completion of the Kettle Moraine system indicated straight A's. The system was designed with plants and microbes in three separate basins to remove dirt, food wastes and other pollutants before the water was allowed to drain into urban streams. The basins were covered with native wetland and prairie plants. The biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) at the

time the *Journal Sentinel* article was written indicated the BOD level was one-fifth of the state limit. A similar system was successfully installed first at the Riveredge Nature Center in Newburg, where Dave and his wife Patty are dedicated volunteers.

How did such a talented and environmentally world-renowned individual end up in Cedarburg? As with most non-indigenous residents of Cedarburg, the historic charm and proximity to jobs in the metro area lured Dave, his wife Patty and four children to the area twenty-five years ago. They lived in the city of Cedarburg for nineteen years and have been residents of the Town for the last six years. All four of their children attended and graduated from Cedarburg schools. David by education is an environmental engineer specializing in water and wastewater treatment. He graduated from Clarkson University, in Potsdam, New York in 1972 and is a registered professional engineer in Wisconsin & Michigan and a certified wastewater treatment plant operator in New York. He is a board certified environmental engineer by the National Academy of Environmental Engineers. He serves on the board of ABC, an international certification board for water and wastewater operators throughout the US and abroad.

Dave currently is president and owner of Natural Water Solutions, LLC, founded in 1989, providing engineering services to municipalities, industries, and foreign governments. For an encore to his successful projects, Dave applied for and currently holds four patents for engineered wetlands.

Dave's experience in local government and civic organizations include serving on the Sewerage Commission for the City of Cedarburg for over 11 years and being an assistant scoutmaster for Boy Scout Troop 830. He believes in giving back to the community and does so as an active member of the Cedarburg Lion's Club and as a dedicated volunteer at Riveredge Nature Center. Dave and Patty are members of the *Revive the Rivoli* committee, which has already raised over \$350,000 in private funding. When asked about what he enjoys, he simply indicated spending time with his granddaughter whenever possible. As for Dave's most recent accomplishment, the Michelangelo of environmentally friendly wastewater systems is now simply known as Town of Cedarburg Supervisor, Wards 1, 2 & 10.

WANTED

Volunteer to care for flowers at the Town Hall during the 2007 growing season. Please call the Town Hall (377-4509) if you are interested in donating your time to help beautify the Town

From the Town Chairman

I feel honored and humbled at having been elected as the new Town Chairman by the Town Board of Supervisors to serve the remainder of Jerry Voigt's term. I have a great deal of respect and admiration for Jerry Voigt, who honorably served our Town for over 30 years. I also respect his decision to retire and I will fulfill the duties and responsibilities of the Town Chairman to the best of my ability.

For those of you who do not know me, I have lived in the Cedarburg community since 1968. My wife Darla and I have two grown, married and successful children and we have been blessed with a wonderful granddaughter. We have been Town residents since 1974. I know that still makes us "newcomers," but we have been involved in a wide variety of local activities, including all types of youth sports, Safety Town, Pre-School, Booster Club, Jaycees, Jaycettes, Lions Club, etc. etc. I am also a retired Army Lieutenant Colonel with 24 years service and served 7 months in the mid-east during the Gulf War as a Unit Commander. My full time profession is Vice President of Network Safety Consultants. I have served on the Town Board since 1996.

I thought it important that everyone know at least a little about the Town Chairman.

So what is happening around our Town?

We have had several major accomplishments over the past year. We all know about the new Fire Station at 5 Corners. In August 2006, we finished a new shelter at the Pleasant Valley Nature Park. It is available for private use by Town residents and City residents by reserving it at Town Hall. The 5 Corners Master Plan has been developed and everyone can see there is plenty of activity in that area. The new architectural standards established are on display at the Five Corners Commons, just west of the Town Hall on Hwy. 60. This area will be the focus of future commercial and light industrial development for the Town. The commercial/retail/light industrial development in the 5 Corners area will serve the community well and at the same time increase the Town tax base.

We have continually fought to hold the line on taxes every year I have been on the Town Board. I promise we will continue our efforts. With new rules handed down from the State, this is a growing challenge. We started the budget process in June. (Yes, June). Growing health care costs is one of our major concerns, but again we have been both innovative and resourceful, allowing us to actually lower health care costs last year without cutting benefits to any extent.

We have initiated a new trash collection container system. You

probably have seen the "Blue Cans" on trash collection days. These are really a great deal. The price is low, they are very easy to move, they are guaranteed for 10 years and by using these containers we have sped up the collection process and reduced the potential for back injuries to our employees. The containers are on display at the Town Hall. If you are thinking about replacing your trash container or want to make the whole process easier for yourself, stop in and check out the three (3) sizes.

You probably have all heard about or witnessed the strife between the Town of Cedarburg and the City of Cedarburg. It is very unfortunate and the biggest challenge facing the Town at this time.

Everyone needs to know we are looking out for the best interest of all the Town taxpayers during these trying times. It would be fiscally irresponsible and morally unacceptable to allow the City to annex, confiscate or otherwise "swallow-up" the 5 Corners area of our Town to increase the tax rolls of the City. No matter what the latest smoke screen the City employs (like worried about the quality of the water or it's too dense or concerned about the rural character of the Town or the Town Board being "Un-American"), the bottom line is they want the 5 Corners area in the City to help with their sewer/water costs and increase THEIR tax base.

Do I like to be at odds with the City? No.
Do I enjoy seeing our community divided? No.
Will I accept turning the keys to 5 Corners over to the City? No.

We didn't start this fight, but we will not run away from it either.

I encourage anyone who is interested in Town government, Town policies or simply just wants to know "what is going on" to attend a Town Board Meeting. The meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month at 7PM, unless otherwise noticed. To keep up-to-date with the activities and happenings in the Town of Cedarburg, we have a monthly electronic newsletter available. You can sign up at the Town Hall to receive the electronic newsletter. We already have almost 500 households receiving this monthly communication.

Dave Valentine
Town Chairman

Public Works Notes

Thomas Marquardt, PE - Director of Public Works



Concrete Driveways

Town Ordinance 4-4-1(c)(7) states that “Concrete pavements shall end a minimum of ten feet (10') from the Town road pavement.” The area between the concrete and the edge of the pavement shall be constructed of gravel or asphalt pavement. All new and reconstructed driveways shall be constructed in this manner.

The reasoning behind this ordinance stems from our snow plowing operations. When snow is plowed from the roadways, the shoulders are also cleared of ice and snow. As the plow blade or plow wing rides along the shoulder, it can easily slide over a gravel or asphalt driveway. If an asphalt driveway is projecting above the roadway or shoulder, the plow may catch its edge but the material is soft enough to be sheared off. This can give the plow driver quite a bump, but is not extremely damaging to the plow. If a concrete driveway projects above the roadway and is hit by the plow blade, it has no give and can cause extensive damage to the plow and possible injury to the driver. We have had instances where such an impact has broken the plow mount on the truck and required the vehicle to be taken out of service. The potential for damage or injury is reduced by keeping the concrete driveways 10 feet back from the edge of the pavement.

Weed Spraying

The Town of Cedarburg does several types of herbicide spraying within the town road right-of-ways. All of our sprays are “general use” herbicides that can be purchased from any lawn and garden store. The first spraying operation occurs in the spring, to control the weed growth around sign posts and markers where our mowers cannot reach. This is a non-selective Glyphosate product. It will control all weeds and grasses. We have a sprayer bar which attaches to the side of a truck. This setup is used to spray the roadway shoulders for control of weed growth along the roadway shoulders. This product is also used in a weaker solution during July and August to control the spread of Purple Loosestrife. The second type of spraying is for poison ivy in the roadside ditches. The herbicide used to control this plant is a 2,4-D, post emergent application from a wand sprayer. Records of sprayed areas are kept at the Town Hall and on-site markings are as shown in the photo.

Liquids, Oils and Paints in the Garbage

Refuse collection is not the cleanest operation by its nature. It is our desire to keep all of the waste materials (solid or liquid) within the refuse truck until it is emptied at the transfer station. Liquid waste, oil (cooking or motor) and paint are prohibited from collection by Town Ordinance 6-3-7(j). These materials will not pack like the solid refuse and collect in the bottom of the refuse truck causing leakage and spillage. Liquid waste, cooking oil and latex paints must be drained or soaked-up with a material such as cat litter. Motor oils can be brought to the Town Hall during open recycling hours. Oil-based paint must be taken to the hazardous waste disposal site in Port Washington. Please keep these materials out of our waste stream.

Clearing Driveways for Emergency Vehicles

It is the desire of many homeowners in the Town of Cedarburg to have a secluded residence connected to the roadway by a narrow tree-lined driveway. This scenario, while attractive, can create a life threatening situation when a fire truck or rescue squad must respond to the residence. A fire truck or rescue vehicle can be as much as 12 feet high and 8 feet-4 inches wide. Driveways should be cleared to accommodate a vehicle of this size. Tight turns in the driveway will require additional width to maneuver a 35 to 45 foot fire truck into a position where it can be used most effectively to fight a fire. The time to clear your driveways is before the need arises. If you have questions about the amount of clearance required, please contact the Town Hall or the Cedarburg Fire Department.

History of the Kaehlers Mill Settlement

Carol D. Boettcher - Town Landmarks Commission, Local History Researcher

At the intersection of present day Covered Bridge and Kaehlers Mill roads in the town of Cedarburg was the local crossroad community of Kaehlers Mill. According to Uhlig family history, the Carl Uhlig family emigrated from Saxony, Germany, in about 1847. The family had been millers in their native town. Upon reaching the port of New York, Carl passed away in Buffalo, NY. His widow and five children left, settling on 80 acres in the town of Cedarburg, which encompassed almost one quarter mile of Cedar Creek.

Uhlig family history is unclear whether son, Carl F., actually built a grist mill which was destroyed by fire, or if he went bankrupt before the completion of it. His occupation is listed as "farmer" in the 1850 Federal U.S. census and there were no "millers" to be found in the immediate area leading this author to believe that perhaps he did begin building a mill, possibly met with a setback and decided selling out was the more prudent option.

Johanna Sophia Uhlig (Carl sr.'s widow) sold the west 1/2 of the northwest 1/4 of Section 10 to J. H. Kaehler (1795-1875?) for \$4,000 on 14 October 1851. The family is then said to have moved to Nebraska.

John Henry Kaehler is said to have immigrated to the United States from his homeland in Schleswig-Holstein (near Denmark) about September 1851 with his wife, daughter, and two sons. With the purchased of the 80 acres John began improving and farming the land. Within the next few years his daughter, Caroline, would marry and build a home just north of her parents. Sons Peter and William moved to Port Washington and began working for Barnum Blake, a well known entrepreneur, who owned several piers, a 'shook shop', and lumber yard, just to name a few.

In April 1858, he married Adelaide Blake (1841-1935), the daughter of his employer, Barnum Blake. An ambitious man at an early age, Peter Kaehler aspired to become a merchant in Port Washington having established a store there in 1859. It is said that he petitioned the legislature for permission to become a merchant before the legal age of 21. In April of 1859, he left for New York City "to procure a stock of spring and summer goods" for his store. By 1860, he had established a profitable thriving merchant business in downtown Port Washington, employing two clerks. One was his brother, William, and the other was a young Luxembourger.

His real estate was valued at \$12,000 and his personal property at \$6,000. This was an extraordinary sum of money for someone who was just 22 years old at the time, placing him among the wealthiest citizens in Port Washington. Consider that his next door neighbor, Joseph Goldsmith, who was 50 years old and also a merchant by occupation, had real estate valued at \$12,000 as well, however his personal property was \$25,000! Only three other people owned real estate valued higher than Peter: his father-in-law, Barnum Blake, who was 44 years old, owned \$30,000 worth of real estate; Lion Silverman, a 41 year old tavernkeeper, and Edward Dodge, a 46 year old blacksmith, each owned \$20,000 worth of real estate. By comparison, the only banker in the city at the time, James Vail (who was 33) had \$10,000 in real estate and just \$2,000 in personal property. The average farmer's land was valued at about \$800-\$1,000.

During the late 1850's and into the 1860's, at least one grist miller and one saw miller tried to establish business in the settlement area. By 1860, Charles Müller was working in the grist mill, while Anton Boehm, a Bohemian immigrant, was running a sawmill. It is not currently known when Kaehler took over ownership of both mills.

Probably upon the death of his mother, Sophia (1800-1865?), Peter moved his young family to his father's Town of Cedarburg property. At some point Peter acquired one third of an acre from the Krohn family on Cedar Creek. This is the land which is believed to have been the site of the grist mill. Wheat and rye were the staples of life for nearly all inhabitants as these were the grains which needed grinding to become the integral ingredient in bread.

After the move, Kaehler became active in local politics and civic enterprises. He was on the executive committee for the Ozaukee County Agricultural Society which was responsible for operating the annual county fair. He provided services for the town and lumber for many area building projects.

He owned prize winning livestock, garnering blue premiums for draft horses, sheep and pedigreed Shorthorn cattle, as well as yellow oats and yellow dent corn.

At some point it is said that he established a general store on the corner of present day intersection of Kaehlers Mill and Covered Bridge roads since he had previously operated such a business in Port Washington. The store may also have functioned as post office for local residents to send and receive mail. Several mill cottages are said to have been located near the intersection as well.

The decade of the 1850's saw huge increase in wheat which was rapidly becoming a popular cash crop for farmers. Ground flour could be sold to merchants who would, in turn, sell and ship it out to points further west. At the close of the 1860's, wheat production and sales began a decline. Soil depletion began to take its toll. When the Panic of 1873 hit Wisconsin its residents experienced a depression worse than the one which had occurred in 1837.

Gradually, the market for wheat began to collapse with the arrival of 'wheat rust', a nasty fungal problem, which devastated yields for several years, along with smut. The final blow inflicted was the chinch bug. Slowly, the disproportionate reliance on wheat led to the rise of the growing dairy industry, which required the cultivation of different crops.

Mills powered by water have always been at the mercy of nature and Kaehler's were no different. When rainfall was scarce, the amount of water moving through the creek bed was usually not sufficient to power the gears. With the advent of too much rain or melting snow, there was always the risk of the dam collapsing, mill races washing away. Such were the vagaries of the mill business.

Sometime after the Civil War, John Peter Schlax, a Prussian immigrant, settled on a small plot of land at the present day intersection of Covered Bridge and Pleasant Valley roads. He established a blacksmith shop which served area residents north of the creek repairing plows, making sure horses were properly shod and creating many other useful items such nails, hinges and doorlatches. John was a veteran of the war having served in company C of the 129th Illinois infantry. He died under tragic circumstances when an area farmer and his son noticed smoke and flames coming from his home.



Peter Kaehler home circa 1950

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The mills fell into disrepair after the Kaehler family moved to Chicago in the late 1880's following a very lengthy and nasty court battle over property taxes. He established a grain, feed and flour business and left his wife a sizable estate when he passed away in 1902.



The last traces of the mills disappeared in 1903 when the lumber and metal were salvaged and sold off. The only buildings remaining from this settlement are the blacksmith shop (located on the former Krohn homestead) and the store which has since been converted to a single family residence. The mill race is still visible in winter months.

Advertisement for Kaehlers dry goods store. Note that he was just 19 years of age when this ad was taken out. From the Ozaukee County Democrat dated 7 Nov 1857.

(For further references, please check the Town's website at www.town.cedarburg.wi.us)

1293 Washington Avenue
Cedarburg, Wisconsin
53012-9304

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CEDARBURG, WI
PERMIT #275

Current Resident

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