

to make a purchase until on a 137-acre parcel just west of Epic.

That's only the beginning of the process, as the \$690,000 offer is far below the more than \$5 million being asked. And with only \$140,000 put away in its building fund, the town also would need to borrow money for such an endeavor, which means going before voters in its annual meeting.

reason the issue came up this summer, she said: "The fact that this property came up for sale."

Johnson noted that it went on the market this spring and the board subsequently discussed it a few times in closed session at her prompting.

"I have had my eye on that interchange for years,"

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## Council approves comprehensive plan

**By Jim Ferolie**  
Verona Press editor

Just a few months shy of its deadline, the city finally has a comprehensive plan.

The Common Council voted unanimously Monday night to approve the plan, which is essentially the city's handbook for the next 20 years or so on issues of development, growth and management of its resources. Comprehensive plans were essentially required by

the state's Smart Growth legislation, first enacted in 2000. All municipalities — cities, towns and even counties — must have one on file by Jan. 1, 2010, or risk having their decisions contested as invalid.

The plan as Verona approved it is several hundred pages long — about 500, plus a variety of appendices, maps and references to other documents — and took almost two years to put together. A com-

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## We're not worthy!

A group of spectators on Whalen Road bows and cheers for 28-year-old Sarah Klingel of Plano, Ill., who grins with amusement as she goes by. The group showed its admiration for each Ironman Wisconsin contestant as they passed, and why not? Not just anyone can complete a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride and a marathon in a single day. Watching Ironman competitors has become an annual ritual for Whalen Road residents, and thousands of people come from out of town to see the bikers travel North Main Street at the Loop Festival.

More photos: Page 16 and in the ConnectVerona.com photo galleries

Jim Ferolie photo

## Statewide campaign makes debut at Miller's

**Seth Jovaag**  
ified Newspaper Group

Miller and Sons Supermarket has a local institution for more than years.

On Saturday, the Verona grocery store will be the launching point for a

different kind of "buy local" campaign, when state officials unveil a marketing program designed to boost grocery sales of food produced or packaged in Wisconsin.

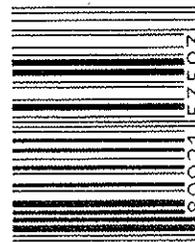
The "Something Special from

Turn to **Local** Page 2

## If you go

**What:** "Grocers Buy Local" launch  
**Where:** Miller and Sons, 210 S. Main St.  
**When:** 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday  
**Info:** Visit [thrivethere.org/localfood](http://thrivethere.org/localfood)

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## TOWN HALL

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she said.

The property, owned by the Gust family and rented out for farming, is within a couple blocks of the County Highway G interchange west of the city, an ideal location for trucks carrying salt, gravel or asphalt or to conduct other public works duties. It also is in an area highly unlikely to be surrounded by the city, as the current Town Hall on North Nine Mound Road is.

"That portion of the Town of Verona is probably going to remain Town of Verona for some time," Johnson said, noting that about half of the property is wetland.

Johnson said last week she had discussed the property with Gust's real-estate agent, Molly Freitag, but had not done any sort of negotiating on behalf of the town.

Freitag didn't agree with the town's assessment of its value, noting that part of it,

between Country View Road and the Military Ridge State Trail, is close to land Epic has paid hundreds of thousands of dollars for and is in an area the town has labeled in its plan for potential future development.

"I did a very thorough market analysis," she said, listing several sales in the area she compared the property to. As of Monday afternoon she had heard from town representatives but had not received the offer.

"I gave them the material (months ago), but I also gave it to about 50 other people," she said.

Most of the property, though, is listed on city, town and county plans as future farmland preservation area and assessed at about \$200 an acre because it is active farmland. The town based its purchase offer at about \$10,000 per tillable acre, or around

\$5,000 per acre overall, a typical rate for land with questionable short-term development potential.

Both the city and town have drawn plans at one time or another for a north-south alternate route from that highway off-ramp through that property – the interchange has a much higher capacity than is currently being used – but such plans are complicated by the proximity of the Sugar River. A bridge would be expensive, and the sensitivity of the waterway could add layers of red tape.

"Dane County said not a chance will the county ever be building a bridge off that wetland area," Johnson said.

The cost of a building hasn't been determined, but Johnson said what's needed for office and public works uses might cost around \$1 million.

## PLAN

Continued from page 1

mittee of nine people – the mayor, one alder and seven citizen representatives with a broad range of interests – made most of the decisions on what to include, what to change and what to remove. They took not only their own experiences and personal interactions with other Veronans but also drew input from four city-sponsored public forums and responses from interested parties who had been directly mailed various pieces of the plan.

The committee received more than 500 suggestions and comments on the plan.

The Plan Commission also requested some minor changes last week after getting public comments from two people at its formal public hearing.

The plan includes nine chapters, as mandated by law. They are:

- Issues and opportunities

(current situations in Verona and challenges, such as high growth and a relatively high proportion of residential property)

- Housing (including the city's policy on limiting it)

- Transportation (including future roadways and a recommendation to support public transport)

- Utilities and community facilities (such as the library, parks and plans for future infrastructure)

- Agricultural, natural and cultural resources (including the city's policies on farmland preservation and stormwater management and a limited nod to historical preservation)

- Economic development and agriculture (including plans for promoting business and agriculture and using room tax revenues)

- Intergovernmental cooperation (with neighbors and

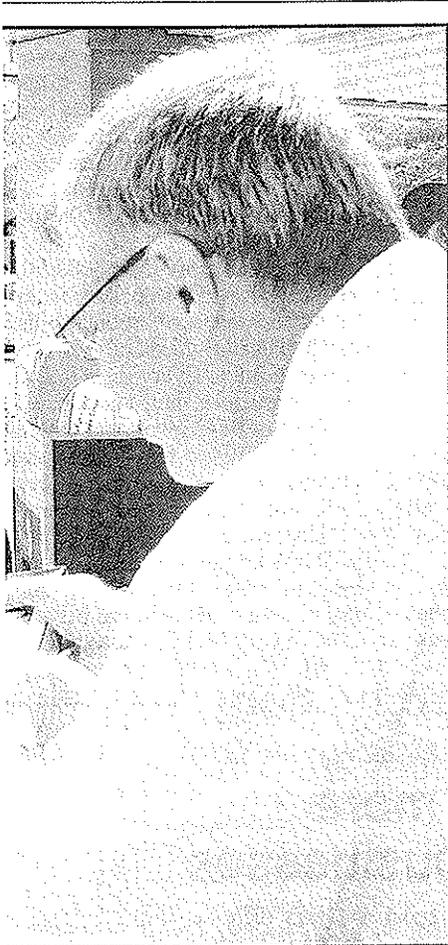
regional entities, as well as the local school district)

- Land use (directing growth inward and outward, including the downtown)

"It doesn't get overly prescriptive," city planner Bruce Sylvester responded to an alder's question Monday. "It does lay out very broad goals."

Because of the cumbersome size of the full document (available at [ci.verona.wi.us](http://ci.verona.wi.us) and at City Center and the Verona Public Library), the city will print summary brochures for each of the nine chapters. These will be available to anyone upon request, as will electronic copies of the entire plan on disc.

The plan becomes effective after copies are sent to a variety of governmental bodies and representatives for the non-metallic mining industry, as provided by statute. Sylvester said that would take about a month.



Jim Ferolle photo

back boxes of food items for the Verona put on by Kiwanis on Saturday. The group supermarket, handing out a list of needs in the store. This was the fourth load in.

## seniors invoice

gh May 31, and activities ded to Town nts," the let-

ter misses is e ultimatum ie town was nty's support nt to five of services. in fact, bud- \$35,000 for a 40 percent the year ers made it at they would ag than com- he roughly ag they had

Combs asked fellow supervisors at the Sept. 8 meeting. "The February letter laid out pretty clear they were going to use county allocations."

The county has dropped some of its support to senior centers in 2009 and might very well drop even more in 2010.

As a concession, Combs said he was considering having the town make a donation to the Verona Senior Center for five months' worth of the costs the town has incurred since it began providing its own services. That drew shoulder shrugs and nods, with supervisors aware that the town has mostly used vol-