

PLANNING COMMISSION
June 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Pursuant to due call and notice, the Thief River Falls Planning Commission met in the Thief River Falls City Council Chambers on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, at 5:00 P.M. Board Members present: Averill, Lee, Lindberg, Narverud, Nelson, Parker, Shaffer. Members Absent: Reierson, Sjoberg. Others present: Borseth, Sparby, Wayne Johnson, Troy Stauffenecker, Eric Eastman, Mary Jo Myklebust, Angie Westling

APPROVE AGENDA:

Narverud called the June 13, 2023, Planning Commission meeting to order. Lee approved the agenda; Shaffer seconded the motion.

APPROVE MINUTES OF MAY 9, 2023 MEETING:

Lee made a motion to approve the May 9, 2023, Planning Commission meeting minutes with the correction listing Mike Parker as present. Shaffer seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

COUNCIL ACTIONS

The city council approved the easement language amendments.

HEARING - NORTHERN PRIDE VARIANCE REQUEST:

Borseth presented the information on the Northern Pride variance request. Northern Pride would like to place a Co2 tank on the west side of the former Northwest Beverage building located at 419 Pennington Avenue that they purchased in 2021. The building is almost to the property line on the north side and 13 feet from the property line on the west side. They are requesting a 35' variance to the 35' rear yard setback. No public comments were received. Parker asked why Northern Pride chose the west side of the building and not the south side where the parking lot is. Borseth stated there are two sanitary sewer mains on the south side, their loading dock, and employee parking lot which needs to be large enough to meet the off-street parking requirements. Wayne Johnson with the Water Department stated that this is a unique situation because they have no room on the north side, their loading dock & power is on the south side, and they did their due diligence to look over every option they had. The west side is the least intrusive for everyone. He stated the variance and easement would not impede the Water Department's operations in any way.

Nelson made a motion to approve the variance request contingent on the city granting the easement. Parker seconded the motion which carried. The recommendation will go to the City Council for approval at the June 20th City Council meeting.

HEARING – F4 LLC CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REQUEST:

Borseth presented the information on the F4 LLC conditional use permit request. F4 LLC purchased vacant property south of Cenex located at 2014 US Highway 59 Southeast and are currently building a car & truck wash. F4 LLC applied for a conditional use permit to not require screening because the site is adjacent to a street.

The city recently added buffer strips as a conditional use to allow a performance-based approach & to review each scenario. If the property is adjacent to streets or alleys, they do not require a 35' buffer unless required by a conditional use permit because the street acts as the buffer.

Mary Jo Myklebust who lives nearby stated that she has had issues with long grass & garbage coming into their yard from other commercial properties in the area. She is hopeful that the car wash will contain their garbage and recommends a row of trees along the boulevard on the Hanson Drive residential side of the car wash property.

Angie Westling, one of the car & truck wash owners, stated that none of the owners would have a problem with the city planting trees on the boulevard. They would be concerned if the city expected them to put up screening/fencing as that would cost thousands of dollars, depending on how long it would have to be. The building is set far back from the residential side, and the building was positioned so that no headlights would shine into the residential area. There will also be no option for vehicles to turn in that direction after exiting the car wash. Narverud stated he will bring the boulevard tree request to the Public Works committee. If approved by the city, trees would most likely get planted next spring. After discussion, Lee made a motion to approve the conditional use permit – no buffer required. Lindberg seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

OTHER:

Nelson asked about the Sanford Hospital demolition and if there are any updated plans. Borseth stated they still have not disclosed their plans.

Borseth stated that the city is in the process of hiring a firm to do another housing study. The last one was done in 2012. The Gracewin developer may still be interested in building a senior living apartment building. The Angle is still in idle mode. The interest rates and construction costs are so high right now.

ADJOURNMENT:

Lee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 P.M. Nelson seconded the motion, which carried.