

PLANNING COMMISSION
Wednesday, March 19th, 2025

#1 Call to Order

Planning Commission Chair Gorham called the meeting of the Brainerd Planning Commission to order at 6:00 pm in the City Hall Council Chambers.

#2 Roll Call

Noted present were Commissioners Petersen, Grecula, Gorham, Higgins, and Erickson. Members Norwood and Powell were noted as absent. Also noted as present was Community Development Director Kramvik.

#3 Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Peterson opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

#4 Approval of Agenda

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS PETERSON AND GRECULA, DULY CARRIED, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

#5 Approval of Minutes

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS ERICKSON AND GRECULA, DULY CARRIED, TO AMEND AND APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 19TH, 2025 REGULAR MEETING BY EXPANDING ON THE COMMENTS FROM KEVIN YEAGER AT THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR ST. FRANCIS CAMPUS.

#6 New Business

6a. Consider Interim Use Permit for the Operation of a Year-Round Warming Shelter – 1926 S 7th St

Community Development Director Kramvik reviewed the application for the renewal of the warming shelter Interim Use Permit, which expires June 30, 2025. He indicated they are also requesting to allow the shelter to operate year-round and not just in the winter months as is currently allowed.

The Chair opened the public hearing at 6:05 pm.

The Chair recognized Jana Shogren, director of Bridges of Hope who gave detailed counts of people the shelter has helped the past three years. She addressed the concerns regarding police and EMS calls to the shelter and feels the quantity of calls is not extreme when you factor out health and medical concerns that could happen anywhere.

The Chair recognized the following people who spoke in favor of the renewal and expanding services to year-round:

- Rachel Zetah, Adult Services Supervisor for Crow Wing County
- Bill Wear, representing the Bridges of Hope and the Bridge on 7th
- Kathy Dufour, 17077 Pine Circle Rd
- Ed Shaw, 521 9th St N
- Elizabeth Johnson, currently staying at the shelter
- Randi Rickem, 710 S 8th St
- Matt Karlgaard, board member at Bridges of Hope

The Chair closed the public hearing at 6:32 pm.

Commissioner Erickson indicated the initial request from 2021 described this as a warming shelter for winter months, not as a homeless shelter. He stated the incident report from PD was concerning.

Commissioner Gorham is in approval due to stating this is a community to help and encourage people to do the right thing.

Commissioner Higgins asked Jana Shogren what was being done to address the police incidents. Ms. Shogren indicated there are volunteers, community services, and Bridges of Hope resources.

Commissioner Petersen approves of the trial period for the summer to give them a chance.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS PETERSEN AND GRECULA TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE INTERIM USE PERMIT RENEWAL OF THE SEASONAL PERMIT SEPTEMBER 1ST – APRIL 30TH THROUGH JUNE 30TH, 2028 AND A TRIAL PERIOD FROM APRIL 30TH THROUGH AUGUST 31ST, 2025 FOR THE WARMING SHELTER AT 1926 S 7TH ST ALONG WITH THE CONDITIONS PROVIDED.

Upon roll call, Members Petersen, Grecula, and Gorham voted “aye”. Members Erickson and Higgins voted “nay”. The Chair declared the motion carried.

CDD Kramvik indicated this will be heard at the City Council meeting April 7th, 2025 at 7:30 pm.

6b. Consider Conditional Use Permit for a Boarding House on NW 3rd St – My Neighbor to Love

Community Development Director Kramvik indicated Vicky Kinney, on behalf of My Neighbor to Love, has applied for a conditional use permit to construct a boarding house on NW 3rd Street. He gave a brief review of the request and details regarding all the projects’ timelines. The boarding house would operate very similar to a college dorm, as the boarders share bathroom and kitchen facilities. Along with the conditional use permit, there will be a boundary line adjustment for the two parcels to accommodate the stormwater retention pond. The extra extension to 18 months is due to grant applications, deadlines, and grant allocation.

The Chair opened the public hearing at 6:54 pm.

The Chair recognized Vicky Kinney, who is the applicant on behalf of My Neighbor to Love Coalition. She explained boarding houses operate differently than a shelter, as a boarding house room occupant can arrange to stay several days, months or permanently by paying a rental fee.

The Chair recognized Ed Shaw, 521 9th St N, who is in full support of the project and gave examples of other boarding house models in Brainerd.

The Chair recognized Mike Higgins, 1801 Mill Ave, who is in support of the project as he had a family member that needed to utilize this type of housing. He also stated these properties should be held accountable the same as other rentals.

The Chair recognized Mike Duval, 468 Tyrol Dr, who gave a detailed explanation of density requirements shown in the TN-2 Zoning District and this does not meet those requirements. He also indicated that the current projects do not meet deadlines and site stabilization requirements and is not in favor of approving the project.

The Chair closed the public hearing at 7:14 pm.

Commission discussion took place, and Director Kramvik explained the TN-2 Zoning Code regarding commercial uses.

The Commission Chair requested Vicky Kinney to step up to the podium to give them a timeline of the projects which are as follows:

1. The 4-plex at 310 Jackson Street has been completed, and a sprinkler system was installed last summer to try and aid in the development of the grass.
2. The new 12-plex at 620 3rd St NW broke ground in September 2024 and was completed March 2025, with the landscaping requirements being done this summer 2025.
3. The next two building projects on 3rd St NW will break ground this spring with a completion date of spring of 2026.
4. This CUP request is Phase Four which starts in 2026, but the grant process needs to be addressed now for funding opportunity.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS PETERSEN AND ERICKSON TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW FOR A BOARDING HOUSE AT THE PROPERTIES INDICATED ON NW 3RD ST PID'S 41040800 AND 41040801 AS PRESENTED.

Upon roll call, Members Petersen, Erickson, and Grecula voted "aye". Members Gorham and Higgins voted "nay". The Chair declared the motion carried.

CDD Kramvik indicated this will be heard at the City Council meeting April 7th, 2025 at 7:30 pm.

6c. Consider Conditional Use Permit for Vehicle, Trailer, and Equipment Sales – 1801 Mill Ave

Member Higgins recused himself from this topic.

Community Development Director Kramvik stated Mike Higgins applied for a conditional use permit to allow sales of trailers and equipment at the industrial center at 1801 Mill Avenue.

The Chair opened the public hearing at 7:31 pm.

The Chair recognized Mike Higgins, owner of Brainerd Industrial Center who stated a tenant approached him about using space to sell trailers and equipment. There may be another client looking to sell small accessory buildings in another section of the lot. Any signage that is proposed will be addressed by applying for a permit.

The Chair closed the public hearing at 7:33 pm.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS ERICKSON AND PETERSEN TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW FOR OUTDOOR SALES OF TRAILERS AND EQUIPMENT AT 1801 MILL AVE AS PRESENTED WITH THE ADDITION OF REMOVING THE SCREENING REQUIREMENTS IN THE ZONING CODE FOR OUTSIDE SALES USES.

Upon roll call, Members Petersen, Grecula, Erickson and Gorham voted “aye”. No members voted “nay”. The Chair declared the motion carried.

CDD Kramvik indicated this will be heard at the City Council meeting April 7th, 2025 at 7:30 pm.

#7 Unfinished Business

7a. Review Data Center Ordinance

Community Development Director Kramvik presented the completed data center ordinance to the Commission for approval.

Commission discussion took place.

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS ERICKSON AND HIGGINS, DULY CARRIED, FOR A PUBLIC HEARING TO BE HELD AT THE APRIL 16TH, 2025 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING FOR RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE THE DATA CENTER ORDINANCE AS PRESENTED.

#8 Public Forum

The Chair opened the public forum at 7:41 pm.

The Chair recognized Chuck Marohn, 616 4th St N, who spoke about street vacations and future consequences of doing so from a public safety standpoint. A street vacation should also have a public benefit, and not just for the property owner’s benefit. He also brought up the issue of housing and the ordinance that restricts the demolition of homes for other land uses.

The Chair closed the public forum at 7:47 pm.

#9 Staff Reports

Community Development Director Kramvik made the following updates:

- City Council approved the preliminary plat for St. Francis but wanted to see a master plan before any further action takes place.

- City Council approved the resolution to deny Paradigm Auto's rezoning request and directed staff to enforce the ordinance.
- Staff have been reviewing underdeveloped rental properties and will be sending a development opportunity letter to those property owners with their annual rental housing renewal applications.

#10 Commission Member Reports

None

#11 Adjournment

MOVED AND SECONDED BY COMMISSIONERS PETERSEN AND ERICKSON, DULY CARRIED, TO ADJORN AT 7 50 PM.

Don Gorham, Planning Commission Chair