

PLANNING COMMISSION
June 10, 2025, 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 10, 2025, at 5:00 P.M. Board Members present: Averill, Lee, Lindberg, Narverud, Retka, Nelson, Shaffer, Sjoberg. Absent: Reierson.
Others present: Blake Kuznia, Kuznia Construction

APPROVE AGENDA:

Sjoberg called the June 10, 2025, Planning Commission meeting to order. Lee approved the agenda; Averill seconded the motion.

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 30, 2025, MEETING:

Lindberg made a motion to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes from April 30, 2025. Lee seconded the motion, which was carried unanimously.

COUNCIL ACTIONS:

The council approved the amendment to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for the 5.07 acres of Sanford parcel from medium-high density to high density for The Edge development.

The council approved rezoning 5.07 acres from AG to R-4 high density for The Edge development.

The council approved the appointment of Jim Retka to the Planning Commission.

PUBLIC HEARING – VARIANCE REQUEST FOR NEXUS CHURCH:

Sjoberg opened the public hearing for Nexus Church, 246 Kendall Ave North. Blake Kuznia applied for a variance to the setback requirements on Nexus Church's behalf to install an ADA compliant wheelchair ramp. The only financial & geographically feasible location is on the south side of the building which hovers over the property line. The ramp will be 60" wide and approximately 50 feet long. The ramp will be connected to the southwest entrance and slope down to the east. A sidewalk will be installed at the end of the ramp and extend to the alleyway.

Blake Kuznia gave a short presentation on the proposed project detailing the location chosen.

After discussion, Lindberg made a motion to grant a five-foot (5') variance allowing for a zero setback from the property line for building an ADA compliant ramp. The project meets all criteria. Nelson seconded the motion which carried unanimously. This recommendation will be referred to the City Council at their meeting on Tuesday, June 17th.

REVIEW & DISCUSSION OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM MODIFICATION AND TAX INCREMENT FINANCING PLAN FOR TIF 1-16.

Baker presented information regarding a modification to the development program and tax increment financing (TIF) plan establishing TIF district 1-16: The Edge which is a workforce housing economic development district.

By state statute, the recommendation for tax increment financing should come from Planning & Zoning. A sample letter from the Planning Commission chair was presented. The letter states that the commission has reviewed the program, and the written opinion of the commission either conforms or does not conform to the general plans for development.

Narverud made a motion to send an approval letter to the city council that the program & plan conform to the general development of the city. Lee seconded the motion.

NEED FOR A MAXIMUM FENCE HEIGHT ORDINANCE DISCUSSION:

Baker had a request from a homeowner to erect a 12-foot fence. After reviewing city ordinance, the city does not have maximum fence height. If the fence is over eight feet and may take on a wind load, footings need to be designed by a structural engineer. Baker reviewed Duluth's ordinance, and they limit front yard fences to 4 feet, and rear yard fences to 8 feet. The Planning Commission is interested in further research from other communities.

ADJOURNMENT:

Lee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 p.m. Nelson seconded the motion which carried.