

**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**SOUTH ST. PAUL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**April 1, 2026**

CHAIR FEHRMAN CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 7:00 PM ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2026.

1) ROLL CALL

Present:

- Tyler Fehrman
- Tim Felton
- Geoff Fournier
- Tracy Haye
- Andrew Hoffman
- Brianne Miller
- Alex Wegehaupt

Absent:

- None

Staff Present:

- Michael Healy, Planning Manager
- Monika Miller, Associate Planner

2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA –Motion to approve the agenda as amended– Hoffman/Haye (7-0).

3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 4, 2026 –Motion to approve the minutes as presented– Miller/Hoffman (7-0).

4) PUBLIC HEARINGS

~~A. Conditional Use Permit for a Bingo Hall at the Southview Shopping Center~~

*The item was withdrawn by the applicant prior to the meeting.*

B. Sign Variance for Anytime Fitness at the Southview Shopping Center

Ms. Miller presented the staff report. The applicant, Tony Wind on behalf of Anytime Fitness is requesting a variance to install signage for his business which will be located in the northernmost suite of the Southview Shopping Center. The amount of signage currently at the Southview Shopping Center exceeds the amount of signage that is allowed for a single property with C-1 zoning and so a variance is necessary for the applicant to install his desired signage. Staff laid out the practical difficulties that are associated with applicant's request, and

the unique signage needs for multi-tenant retail facilities. Staff crafted a strategic set of conditions for the variance that would allow the approval to address the signage needs for the northernmost building at the Southview Shopping Center. Staff recommend approval of the proposed variance.

The Commissioners discussed the master sign plan process and asked staff for additional details about the proposed signage.

The applicant, Tony Wind, was present to speak to the application. Mr. Wind shared his background and why he selected South St. Paul as the location for his business.

Chair Fehrman opened the public hearing. No one was present to comment on the Application. Staff shared an email received prior to the meeting with questions about the application but no real comments. Chair Fehrman closed the public hearing.

The Commissioners discussed the amount of signage that they felt was appropriate for the site. The Planning Commission came to the conclusion that the amount of signage proposed through the variance for the northernmost building was appropriate.

Motion to recommend approval of a sign variance for the Southview Shopping Center, subject to conditions- Hoffman/Fournier (7-0).

#### C. Twin City Hide and Tanning Planned Unit Development Extension

Mr. Healy presented the staff report. The Applicant, Twin City Hide and Twin City Tanning, is requesting an extension to their planned unit development approval from 2017. The planned unit development approval is for a total redevelopment of their facilities over the course of five phases, which has allowed the business to continue to operate while the redevelopment is occurring. The business is requesting a 3-year extension to complete the final phase of their development. There have been several delays throughout the redevelopment process, including supply chain challenges during COVID, software issues with the new state-of-the-art equipment, and the discovery of contaminated soils which needed to be remediated. The applicant believes they can complete the final phase of the redevelopment in the next three years. Staff recommend approval of the planned unit development extension, subject to conditions.

The Commissioners discussed with staff whether the planned unit development approval required phase five of the redevelopment to be completed and the average length of an extension for a development approval.

Paul Rogosheske, the attorney for Twin City Hide and Twin City Tanning, was present to speak on the application. Mr. Rogosheke detailed the improvements that have been made to the hide and tanning plant through the previous phases of the redevelopment and the importance of the phase five improvements.

Chair Fehrman opened the public hearing. No one was present to comment on the application and no comments were received prior to the meeting. Chair Fehrman closed the public hearing.

Motion to recommend approval of an amendment to Twin City Hide's conditional use permit for a planned unit development granting a 3-year extension- Hoffman/Fournier (7-0).

D. Ordinance Updating Zoning Requirements in the R-2 Single-and-Two Family Zoning District

Mr. Healy presented the staff report. Following a discussion with the Planning Commission in March, the City is proposing a code amendment that would update lot size requirements for duplexes in the R-2 Single- and Two-Family Residence district. This zoning district already allows both single-family homes and duplexes as permitted uses. Currently, any buildable lot can be used lawfully as a single-family home whereas a property that does not have any “grandfather rights” can only be used lawfully as a duplex if the lot is at least 60 feet wide and at least 7,200 square feet in size. The lot size and lot width requirements are creating significant logistical challenges for the rental licensing program and are arguably no longer needed based on other changes that have been made to the City Code. The proposed ordinance would allow lawful duplexes on 50-foot-wide buildable lots in the R-2 district and allow duplexes on smaller buildable lots if an improved alley is present.

There are many duplexes in the R-2 district that have “grandfather rights” to exist on lots that are smaller than 7,200 square feet because they were built before the City had any zoning rules or before increased minimum lot size requirements for duplexes were introduced in 1965. Owners of duplexes will often reclassify their building as a single-family home to save money on property taxes and, in doing so, they forfeit any grandfather rights their duplex may have had. Many of these duplex properties are not on 60-foot lots so they are unable to ever be legally considered duplexes again after the grandfather rights are gone, even though the building still contains two separate dwelling units (kitchen, bathroom, and bedrooms) with separate accesses and lockable doors. It is unlawful for the 2nd unit to get a rental license, since technically, that unit does not exist.

The owners of single-family homes that are laid out like duplexes are strongly incentivized to skip getting a rental license if they owner-occupy one of the two units. Their building will show up in tax assessor records as a fully homesteaded single-family home, so the City has no good way of knowing that there is a secret second unit which is being rented out unless Staff receives a complaint and an investigation reveals that rental activity is taking place. Whenever these building owners do the right thing and come in for a rental license, they are limited to renting out all or part of the building as if it is a “single-family home with two kitchens.” This essentially means that the building still operates as a duplex, but the owner only needs to pay for a single-family home rental license, so they get a price break every year when they must renew their rental license.

The Planning Commission had a highly technical discussion and asked City Staff a number of clarifying questions about single-family homes, duplexes, and twinhomes and how City Staff and the Dakota County Tax Assessor draw distinctions between the different housing types when there seem to be so many gray areas (i.e. single-family homes with 2 kitchens and/or 2 separate dwelling units). City Staff explained how the zoning rules are administered and provided some insight into how the code enforcement process works for zoning violations and rental licensing violations.

Ultimately, most of the Planning Commissioners agreed with City Staff that this is not a policy change ordinance and is instead a narrowly tailored policy refinement ordinance related to the geometry of home lots in the R-2 district. They agreed with City Staff that the ordinance will reduce gray areas and make it easier for the Planning Department and the City Clerk to conduct code enforcement and properly license rental buildings that are clearly being used as duplexes even though they are licensed as rental single-family homes. Commissioner Fournier shared that he once owned a duplex in South St. Paul on a 40-foot lot, and he agrees with City Staff that this type of property can support a duplex with comfortable living conditions for the occupants.

Commissioner Felton disagreed with the other Planning Commissioners and indicated that he still feels that a duplex needs to be on a lot that is at least 60 feet wide. He shared during the discussion that he believes that the owners of smaller properties have enough options already and do not need the option of having their building be considered a lawful duplex. He noted that a lawful single-family home that contains two complete dwelling

units (separate kitchens, separate bathrooms, and separate bedrooms) could legally be used by a multi-generational family who are all related to each other, so there are lawful ways to use such a building without needing a rental license. He expressed that some members of the community feel that there are too many rental dwellings in town, and he worries that making more properties eligible to be lawful duplexes could lead to more rental activity.

City Staff reiterated that the proposed ordinance is not a policy change and the R-2 district's explicit purpose is to allow single-family homes and duplexes to exist together in the City's older low-density neighborhoods. There is no proposal to allow duplexes in any neighborhoods that do not already allow duplexes. City Staff also noted that it is extremely expensive to outfit a home with a secondary dwelling unit (separate kitchens, separate bathrooms, and separate bedrooms) for multi-generational living. Most residents are not going to want to invest the money to add a secondary dwelling unit if their hands are tied and the only lawful way to use the building is multi-generational living and the second unit cannot be rented out legally if one generation passes away and the other generation wants to keep living at the property.

Chair Fehrman opened the public hearing. No one was present to comment on the application, and no comments were received prior to the meeting. Chair Fehrman closed the public hearing.

Motion to recommend approval of an ordinance amendment updating the zoning standards for single-family homes and two-family homes in the R-2 zoning district- Miller/Hoffman (6-1) (Felton).

5) NEW BUSINESS

A. Planning Commission Officer Elections

The Planning Commission held elections for the Chair and Vice Chair.

Commissioners Fehrman, Miller, and Felton were nominated for the Chair position. Commissioner Felton was elected to the role of Chair during the second round of balloting with four out of seven votes (Hoffman, Fournier, Felton, and Haye).

Commissioners Miller and Haye were nominated for the Vice-Chair position. Commissioner Miller was elected to the role of Vice Chair during the first round of balloting with five out of seven votes (Wegehaupt, Miller, Fehrman, Hoffman, and Fournier).

Both officers will serve in their new roles starting at the May 6, 2026 meeting.

6) OTHER BUSINESS

None.

7) STAFF UPDATES

None.

8) ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn- Hoffman/Miller (7-0)