



**Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2026
6:30 PM**

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Blees called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

COMMISSION

Patrick Blees, Chair
Andrew Wise, Vice-Chair
Arthur Alvarez, Jr., Commissioner
Cameron Muhic, Commissioner
Pete Marcaccini, Commissioner
Vito Sauro, Commissioner

STAFF/LIAISONS

Jason Nordby, City Council Liaison
Ken Roberts, Community Development Director
Chris Cherne, Planning Commission Secretary

III. ADOPT AGENDA

Blees asked for a motion to adopt the April 2, 2026, meeting agenda.
M/Wise, S/Muhic.
Motion carried 6-0.

IV. PRESENTATION

A. Planning Commission Introductions

The Planning Commission members introduced themselves and gave a brief summary of their background and experience.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of March 5, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Blees asked for a motion to approve the March 5, 2026, Meeting Minutes.
M/Alvarez, S/Marcaccini.
Motion carried 6-0.

VI. MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments.

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Conditional Use Permit Application – 2121 Holloway Ave E

Cherne presented the Conditional Use Permit Application – 2121 Holloway Ave E item to the Planning Commission. Ligogo Muholeza, the property owner at 2121 Holloway Ave E, submitted an application for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow for the conversion of a portion of the attached garage on his property into an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). The proposed project includes a two level ADU with a total square footage of 1,258 square feet. An ADU is allowed as a conditional use subject to the supplemental ADU regulations in the zoning ordinance. Staff find that all the ADU regulations, key considerations, and CUP review criteria are satisfied by the proposal except that the zoning ordinance limits the maximum square footage of an ADU to be 900 square feet. Staff recommend that a condition of approval should be that the applicant shall amend the floor plans to show a square footage of no more than 900 square feet for the proposed ADU. Other recommended conditions of approval include submittal and approval of construction plans for all required permits, new exterior materials be consistent with the existing design and colors of the principal structure, the submittal of the Applicant for a new Sewer Availability Charge (SAC) determination with the Metropolitan Council and the payment of required SAC fees, and finally that the Applicant coordinate with North St. Paul Electric to determine whether the establishment of an independent electrical utility connection and meter will be required for the ADU project.

Alvarez confirmed that the proposed entrance to the ADU is on the backside of the structure. Roberts stated there are a couple options for the Applicant moving forward. One option is to revise the plans to decrease the ADU size to 900 square feet. Another option would be to apply for a variance request to proceed. Blees stated it would be difficult for the applicant to demonstrate practical difficulties in accordance with the variance regulations. Sauro stated that the proposed ADU seems to be a good use of the space.

Chair Blees opened the public hearing at 6:47 PM.

The Applicant Ligogo Muholeza, 2121 Holloway Ave E, shared his and family's history of living in the City of North St. Paul and their desire to convert a portion of their large, attached garage into an ADU. Muholeza stated he was shocked to hear that the maximum space of an ADU is limited to 900 square feet. Muholeza stated the ordinance is understandable but is restrictive for his property that has a very large house already, which is not as common in North St. Paul.

Chair Blees closed the public hearing at 6:58 PM.

Wise stated that this ADU case is different because the space is already attached to the principal structure. Wise stated he would be open to looking at amending the ADU regulations in the ordinance in the future to fit situations such as this. Roberts recommended the Planning Commission add a new condition that if the ordinance is ever amended to allow for an ADU with the size that is originally proposed, the original proposal will be automatically approved.

Blees asked for a motion to recommend City Council approval of the CUP to allow for the ADU at 2121 Holloway Ave E with the added condition as described by staff.

M/Alvarez, S/Muhic.

Motion carried 6-0.

Chair Blees asked for a motion to direct staff investigate an amendment to the ADU ordinance regarding maximum square footage.

M/Muhic, S/Marcaccini.

Motion carried 6-0.

B. Variance Requests – 2357 7th Ave E

Cherne presented the Variance Requests – 2357 7th Ave E item to the Planning Commission. The Applicant for the variance requests is the City of North St. Paul. The Applicant is seeking a variance from the residential districts lot requirements and the off-street parking standards for residential districts in the North St. Paul zoning ordinance. These variances are requested in order to proceed with a minor subdivision of the property at 2357 7th Ave E. The Applicant is proposing to divide the existing parcel into two lots. The proposed western lot would be more than 50 feet wide, and the eastern lot would be 40.93 feet wide. The zoning ordinance requires a minimum lot width of 50 feet for each lot in the R-2: Mixed Residential Zoning District. The Applicant is requesting City approval of a lot width variance of 9.07 feet on the eastern lot. The Applicant also is requesting a driveway setback variance of 1.5 feet from the wide lot line for both new parcels.

The subject property is located in the R-2: Mixed Residential Zoning District and will have the use of Townhouse Dwellings once construction is complete. Townhouse Dwelling is a permitted use in the district. The lot at 2357 7th Ave E is irregularly shaped due to its location being at the intersection of 3rd St N, 7th Ave E, and South Ave E. The lot is not rectangular shaped and therefore becomes substantially more difficult to properly and evenly subdivide in accordance with the residential district's lot requirements. The proposed driveways are unable to be relocated due to the garages' proximity to each other. Staff believe the three feet between the two driveways establishes sufficient space to alleviate concerns of drainage. Based on the variance request review criteria, staff recommend the Planning Commission make a motion to request staff to prepare a resolution with findings of fact consistent with an approval of the variance requests.

Blees asked if there was a reason this question didn't come sooner. Roberts stated the original intent was for both units to be on one lot. After some time, it was determined it would be better to have each unit on a separate lot so there can be two owners. The survey also notes the exact location of the proposed lot line splitting the parcel running along the shared wall in the structure.

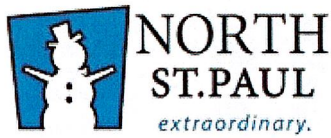
Chair Blees opened the public hearing at 7:22 PM.

Joseph Florian, 2367 7th Ave E, discussed the project at 2357 7th Ave E. Florian is the eastern neighbor of the property and indicated his concerns with the building's setback from the side lot line and the eaves. Florian also discussed his concerns with the amount of impervious surface on the lot. Florian also discussed the dangers of the 5-way intersection near the project area and the intersection of South Ave E and McKnight Road N. Florian recommended the City consider a roundabout at the 5-way intersection.

Chair Blees closed the public hearing at 7:31 PM.

The Planning Commission discussed impervious surface requirements in the R-2 Zoning District and that the maximum allowed is 50%. Wise stated that he has a hard time getting past the legal reason why a variance is needed because if the project went in the correct order, the house would have been originally designed in order to proceed with a minor subdivision. Wise stated that he believes the practical difficulty is created by the property owner in this case. Sauro agreed with Wise. Wise stated he is concerned about setting a precedent for recommending approval of a variance for a structure already built.

Blees asked for a motion to recommend City Council approval of the variance requests at 2357 7th Ave E. On motion by Alvarez, seconded by Blees, with Blees, Alvarez, Muhic, and Marcaccini voting aye, Sauro and Wise voting nay.
Motion carried 4-2.



VIII. COMMISSION BUSINESS, ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

There were no commission business, action items or recommendations.

IX. REPORTS

Nordby asked City Staff to forward information regarding a roundabout being determined not to be a good fit at the 5-way intersection at South Ave E, 7th Ave E, and 3rd St N.

City Manager Brian Frandle shared additional background on a roundabout at the 5-way intersection. Frandle stated that a roundabout would not fit in that location unless there is taking of private property. Frandle stated he has asked about the 5-way intersection to the Fire and Police Departments and determined that the most prominent intersection issues lie at the intersections of McKnight and 7th Ave E and South Ave E. Muhic stated he would like to see the roundabout situation looked at once again.

Staff shared the following 2026 event dates. More information can be found on the City's website:

- Citywide Garage Sale: April 30 – May 2
- Trash to Treasure Day – Sunday, May 3
- Citywide Cleanup Day – Saturday, May 9

X. ADJOURNMENT

Blees asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 PM.

M/Alvarez, S/Muhic.

Motion carried 6-0.

The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting is Thursday, May 7, 2026, at 6:30 PM.

Members, please notify any planned absences to:

Chris Cherne
Planning Commission Secretary
651-747-2440
chris.cherne@northstpaul.org

Attested:

Chris Cherne
Planning Commission Secretary

Approved:

Patrick Blees
Planning Commission Chair