

**CITY OF ST. FRANCIS
ST. FRANCIS, MN
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
JULY 16, 2025**

1. **Call to Order:** The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Dustin Pavék.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were Dean Becker, Deborah Humann, Gail Genin, Dustin Hingos, Marc McMullen, and Dustin Pavék.

Others in attendance: Kate Thunstrom, Community Development Director; Jessica Rieland, Community Development Director; Beth Richmond, City Planner; and City Council Liaison Kevin Robinson.

3. **Adopt Agenda:** Motion by Genin, second by Humann, to approve the agenda. Motion carried 6-0.
4. **Approve Minutes:**
Pavék shared that updates were needed on the minutes to state who made the motion and second for adopting the agenda and approving the minutes.

The minutes were updated to reflect McMullen making the motion, and Hingos seconded the motion to approve the minutes, and McMullen made the motion, and Humann seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

Motion by McMullen, second by Hingos, to approve the June 18, 2025, minutes with changes. Motion carried 6-0.

5. **Public Comment:** None
6. **Public Hearing:**
 - a. The Bluffs of Rum River - Public Hearing

City Planner Richmond reviewed the Staff report in regard to The Bluffs at Rum River development and the request for an amendment to the existing preliminary plat and associated Conditional Use Permit.

Public Hearing was opened at 7:15 p.m.

Tom Widhalm, 4025 241st Avenue NW, came forward and asked why the entrance to this development was being shifted. He asked if the State has reviewed how this will impact traffic in the area. He asked who was involved in the shifting of this road. He asked if the DNR had been involved in this. He noted that in the past, the DNR has wanted a 300-foot setback from the river, and this design does not have that. He added that he only got notice of this one week ago and would have liked to have been notified earlier, so he could have done his research before attending this meeting.

City Administrator Thunstrom explained that they had already been through the first round of preliminary plat review with the DNR and the State. She shared that they worked with MnDOT to shift the road south.

Richmond stated there was a traffic study completed in 2022 when this project was originally reviewed. She noted that there have not been units added to the design that would cause them to need to redo the traffic study. She explained that there were conditions of approval from the 2022 study for the applicants to work with MnDOT and Anoka County for the intersections. She added that they worked with the DNR, and the applicant has received conditional approval with a greenspace outlot. She noted that this property is the northernmost point of the Rum River Management District, meaning that it has different setback requirements, which are smaller.

Councilmember Robinson asked the residents who received notice of this Public Hearing and how far they are from the site. Richmond shared that residents within 350 feet of the site received notice.

Mr. Widhalm asked if they would be shifting 241st Avenue as well. Thunstrom explained that they will be shifting the end of the road to align with the new road using the existing right-of-way. She noted the intersection will only be slightly offset until the City finishes the construction of 241st Avenue.

Robinson asked if the residents in this area will be notified again when this comes before the Council. Richmond said no.

Paul Richert, 3956 St. Francis Boulevard NW, came forward and asked if he would have to give up part of his property when they redo 241st for this intersection. Thunstrom explained that they will not be using any private property and will only be using existing right-of-way to align these roads. She added that surveys would be done to ensure they are not encroaching on any private property. She noted that this project is not scheduled at this time.

Mr. Richert asked if they would be putting in turn lanes on Highway 47. Thunstrom shared that there will be a roundabout at Ambassador and 241st; however, there are no changes to Highway 47 that were required by the State.

Mr. Richert asked if they would be running sewer and water down 241st. Thunstrom explained that the infrastructure will be pulled through the development, up Highway 47, to 241st. She noted that there are no plans to go west on 241st at this time.

Public Hearing was closed at 7:28 p.m.

McMullen asked about the typical notice timeframe for these Public Hearings. Richmond shared that when an application is received, the City has 60 days to act on the application. She noted that they have to send out notices at least 10 days before the Public Hearing.

Robinson noted that this project was originally approved a few years ago but has sat idle. He said these are just changes to the approved plan now that they are working on the project. He asked where this goes from here. Richmond explained that this will next go to the Council with the recommendation from the Planning Commission.

Motion by Pavak, second by McMullen, to recommend approval of the preliminary plat amendment for The Bluffs of Rum River project with conditions and findings of fact as presented by Staff. Motion passed 6-0.

Motion by McMullen, second by Genin, to recommend approval of the public road CUP for The Bluffs of Rum River project with conditions and findings as presented by Staff. Motion passed 6-0.

7. Regular Business Items

None.

8. Planning Commission Discussion

None.

9. Adjournment:

Motion by Hingos, second by Humann, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 6-0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Website Link to Packets and Minutes for the Planning Commission:

<https://www.stfrancismn.org/meetings>

Recorded by: Kate Thunstrom

DATE APPROVED: