



City of Blaine

Planning Commission

September 9, 2025 | 7:00 PM
Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Square Drive NE
Blaine, MN 55449

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The Blaine planning commission met in the City Hall Chambers on Tuesday, September 9, 2025. Chair Goracke called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Commission Members Gorzycki, Howard, Olson, Swanson, and Chair Goracke.

Members Absent: Commission Members Geiselhart and Halpern.

Staff Present: Alex Koberoski, Zoning Technician
Sheila Sellman, Assistant Community Development Director
Teresa Barnes, Project Engineer

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1. 2024-481 Approval of the August 12, 2025 Planning Commission Minutes
Sponsors:

Motion by Commissioner Olson to approve the minutes of August 12, 2025, as presented. Motion seconded by Commissioner Gorzycki. The motion passed 5-0.

4. Public Hearing

4.1. 2025-454 Case File No. 25-0041 // Lucas Woolhouse // 1048 87th Avenue NE
The applicant is requesting the following:

1. Variance for a 27.25 foot setback from the front yard property line, where 30 feet is required.

2. Variance to allow an additional garage in the front yard, where only one (1) garage is permitted.
3. Conditional use permit for a total accessory structure square footage of 1,040 square feet in the Single Family (R-1) zoning district.

Sponsors: Alex Koberoski, Zoning Technician

The report to the planning commission was presented by Alex Koberoski, Zoning Technician. The public hearing for Case File 25-0041 was opened at 7:10PM.

Ray Hamdorf, 8740 Taylor Court, explained based on his knowledge and the activities that were occurring on the applicant's property, the applicant was not being fully transparent with the hardship request and the information that was provided to the city. He noted if the applicant was being fully transparent, the request would have to be denied by the city as granting the request would allow for an expansion of an illegal use. He stated the applicant is listed publicly as a co-owner of a construction company with his father. He reported the applicant was using his residential property as commercial property which was a clear violation of the city's zoning ordinances. He reviewed the numerous violations that were occurring on this applicant's property, which had to do with exterior storage of business materials, outdoor storage of heavy equipment, more than one employee using the property, as well as on street parking for equipment, employees and contractors. He stated the applicant would like to locate the garage in the front yard to enhance safety by allowing large vehicles and trailers to maneuver on site in a more safe and efficient manner. He noted this was an admission that large vehicles and trailers for a commercial business were being stored onsite. He recommended the commission not support the request as it would be an expansion of an illegal use in the R-1 zoning district.

Mai Vang, 1048 87th Avenue NE, requested the variance on her property. She understood there may be some hardship for her neighbors, but her goal was to get the vehicles off the street and onto her property. She believed moving the building closer to the street was not going to change the aesthetic of the neighborhood. She requested the commission support the requested variance.

The public hearing was closed at 7:18PM.

Commissioner Gorzycki asked if the vehicles in the photos were for personal or commercial use.

Ms. Vang explained these vehicles were for business use. She reported she has vehicles on her property, but she does not work out of her home. She indicated the proposed new driveway and garage would allow for the storage of these vehicles and trailers.

Commissioner Gorzycki questioned if storing commercial equipment on a residential property was considered a commercial use.

Zoning Technician Koberoski stated the exterior storage of heavy equipment in excess of 12,000 pounds was not allowed in the city or on the streets. She commented the storage of heavy equipment on a residential property would be in violation of the city zoning

ordinance.

Chair Goracke reported staff had a great alternative with the garage in the rear yard. He inquired why the applicant contested putting the garage in the rear yard.

Ms. Vang explained this was the first time she had seen this drawing or setup. She indicated she has a beautiful view of Laddie Lake and if the garage were placed in the rear yard, this view would be lost.

Chair Goracke stated while this may be the case, the applicants had to understand that city code did not allow for the storage of commercial equipment on city streets or in front yards.

Commissioner Gorzycki inquired if the proposed garage could be used for the storage of commercial vehicles.

Zoning Technician Koberoski explained all home occupation standards would have to be followed and anything associated with a home occupation can take no more than 300 square feet of an accessory structure.

Motion by Commissioner Gorzycki to recommend denial of Planning Case 25-0041A a variance for a 27.25 foot setback from the front yard property line, where 30 feet is required based on the following rationale:

Case 25-0041A:

- 1. There is adequate space on the property to locate the proposed shed, where it would meet the front yard setback requirement.**
- 2. The proposal does not constitute a practical difficulty, as the shed has the ability to meet all setbacks and requirements without needing a variance.**
- 3. The variance is for economic reasons, as the shed could be in a location that meets all required setbacks and requirements of the zoning ordinance.**

Motion by Commissioner Gorzycki to recommend denial of Planning Case 25-0041B a variance to allow an additional garage in the front yard, where only one (1) garage is permitted based on the following rationale:

Case 25-0041B:

- 1. There is adequate space on the property to locate the proposed shed in the rear yard.**
- 2. The proposal does not constitute a practical difficulty, as the shed has the ability to meet all setbacks and requirements without needing a variance.**
- 3. The variance is for economic reasons, as the shed could be constructed in a location that meets all required setbacks and requirements of the zoning ordinance.**

Motion by Commissioner Gorzycki to recommend approval of Planning Case 25-0041C

a conditional use permit for a total accessory structure square footage of 1,040 square feet in the Single Family (R-1) zoning district with the following conditions:

Case 25-0041C:

- 1. Any home occupations proposed to be conducted in the detached garage shall follow all standards of Section 33.10 Home Occupations.**
- 2. Driveway(s) shall meet all driveway standards as outlined in Section 33.13(j)(2), including no more than 36 feet in cumulative width in the front yard.**
- 3. Driveway(s) shall meet all access requirements as outlined in Section 33.13(c)(3), including no more than 30-feet in cumulative width in the public right-of-way.**
- 4. Total square footage for all driveways shall be limited to no more than 2,813 square feet, which is 45% of the square footage of the front yard as shown on the submitted site plan (6,250 square feet).**
- 5. Garage doors shall be limited to no more than 10-feet in height.**
- 6. The color of the proposed detached garage shall be compatible with the existing home.**
- 7. Any proposed tree removal shall follow the requirements as stated in Section 33.09 Tree Preservation.**
- 8. Any additional access will need to follow the existing requirements for width of total combined accesses.**

Motion seconded by Commissioner Swanson. The motion passed 5-0.

Chair Goracke noted this would be on the agenda of the October 6, 2025 city council meeting.

- 4.2.** 2025-455 Case File No. 25-0042 // Scott Uram // 8634 Central Avenue NE
The applicant is requesting the following:

1. Rezoning from Single Family Residential (R-1) to Community Commercial (B-2).
2. Conditional use permit for self-storage in the Community Commercial (B-2)/Highway 65 Overlay zoning district and a zero lot line/shared access.

Sponsors: Sheila Sellman, Assistant Community Development Director

The report to the planning commission was presented by Sheila Sellman, Assistant Community Development Director. The public hearing for Case File 25-0042 was opened at 7:30PM. As no one wished to appear, the public hearing was closed at 7:30PM.

Scott Uram, applicant, introduced himself and discussed his revised plans in further detail with the commission.

Chair Goracke asked if the applicant supported working with staff revising the final plan

before this matter is reviewed by the city council.

Mr. Uram indicated he would continue to work with staff, but explained he did not want to spend extra money on a wall that no one would see.

Motion by Commissioner Olson to recommend approval of Planning Case 25-0042A a rezoning from Single Family Residential (R-1) to Community Commercial (B-2), with the following rationale:

Case 25-0042A:

1. The subject site has a land use designation of Community Commercial. Single Family Residential (R-1) zoning is in conflict with this designation. Rezoning to B-2 is an acceptable zoning for Community Commercial.

Motion by Commissioner Olson to recommend approval of Planning Case 25-0042B a conditional use permit for self-storage in the Community Commercial (B-2)/Highway 65 Overlay zoning district with a zero lot line and shared access, with the following conditions:

Case 25-0042B:

1. The corrugated metal for the entire building must be changed to an approved material: brick, natural cultured stone, stucco, EIFS, architectural metal, colored rock-faced block, glass. Each wall must have 50% of the wall containing three of the approved materials.
2. The garage doors shall match the color of the building.
3. All large walls viewable from Highway 65 must be relieved by architectural detailing, such as change in materials, change in color, offsets, or other significant visual relief provided in a manner or at intervals in keeping with the size, mass and scale of the wall and its view from the public right-of-way. The south elevation shall be modified to meet this requirement.
4. The building must be adjusted to meet the rear yard setback of 100 feet.
5. The side yard setback for the driveway must be adjusted to meet the 10 foot setback.
6. Developer to submit a copy of all required permits, including a Coon Creek Watershed District permit, prior to site work.
7. The revised plans shall be completed prior to this item being reviewed by the City Council.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Howard. The motion passed 5-0.

Chair Goracke noted this would be on the agenda of the October 6, 2025 city council meeting.

The applicant is requesting a conditional use permit to construct a bank in an Office Research Park (B4) zoning district.

Sponsors: Shawn Kaye, Planner

The report to the planning commission was presented by Alex Koberoski, Zoning Technician. The public hearing for Case File 25-0037 was opened at 7:35PM. As no one wished to appear, the public hearing was closed at 7:35PM.

Tim Niemiec, Trustone Financial Group representative, introduced himself to the commission and thanked the commission for considering his request.

Chair Goracke asked how many Trustone Credit Unions were in the area.

Matt Monicatti, Vice President of Facilities for Trustone, reported there were 19 Trustone branches in Minnesota and four in Wisconsin.

Chair Goracke questioned how many new jobs would be created by this Trustone Credit Union.

Mr. Monacotti estimated this site would have eight to ten FTE's.

Motion by Commissioner Swanson to recommend approval of Planning Case 25-0037 based on the following conditions:

Case 25-0037:

- 1. Site plan approval will be required as a part of the building permit application. All site improvements to be included in the Site Improvement Performance Agreement (SIPA) and covered by an acceptable financial guarantee.**
- 2. Drive-thru stacking (meeting zoning ordinance) will need to be provided on the site plan with the building permit submittal.**
- 3. All site lighting to be down-lit style lamps to reduce glare and to meet the requirements of the zoning ordinance. Pole-mounted lighting is limited to 20 feet in height.**
- 4. All signage requires a separate permit meeting the requirements of the zoning ordinance.**
- 5. Temporary signage to be regulated under Zoning Ordinance Section 34.13.**
- 6. An issued Coon Creek Watershed District permit will be required to be received by the City prior to the proposed project receiving any city approval.**

Motion seconded by Commissioner Gorzycki. The motion passed 5-0.

Chair Goracke noted this would be on the agenda of the October 6, 2025 city council meeting.

4.4. 2025-404

Case File No. 25-0038 // City of Blaine

The City is proposing an amendment to Section 34.02 of the Sign Ordinance to allow for pylon signs up to 50 feet in height along Hwy 65.

Sponsors: Alex Koberoski, Zoning Technician

The report to the planning commission was presented by Alex Koberoski, Zoning Technician. The public hearing for Case File 25-0038 was opened at 7:43PM. As no one wished to appear, the public hearing was closed at 7:43PM.

Chair Goracke thanked staff for being proactive on this matter.

Motion by Commissioner Howard to recommend approval of Planning Case 25-0038, an amendment to Section 34. 02 of the Sign Ordinance to allow for pylon signs up to 50 feet in height along Highway 65. Motion seconded by Commissioner Swanson. The motion passed 5-0.

Chair Goracke noted this would be on the agenda of the October 6, 2025 city council meeting.

5. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Olson to adjourn the regular planning commission meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Gorzycki. The motion passed 5-0.

Adjournment time was 7:44PM.