

OWATONNA PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES FOR MAY 12, 2026

The Owatonna Planning Commission met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. in the Crandall Center – Chambers with Chairperson Kelly Rooks conducting the meeting. Present at roll call were Commissioners Kelly Rooks, John Eickhoff, Mark Wilson, Nick Peake, and Jim Joachim (5:32 pm). Commissioner absent: Rachel Springer-Gasner and Dave Effertz. Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke, Planning Specialist Emma Bransford, and Senior Administrative Technician Kristen Kopp were also present.

A motion was made by Wilson and seconded by Peake to approve the minutes of regular meeting of April 14, 2026. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Commissioner Jim Joachim arrived at 5:32 pm.

Application No. RZ-11, which is a request by John Schulte of Jones, Haugh & Smith on behalf of Northland Farm Systems, Inc. for a zone change from B-2, Community Business District, to PUD, Planned Unit Development, for the purposes of adding a new multi-use building including storage, showroom, and offices for the property located at 2250 Austin Road, was presented by Planning Specialist Emma Bransford. (Refer to report on file.) Public hearing opened at 5:38 pm. No comments were made regarding this request. Public hearing closed at 5:39 pm. John Eickhoff asked about the fence. Bransford said that this would be more of a staging area rather than storage so it would not require screening. Jim Joachim asked if the building would be parallel to Austin Road. Bransford said yes, it would. Wilson asked about the shipping containers. Kruschke said that they moved to this site about ten years ago. Currently they are not allowed, but with the new ordinance there will be a provision to allow them. They won't have a need for these containers after constructing the new building. Eickhoff said he appreciates the conditions because of the surrounding residential area. A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Wilson to recommend City Council approval of this rezoning request from B-2, Community Business District, to PUD, Planned Unit Development, for the property located at 2250 Austin Road with the following conditions:

1. All storage containers must be removed from the property prior to CO issuance.
2. All future additions will require approval through a PUD amendment.
3. The driveway access off 22nd St SE shall be paved within five years of the effective date of this ordinance.
4. All items in the City Engineers memo must be addressed.
5. Any signage on the property that does not have an approved permit must be removed, including all signage affixed to trailers.
6. All new signage must obtain sign permits.
7. If the applicant changes the use of any existing building a change of occupancy permit must be approved before final occupancy of the new building.

8. Junk vehicles, equipment, and parts shall be removed from the property in timely manner.

All commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke gave an update on Downtown Parking. He said there have been three changes recently. The lot next to Firestone no longer exists as that has been sold as part of the Ascend South project, nor does the parking along the riverfront near Ascend, which is temporarily closed during construction. Parking Lot #23 on the south side of Main Street was a leased parking lot and City Council chose to no longer renew that lease.

A motion was made by Eickhoff and seconded by Wilson to nominate Kelly Rooks as President. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried. A motion was made by Wison and seconded by Eickhoff to nominate Nick Peake as Vice President. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke and Planning Specialist Emma Bransford gave an update on the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Process. The presentation included discussion on the two-car garage requirement, front deck/stoop/patio setbacks, home occupation standards, and trash enclosure standards.

The Commissioners discussed the two-car garage requirement and recommended eliminating the requirement for further discussion by City Council. The Commissioners discussed front deck, stoop, and patio setbacks and recommended revising the front setback measurement to 50% of the existing setback or using the existing, whichever is less, for further discussion by City Council. The Commissioners discussed home occupation standards and agreed with the draft terms proposed by Bolton & Menk, recommending that the draft remain as written for further discussion by City Council. The Commissioners discussed trash enclosure standards and recommended that trash enclosures be enclosed on all four sides and designed to obstruct views from the surrounding area for further discussion by City Council.

Community Development Manager Greg Kruschke gave an update on previous items and presented the monthly Building Permit Reports. There are 10 house permits issued so far, which is ahead of last year.

Planning Specialist Emma Bransford said that application VAR-25, which was a request by Robert Seykora for a curb cut variance at Cedar Valley Services, has been withdrawn. They were able to work something out that did not require a variance.

There are no items for the May 26 meeting, so that meeting will be cancelled. There is a joint Council and Planning Commission meeting on Tuesday, July 7.

A motion was made by Joachim and seconded by Wilson to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 pm. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion carried.

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Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Kruschke
Community Development Manager