

MINUTES OF THE ALBERT LEA PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
May 6, 2025
5:30 pm – City Center

Chairman Lucas Schuster called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Wyeth Anderson, Vice-Chair
Leon Axtman
Rachel Christensen, Ex-Officio
Jared Dawson
Matt Dorman
Matt Maras
Lucas Schuster, Chair
Steve Thompson

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Megan Boeck, City Planner
Cierra Maras, Development Services Administrative Assistant

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Maras and second by Thompson to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Schuster and second by Dorman to approve the February 4, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Staff report prepared by Megan Boeck, City Planner, is to become part of these minutes by reference.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Ordinance Amendments

Boeck reviewed the staff report. She explained amendments include removing language pertaining to front yard, limiting exposed fasteners to no more than 60% in the B-2 district, adding a definition for real estate signs, adding signs to the list of signs exempt from requiring a permit, decreasing the number of flag or feather signs allowed in commercial and industrial districts, and amending language regarding window requirements in the B-2 district.

Schuster opened the hearing to the public at 5:34 p.m.

Schuster asked if the 60% constraint on exposed fasteners was brought up by contractors. Boeck said that staff took a number of buildings in the Bridge Avenue area and looked at how they face the street.

Maras asked if the amendments came from businesses requesting. Boeck stated that at times the amendments are driven by applicants and other times driven by staff.

Schuster asked if there have been issues with windows in the B-2 district. Boeck stated there have been a few different reasons the window requirement is being amended. She noted the variance that Scooter's got due to the nature of the business.

Christensen mentioned a property owner that needed to install windows at his business when he opened and they were broken shortly after. She asked if it makes sense to require windows on businesses that are vulnerable. Boeck said that if you were to remove the window requirement for a specific type of business and that business closes and a new different type of business opens, you unintentionally create non-conformity issues.

Boeck also noted that the average commercial business is going to have more than 10% of the lineal ground floor in windows.

Schuster closed the hearing to the public at 5:44 p.m.

Motion by Maras and second by Schuster to recommend to City Council approval of all ordinance amendments to Chapter 50 as written and discussed.

Motion passed on a 7-0 voiced vote.

COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATION

None.

STAFF COMMUNICATION

Boeck told the commission there will be a June meeting to review an IUP renewal.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Axtman and second by Dorman to adjourn the meeting at 5:49 p.m. Motion carried.

Cierra Maras, Planning Commission Secretary

Lucas Schuster, Chairman