

Harris Planning Commission

Special Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 2, 2025

- I. **Call to Order** - Planning Commission Chair Jeff Borash called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance** -The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- III. **Oath of Office** - Mayor Randy Carlson administered the Oath of Office to Commissioner Al Siedow.
- IV. **Roll Call** - Commissioners present: Jeff Borash – Chair, Commissioner Shari Denny, Commissioner Al Siedow, Commissioner Tine Kolodziej, absent: Commissioner Neil Elmquest. Staff/Officials present: Nathan Feist – Bollig Engineering. A quorum was present.
- V. **Consent Agenda** - The January meeting minutes were not available in the packet and therefore were **not reviewed or approved**. They were approved later via email. Motion by **Denny** to approve the **agenda**. Second by **Borash**. **Motion carried**.
- VI. **Public Comment – None**.
- VII. **Public Hearings**
 - a. **Lindgren Preliminary Plat / CUP Process**

Nathan Feist presented the proposed **Lindgren Preliminary Plat** which would divide a larger parcel into **four lots** (three residential lots and one remainder parcel).

Key discussion points included:

- The proposal had been previously reviewed by the Planning Commission.
- The property will include four future residential homesites.
- A portion of the property contains low and wet areas toward the rear of the parcel.
- One lot may be approximately 40 feet narrower than the R-2 zoning requirement, potentially requiring a variance if rezoning changes are not adopted.

No members of the public attended the hearing.

The public hearing was closed.

B. MinnSolar Interim Use Permit (IUP) – Solar Development

PID 14.00221.00

C. Soltek Interim Use Permit (IUP) – Solar Development

PID 14.00221.00

The Commission elected to conduct both solar project public hearings simultaneously, as they involved the same parcel and similar proposals.

Discussion included:

- The solar arrays would be located on a larger agricultural parcel.
- The developers do not currently own the parcel but intend to purchase it after permits are approved.
- The Interim Use Permit would allow the solar development consistent with the R-2 zoning district.
- A decommissioning plan was discussed.

Developers proposed:

- Establishing a \$25,000 decommissioning escrow per project
- Funding the escrow at \$5,000 per year for five years
- Total escrow amount of \$50,000 covering both projects

Commission members discussed setback distances and layout adjustments that had been made since earlier concept discussions.

No members of the public attended the hearing.

The public hearing for both solar projects was closed.

VIII. Regular Agenda

A. Lindgren Preliminary Plat

Following closure of the public hearing, the Planning Commission considered the Lindgren plat. Motion by Denny to recommend approval of the Lindgren Preliminary Plat and forward the recommendation to the City Council. Second by Borash. Motion carried.

The recommendation will proceed to the City Council meeting on March 9, 2026.

B. MinnSolar IUP

C. Soltek IUP

Discussion continued regarding the solar developments and associated Interim Use Permits.

Commissioners discussed:

- Decommissioning plan and escrow structure
- Solar array setbacks from property lines
- Ensuring the permit conditions are clearly documented before final approval

Commissioner Denny expressed concern about approving a permit without reviewing a written permit document.

Planning consultant Nathan Feist agreed to prepare a generic list of permit conditions and draft IUP documents for review. Motion by Denny to approve the IUPs contingent upon Planning Commission review of the final written permit conditions via email. Second by Borash. Motion carried.

D. Water and Sewer Ordinance – Mandatory Connection and Exemptions

The Commission continued discussion regarding revisions to the city's water and sewer connection ordinance.

Proposed updates included:

- Clarifying utility availability notification procedures
- Defining failure-to-comply enforcement mechanisms
- Establishing mandatory connection triggers
- Adding provisions addressing well failure or septic failure
- Clarifying rules regarding potable vs. non-potable wells

Additional items discussed:

- Adding a failure-to-comply penalty or fee
- Possible inspection authority for septic systems
- Requiring periodic compliance verification

The Commission discussed requiring septic system compliance verification every three years for properties continuing to use private septic systems when city utilities are available.

Other proposed triggers for mandatory connection included:

- Transfer of property ownership
- Subdivision of property
- Failure of a well or septic system
- New residential or commercial construction

The Commission directed staff to revise the ordinance with the discussed changes.

The updated ordinance draft will return to the Planning Commission for further review prior to scheduling a public hearing.

A public hearing is tentatively anticipated for April 2026.

E. Zoning District Map Discussion

Nathan Feist presented an updated zoning district map.

Updates included:

- Improved map readability
- Added street labels and water bodies to aid orientation
- Additional zoning reference tables summarizing district requirements

The map and zoning table were intended to assist the Planning Commission in reviewing zoning standards and future development discussions.

Commissioners discussed potential zoning adjustments and future land use considerations.

Further review will continue at future meetings.

IX. Commissioner Reports - No additional reports were provided.

X. Adjourn – Siedow made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Denny seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.