



Planning & Zoning Commission Minutes

September 3, 2025, 5:30pm – City Council Chambers
3rd Floor City Hall, 255 N 4th Street

Notice is hereby given that the Planning and Zoning Commission will meet at the above date and time. Any member of the public seeking to submit comments relating to an Agenda item or public hearing may do so in person at the meeting or should submit their comments to www.grandforksgov.com/councilcomments or call 701-746-2661 for further information. All online comments received prior to 5:00 p.m. on the meeting day will be considered part of the record of the meeting as if personally presented.

1. Roll Call

_X_Arel _X_Budke _X_Klava _Kuhn _X_Holt _X_Matson _X_Reichert _X_Sande _X_Wasvick

2. Reading and Approval of Minutes for August 6, 2025, meeting.

Motion by Reichert, second by Arel for approval of minutes as presented, motion carried unanimously.

3. Public Hearings, Final Approvals, Petitions, and Minor Changes

3-1 Ordinance to Amend Section 18-0302 of City Code related to Multi-Family Parking Requirements.

Mr. Brooks summarized the proposed changes and the discussions of the commission and city council last month.

Public Hearing Opened. No comments. Public Hearing closed.

Motion by Reichert, second by Budke for approval of staff recommendation. Motion carried unanimously.

Wasvick made concern of developers squeezing more units without the addition of parking, if that becomes a concern again, we will need to evaluate the old code once more.

3-2 Replat of Lot D, Block 1, Summer's First Subdivision, located at 2313 N Washington Street.

Ms. Johnson presented this item, giving details about this minor replat. Its aim is to change Lot D into 7 separate lots, making them available for renting or selling. Ms. Johnson also stated that this property is seeking a side yard variance set to go to Board of Adjustments September 11th.

Mr. Budke asked why we are seeing a plat of something that is still needing a Variance. It is stated that the building is existing.

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Public Hearing Opened. No comments. Public Hearing closed.

Motion by Reichert, second by Matson for approval of staff recommendation. Motion carried unanimously.

3-3 Replat of Part of Lot 7, Block 1, Heartland West Addition, located at 3005 Heartland Drive.

Ms. Johnson provides details about this minor replat request. This request removed Lot A from the previously established condo association, making it its own lot cleaning up the titles of these properties.

Mr. Wasvick asks why they couldn't just move the lot line and Ms. Edwardson provides information that previous administrative approval would've taken care of this simple request, however the titles and county do not recognize this process any further.

Public Hearing Opened. No comments. Public Hearing closed.

Motion by Reichert, second by Matson for approval of staff recommendation. Motion carried unanimously.

3-4 Plat of Demers Eighth Resubdivision, located at 2500 & 2600 Demers Avenue.

Ms. Johnson described the item and coinciding vacation request together. The developer is seeking to build storage units over the lot line and vacate an existing private storm sewer in order to build. A private drainage easement will be retained to acknowledge the storm drain while still permitting the building over the storm line. Within the public utility easement area, there is a known private storm sewer line. This storm sewer line will not be relocated as part of the proposed storage unit project, so a condition of the replat is that a private drainage easement must be provided for this line.

The replat and the vacation would allow the development to move forward.

Mr. Budke asked if there are any public utilities in the easement. Ms. Johnson, provided clarification that just private storm drain exists within what would be a private easement.

Mr. Wasvick asked if there would be a need for any future public utilities to Mr. Grasser. None needed.

Public Hearing Opened. No comments. Public Hearing closed.

Motion by Reichert, second by Holt for approval of staff recommendation. Motion carried unanimously

3-5 Vacation of Utility Easements, located at 2500 & 2600 Demers Avenue.

Public Hearing Opened. No comments. Public Hearing closed.

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Motion by Reichert, second by Holt for approval of staff recommendation. Motion carried unanimously.

- 3-6 Vacation of Sidewalk Easements, located at 1510 Charwood Court, 1514 Charwood Court, 2233 Springbrook Court, and 2237 Springbrook Court.

Mr. Brooks provided a historical background of the item where roughly five years the home owner requested the vacation of the pedestrian easement. The easement connects S 20th St to Springbrook Ct and allows a short pedestrian route through the neighborhood. However, instead of folks using the easement, its being taken advantage of. The staff report includes police reports where one person is peering through fences, watching others and making them uncomfortable just because they can. The easement is still needed for utilities, but the pedestrian element is being abused by one particular neighbor, who is conducting unwelcome behavior for the immediate homeowners around the easement. The easement has never had a sidewalk installed but the neighborhood knows the connection is there.

Mr. Budke has asked previously if the easement could be paused for a temporary amount of time to address the unwelcomed behavior but retain access for future, compiling folks.

Mr. Brooks intends to ask the City Attorney the question but has not had the opportunity to do so.

Public Hearing Opened.

Sarah Heikkila, 1514 Charwood Ct., She lives in the cul de sac, individual sits in the easement, threatens the children in the cul de sac, and takes pictures of their yards and children, making many feel unsafe and uncomfortable. Supports request to vacate the easement so that the harassment stops as well as allow PD to properly address the unwanted behavior. The neighbor potentially has mental health issues.

Steven Miller, 1510 Charwood Ct., Restraining order is in place but is for no contact order, judge permitted him to use the easement which doesn't do much to stop the close proximity harassment.

Mr. Reichert asked if the measure is going to help address the issue. If the easement is removed will he sit in the street or set him off. Reichert stated that vacating the easement might be extreme and if there are other avenues to address the issues.

Mr. Miller stated that kids rarely use the pedestrian connection. Since the easement is unpaved, less and less know that it exists as more neighbors transition out the neighborhood.

Sande stated that the easement is unsafe due to being unpaved or no lighting. Kids should be taught to walk on sidewalk not in yards. She is supportive of vacating the easement. In the future, installing connections before homes are sold. Sande make a motion to approve this request.

Steve Wasvick stated the sidewalk should have been installed in the 70s onward and now have issues with driveways encroaching and added on.

Closed Public Hearing.

Motion by Sande, second by Klava for approval of vacating the pedestrian easement.

Mr. Budke acknowledges the connectivity desires through the easements as shown on the original plat and still thinks the connections are beneficial.

The homeowner asked if its possible to conduct a survey to see how its used to see if its being used and claimed the City has neglected the path. She also expressed concern about who is liable if people are using it now without improvements.

Motion passed with Budke and Reichert opposed.

4. Communications and Preliminary Approvals

- 4-1 Ordinance to Amend the Zoning Map to Rezone from B-3 General Business District to Ideal Aerosmith Planned Unit Development (PUD), located at 3001 South Washington Street.

Mr. Brooks provided the location of the applicants and businesses in close proximity. Mr. Brooks then states he visited the site to get a sense of the impact in regards to noise and traditional manufacturing externality concerns. This set up is not typically allowed within B-3 district, however this set up doesn't exude noise. He goes on to highlight the residential homes in the rear of the business but says they have worked together in the past on items such as stormwater.

Mr. Wasvick asked about future concerns and if once manufacturing is permitted, if this location was to sell to another entity that didn't conduct as quiet manufacturing taking place today.

Mr. Reichert asked if assembly is the issue when other retailers are assembling larger retail or service items. Reichert questioned spot zoning of this request as well as future manufacturing concerns for others. He stated if they're expanding, they should be looking to expand where the use is permitted.

Mr. Brooks questioned the option to fitting and compatible uses since what they're doing is like auto-repair and servicing.

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Mr. Matson stated Ideal Aerosmith has locations in the former WDAZ building and the former Conlin's furniture space, will they be requesting three other locations as well. Mr. Brooks stated that the other locations are abiding by the 30% allowance rule.

Ms. Sande expressed concern the request as well to allow manufacturing and assembly so near existing neighborhood.

Mr. Budke asked if conditional use permit is an option. Mr. Brooks stated it is not an option in current B-3 code. We would've needed that written in prior as something to be requested.

Mr. Brooks stated there's a struggle to distinguish between the manufacturing and assembly, and the difference between LM Windpower manufacturing and assembly versus Ideal Aerosmiths manufacturing and assembly of drone or other small engineered products. Land Development Code does not have a definition of manufacturing or assembly.

Mr. Reichert asked if Mr. Brooks could explain the fitting and compatible better and how its different. Mr. Brooks explained the fitting and compatibility is somewhat of a catchall if you will. It's the allowance for other businesses of the same general character of what is already permitted with the district. This is only if they are deemed fitting and compatible from the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Mr. Wasvick requested a description of what Ideal Aerosmith produces to be able to evaluate if they are fitting and compatible during next months, October, meeting.

Motion by Sande to deny the request. Motion fails for lack of second.

Ms. Arel asked what about the manufacturing definition and what about their use determines them to be nonfitting in their current district. Ms. Arel has more concerns with the height of the addition. She states she does not see what they manufacture to be a disturbance to the neighborhood so would like this ask to be allowed and let them continue business.

Ms. Sande is not comfortable with only Planning & Zoning making a determination and would prefer it to be addressed by elected officials of city council.

Mr. Brooks states the other Ideal sites in town are abiding by the zoning, and long term goal is for them to build a new facility, but currently right now, they are seeking this addition.

Ms. Sande stated that not notifying neighbors and not having Council input is wrong. Mr. Brooks stated the same concerns were why he chose to pursue the rezoning versus the fitting and compatible as he struggled with getting neighborhood input with rezone or not.

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Mr. Klava asked if neighbors were to complain, would the commission be able to review and accept or revoke the status of fitting and compatible. Mr. Brooks stated staff would review to see if operations or anything else has changed, and whether they are sitting conducting as fitting and compatible.

Mr. Brooks stated that UAS industry is expanding in Grand Forks and thinks they are not only fit to be in Industrial zones but in B-3 as well.

Mr. Reichert stated light assembly is so much different than heavy assembly and if it's not loud as it sits, that's something to consider.

Motion by Reichert to postpone, second by Arel. All in favor of postponing.

Mr. Brooks asked if intent is to bring back a fitting & compatible next month. Mr. Reichert and Mr. Wasvick stated yes and asked if City Attorney could develop assembling in B-3 not industrial.

5. Reports from the Planning Department

5-1 Monthly Update

Ms. Johnson updated the commission on the three approved site plans from this past month. As well as brief updates on the Sub-committees, our AARP code audit and the standing MPO meeting.

6. Other Business

7. Adjournment – 6:40pm