



MINUTES

Mankato Planning Commission
April 23, 2025 - 6:00 p.m.
IGC - Mankato Room

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Zehnder called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Ms. Johnson made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Meister seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Dieken made a motion to approve the minutes from March 26th, 2025. Ms. Surdy seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

1. **March 26, 2025 Draft Planning Commission minutes**

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

No old business

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

1.

CY17-25

Request of Trellis, with permission of the property owner, for a Land Use Plan amendment to change the guided land use from Heavy Industrial to Office Residential. The subject properties are described as part of Block 17, Oakwood Addition, City of Mankato (Blue Earth County PIDs R010813253001, R010813253002, R010813253010, etal, 750 Linder).

Ms. DePrenger reports that staff submit the following findings of fact that the Land Use Plan Amendment conforms to the following goals of the Land Use Plan and future review of development proposals will be conditions to the following:

1. Promotes adequate low, medium, and high-density housing for all income levels and age groups. The proposed future of the property offers a multifamily supportive housing

- project.
2. Encourage the utilization of mixed-use development concepts in subdivision design. The proposed use of the property will have both office and residential components.
 3. Supports the goals and objectives of Mankato Area Transportation and Planning Study and the parks and open space plan. The property is located in proximity to a public transit stop. The applicant is proposing to provide an open courtyard area that includes grills, patios, seating areas, and green space for the residents to enjoy. The development will also include sidewalks to connect to public infrastructure and open green space at the southern end of the parcel.
 4. Retains and enhances the character and quality of established office residential areas, and revitalizes, rehabilitates, or redevelops those office areas where such improvements are needed. The applicant is proposing to redevelop a currently vacant lot which in the past was a part of the City of Mankato Public Works Department campus. This change aligns with the Sibley Redevelopment Plan, which was initially considered in 2007.
 5. Encourage and promote innovations in development techniques in order to obtain maximum livability and excellence in planning and design for all developments. The applicant is proposing a mixed use of residential and office development, providing development techniques suitable for the area, including the utilization of programs like the Green Communities and SB2030 energy standard.
 6. Provides multi-modal transportation connectivity between high-density developments and destination points. The property is located adjacent to Poplar Street, a connection street to South Riverfront Drive. With improvements to the site, the sidewalk to the north of the development may provide a connection to the existing sidewalks.
 7. Enhance site design in office and residential subdivisions and developments. The applicant is proposing to develop the currently vacant site.
 8. Require adequate buffering and transitional areas between incompatible uses and less dense housing areas. The proposed housing is a continuation of the housing project provided to the east of the property, and is nearby compatible uses such as schools, restaurants, grocery stores and downtown Mankato.
 9. Promote quality building design standards. The applicant is proposing to construct a 40-unit supportive housing apartment building with quality exterior building materials and spaces.

Ms. DePrenger reports that staff submitted the findings that the proposed Land Use Plan amendment conforms to the following location criteria for designating residential property in the Land Use Plan.

1. The property is adjacent to commercial, industrial and other office-residential uses.
2. The property is adjacent to collector streets via Poplar Street, Sibley Parkway, and Linder Avenue.
3. The proposed property is surrounded by commercial, office residential, and industrial. The request to change the land use plan to Office-Residential is compatible with the uses adjacent the site.
4. The property is adjacent to arterial or collector streets, accessible without passing through less intense land uses. Traffic would connect on to Poplar Street and furthermore, South Riverfront Drive without needing to pass through less intense land uses.
5. The property is adjacent to a public transportation route. A transit stop is in close proximity to the proposed site.

Ms. DePrenger reports that in order for the development to better conform to the goals of the Land Use Plan and the Strategic Plan for the City of Mankato, the land use plan is recommended based on the following:

1. Any future approvals shall be completed in conformance with the permitting requirements such as replatting, rezoning, dedication or right of way, vacation of any

easements, and planned unit development review.

2. The submitted traffic study will be reviewed by staff to see if any traffic improvements are required. The applicant may be required to be a willing petitioner in those improvements.

Mr. Wilke questioned whether the proposed use would be conditional or permitted.

Mr. Konz indicated that he believes that apartment complexes are permitted in the office/residential district. He also indicated there was a desire for there to be planning and development on the property that would need to be presented to the planning commission at a future meeting.

Justin Eilers, Trellis. Mr. Eilers was present to represent the project and answer any questions that the commission members may have.

Mr. Wilke asked for more information about the meaning of supportive housing.

Mr. Eilers indicated that supportive housing has a slightly different definition than affordable housing. Supportive housing operates as a permanent apartment building that is targeted towards people with very low incomes that are transitioning into a permanent living situation. He added that additional staff will always be present to assist residents with the transition into the building. Additionally, the building will provide space for organizations to provide support to the residents.

Chair Zehnder opened the public hearing for comment.

Sander Ludeman, 1400 S. Riverfront Dr. Mr. Ludeman was present at the meeting as an adjacent property owner. He is supportive of this project, but a potential emergency homeless shelter located on the second parcel could create challenges for local businesses such as his. He stated this could cause significant changes to companies' willingness to operate their business in this area.

Chair Zehnder questioned if there was a plan for an emergency shelter at this location.

Mr. Konz stated that funds for that type of project have not been allocated, and the beginning processes have not occurred. He added that if an emergency shelter is desired in that location, it would be a conditional use. This would be required to come back to the planning commission and additional notices would be sent out.

Mr. Ludeman added that some of the concerns are that even though he is in favor of this supportive housing development, he might be inclined to see it not moved forward so that future development does not affect the area in a negative way.

Ms. Surdy added that she has strong support for this project, and she hopes that more can be done to support those that are unhoused in this community.

Mr. Meister made a motion for approval of the Land Use Plan amendment. Ms. Surdy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The anticipated date of City Council action is May 12, 2025.

Request of the City of Mankato for review of certain sections of Chapter 10 of the City Code pertaining to cannabis.

Ms. Mitchell presented the report on an ordinance amendment to add lower-potency cannabis sales in the B-1 district.

Mr. Wilke questioned what low-potency edible is.

Mr. Konz indicated that this is the type of edible that is available for purchase currently. He indicated that the City Code did not include the B-1 district for this type of sale and wanted to ensure it was included.

Ms. Surdy indicated that low-potency must pass under a certain percentage of the THC content for it to be considered low-potency.

Mr. Iddings questioned if there would be regulations or inspections related to the potency of the cannabis that is being sold.

Mr. Konz indicated that there would be compliance checks that the City of Mankato would conduct and if further action was needed, the city would refer it to the State of Minnesota.

Chair Zehnder opened the public hearing for comment, with no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Ms. Surdy made a motion to approve the ordinance amendment to add lower-potency cannabis sales in the B-1 district. The motion was seconded by Mr. Meister. The motion passed unanimously.

The anticipated date of City Council action is May 27, 2025.

6. **MISCELLANEOUS**

No Miscellaneous items

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Ms. Surdy moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Meister and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED.

Chair, Mankato Planning Commission