

PLANNING COMMISSION

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Regular Meeting – April 23, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Michael Meehlhause called the regular meeting of the City of Bemidji Planning Commission to order at **5:30 p.m.** Roll call was taken, and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

Members present: Faver, Heinonen, Lemmer, McCoy, Meehlhause, Olderman, Peterson (via WebEx due to personal reasons).

Members excused: None

Staff Present: Assistant Planning Director Melissa Fahrenbruch, Compliance Inspector & Site Analyst David Wielenberg, Administrative Assistant Ainslee Krause

Others Present: Troy Gilchrist (via WebEx), Corey Bailey, Kristine Lacey, Jason Vogel

AGENDA

Chair Meehlhause called for any amendments to the agenda. Motion by **Heinonen**, seconded by **Lemmer**, to approve the agenda. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

MINUTES

The minutes for the **March 26, 2026**, Planning Commission meeting were presented for approval. Motion by **Heinonen**, seconded by **Lemmer**, approving minutes as presented. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

VISITORS WITH BUSINESS NOT ON AGENDA: No appearance.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearings:

PLANNING CASE: REZONE REQUEST – COREY BAILEY REPRESENTING BAILEY VISTA, INC.:

Fahrenbruch presented the planning case request: Corey Bailey representing Bailey Vista, Inc. is requesting a (Rezone) Land Use Map Amendment from B-2 General Commercial Zoning District to R-4 Moderate Density Residential Zoning District to build a single-family home. The subject property is located at 810 1st St E (PIN: 800428300) in the City of Bemidji.

Conclusions based on the Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan were presented in the packet including conditions and findings of fact.

Commission members made the following comments:

- No comments

Public Hearing

Pursuant to published notice, a public hearing was held regarding input on the request. Chair Meehlhause opened the Public Hearing at **5:35 PM**, hearing the following comments:

- Corey Bailey addressed the Commission regarding his project.

Hearing no further comments Chair Meehlhause closed the Public Hearing at **5:37 PM**.

Motion by **Heinonen**, seconded by **Peterson**, to recommend approval of the rezone request for parcel 800428300, with the conditions and findings of fact as presented in the packet. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Ayes: **Peterson, Olderman, Meehlhause, McCoy, Lemmer, Heinonen, Faver**. Nays: **None**.

Chair Meehlhause addressed that the request would go before the Planning Board at their next meeting on **May 12, 2025**, at 5:30 PM for the final decision.

PLANNING CASE: REZONE REQUEST – ETHAN HAUSE:

Wielenberg presented the planning case request: Ethan Hause is requesting a (Rezone) Land Use Map Amendment from R-3 Suburban Residential Zoning District to R-4 Moderate Density Residential Zoning District to build a single-family home on a property abutting Lincoln Elementary School. The subject property is located at 615 Lake Ave NE (PIN: 800239500) in the City of Bemidji.

Conclusions based on the Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan were presented in the packet including conditions and findings of fact.

Commission members made the following comments:

- No comments

Public Hearing

Pursuant to published notice, a public hearing was held regarding input on the request. Chair Meehlhause opened the Public Hearing at **5:40 PM**, hearing the following comments:

- Kristine Lacey addressed the Commission regarding the project on behalf of Hause.

Hearing no further comments Chair Meehlhause closed the Public Hearing at **5:41 PM**.

Commission members made the following comments:

- Heinonen inquired about the location of the existing garage as it appeared to be very close to the property line. Fahrenbruch responded.

Motion by **Faver**, seconded by **Lemmer**, to recommend approval of the rezone request for parcel 800239500, with the conditions and findings of fact as presented in the packet. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Ayes: **Faver, Heinonen, Lemmer, McCoy, Meehlhause, Olderman, Peterson**. Nays: **None**.

Chair Meehlhause addressed that the request would go before the Planning Board at their next meeting on **May 11, 2025**, at 5:30 PM for the final decision.

PLANNING CASE: REZONE REQUEST – JASON VOGEL REPRESENTING NORTH CENTRAL GARAGE DOOR COMPANY, INC.:

Fahrenbruch presented the planning case request: Jason Vogel representing North Central Garage Door Company, Inc. is requesting a Conditional Use Permit for Heavy Manufacturing/Processing with an addition to their building in the Light Industrial (I-1) Zoning District. The subject property is located at 900 Carr Lake Rd SE (PIN 800528900) in the City of Bemidji.

Conclusions based on the Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan were presented in the packet including conditions and findings of fact.

Commission members made the following comments:

- Heinonen inquired as to what type of construction is being used. Fahrenbruch responded that the applicant could better answer that.
- Heinonen inquired if the MPCA had been informed of the project. Fahrenbruch replied that they had.
- Olderman inquired about the Commission approving two tanks when the applicant was creating room for four. Fahrenbruch replied that the future tank installations would require an amendment to the CUP.
- Peterson inquired if requiring an amendment resulted in extra leg work for the applicant at a later date. Fahrenbruch replied it was being done on the recommendation of the land use attorney and state agencies.
- Gilchrist clarified his recommendation.

- Peterson inquired as to the length of time North Central Door (NCD) had been in operation in Bemidji. Fahrenbruch replied.
- Lemmer stated that NCD had been in operation for a long time, but inquired if they were currently under new ownership. Fahrenbruch responded.
- Peterson inquired about the possibility of adding conditions related to approval of two vs. four tanks. Fahrenbruch and Peterson discussed.
- Lemmer suggested hearing from the applicant before the Commission made any determinations on the number of tanks approved. Peterson agreed.

Public Hearing

Pursuant to published notice, a public hearing was held regarding input on the request. Chair Meehlhause opened the Public Hearing at **5:54 PM**, hearing the following comments:

- Jason Vogel addressed the Commission regarding the history of the company and the benefit of producing the doors locally rather than bringing them in from elsewhere.
- McCoy inquired if the project would add jobs to the region. Vogel replied that it could add some higher end jobs due to the chemical management aspect.
- Peterson inquired if the company has any state or local safety inspections related to the production process. Vogel replied that OSHA has oversight.
- Peterson inquired about the reason for future expansion to four tanks. Vogel replied that that it would be due to future expansion of production, but also inventory management, but that new ownership (Garaga) would also have say over what is done at the local level.
- Heinonen inquired about the building construction. Vogel replied that the base will be poured concrete and the walls/ceiling will be steel construction.
- Lemmer inquired about the timeframe for the possible addition of more tanks. Vogel stated that it was unknown, possibly years.
- Olderman inquired about the expense of the project related to investment vs. risk. Vogel replied the project had a budget of around \$20 million and was a large investment for the company.
- Olderman stated that if the Commission is willing to approve two tanks, they should approve four, and if they are unwilling to approve any, then whether it is two or four does not matter.
- Meehlhause inquired if there was any Minnesota Pollution Control Agency or Minnesota Department of Health approvals that the company needed to obtain for the project. Vogel confirmed there were some state level permits required and they had contracted an engineering firm to assist with the permitting process.
- Lemmer inquired about the possible emission of air pollution. Vogel replied that it is minimal given the relatively small amounts of chemicals used.

Hearing no further comments Chair Meehlhause closed the Public Hearing at **6:04 PM**.

Commission members made the following comments:

- Regarding the two tanks vs. four tanks issue, Faver stated that he didn't think it was advisable to approve more than what the applicant was asking for as the public notice only referenced two tanks. Also, this amendment allowed for further Commission and Board review of the operation before expansion.
- Lemmer agreed and added that the applicant does not have a timeline set for this expansion.
- Olderman asked for clarification that the applicant is building a space for four tanks but only asking for two. Meehlhause confirmed.

Motion by **Heinonen**, seconded by **Lemmer**, to recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit request for parcel 800528900, with the conditions and findings of fact as presented in the packet.

Chair Meehlhause addressed the Commission that he understood wanting to make the process easier for the applicant in the future, but that retaining public oversight was a good thing.

Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Ayes: **Peterson, Olderman, Meehlhause, McCoy, Lemmer, Heinonen, Faver**. Nays: **None**.

Chair Meehlhause addressed that the request would go before the Planning Board at their next meeting on **May 12, 2025**, at 5:30 PM for the final decision.

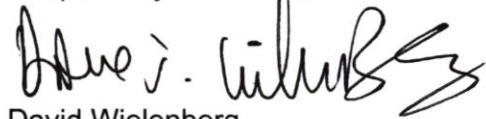
UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETINGS

- Thursday, May 28, 2026 5:30 p.m. Planning Commission Meeting

ADJOURN

There being no further business, motion by **Lemmer**, seconded by **Heinonen**, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote. Meeting adjourned at **6:10 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



David Wielenberg
Compliance Inspector & Site Analyst

PC Minutes approved and attested by:



Planning Commission Representative