



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Richfield, Minnesota
Regular Planning Commission Meeting
December 8, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chair Stursa at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Planning Commissioners Present: Brett Stursa, Acting Chair; Cole Hooey; Matt Taraldsen; Benjamin Surma; and Stephanie Kowalkowski

Commissioners Excused: Eddie Holmvgig-Johnson and Brendan Kennealy

Staff Present: Sam Crosby, City Planner; and Ruby Villa, Planner I

Others Present: Amy Gudmestad, Minnesota Independence College and Community (MICC)
See item #7a for public hearing speakers

OPEN FORUM

There were no speakers.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

M/Taraldsen, S/Kowalkowski, to approve the agenda.

Motion carried: 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M/Hooey, S/Taraldsen, to approve the minutes of the Regular Planning Commission Meeting of November 24, 2025.

Motion carried: 5-0.

ITEM #7a	PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A REQUEST BY MINNESOTA INDEPENDENCE COLLEGE & COMMUNITY FOR A REZONING, CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT, PRELIMINARY PLAT, AND VARIANCES.
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Planner Crosby presented Agenda Item No. 7a and reviewed statements of support sent by Best Buy and Kathleen Posai (Richfield resident).

Planner Crosby addressed questions presented by Commissioner Hooey regarding the need for a rezoning and the purpose behind dividing the parcels into two lots now as opposed to when a project comes forward for the housing portion.

Amy Gudmestad, Chief Executive Officer of MICC, introduced herself to the Commission.

Acting Chair Stursa opened the public hearing.

Elizabeth Sunne-Ojeda, Richfield resident, spoke in opposition to the request.

Jeff Thayer, Richfield resident and member of MICC’s Board of Directors, spoke in favor of the request.

Mark Otness, partner for Colony Apartment Homes, spoke in favor of the request.

M/Taraldsen, S/Hooey, to close the public hearing.

Motion carried: 5-0.

In response to Commissioner Stursa, Planner Crosby addressed a resident’s concern for increased traffic: a traffic analysis was provided by the applicant which indicated that there will be a very low increase in trip generations as part of the proposed project. This is because MICC already operates in the area and thus a lot of their trips are already accounted for in the existing conditions.

M/Hooey, S/Surma, to recommend approval of the requested rezoning, conditional use permit, preliminary plat, and variances for Minnesota Independence College and Community.

Several commissioners expressed their support for the project and for MICC’s mission.

Motion carried: 5-0.

LIAISON REPORTS

- Community Services Commission: Commissioner Hooey had no report.
- City Council: Chair Holmwig-Johnson was absent.
- Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA): Commissioner Stursa had no report.
- Richfield School Board: Commissioner Kennealy was absent.

- Transportation Commission: Commissioner Surma stated that the County and City are seeking public involvement for the 2028 Penn Avenue reconstruction project. There is a survey open right now.
- Chamber of Commerce: Commissioner Kowalkowski had no report.
- Sustainability Commission: Commissioner Taraldsen had no report.

ITEM #11	CITY PLANNER'S REPORT
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Planner Crosby had no report.

ITEM #12	NEXT MEETING TIME AND LOCATION
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Although likely to be cancelled, the next regular meeting is scheduled for January 26, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the Richfield Council Chambers.

ITEM #13	ADJOURNMENT
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M/Taraldsen, S/Kowalkowski, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried: 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Submitted by:



 Ruby Villa
 Planner I



 Matt Taraldsen
 Planning Commission Secretary