

MEETING MINUTES

Birchwood Planning Commission Regular Meeting

City Hall - 7:00 PM Regular Meeting 3/26/2026

Submitted by Michael Kraemer – secretary

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: – Andy Sorenson, Michael Kraemer, Casey Muhm, Michelle Maiers-Atakpu arrive 7:07 PM,

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Michael McKenzie

OTHERS PRESENT: City Engineer – Marcus Johnson, City Planner - Ben Wikstrom,

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman - Sorenson called meeting to order at 7:02 PM.
2. PUBLIC FORUM
 - a. None
3. APPROVE MINUTES – Minutes from December 18, 2025 regular meeting. Motion by Muhm, 2nd by Sorenson to approve the minutes. Vote: Yes – 3, No – 0 Motion to approve passed.
4. REGULAR AGENDA
 - a. Item A – EDUCATIONAL DISCUSSION FOR PERVIOUS VS IMPERVIOUS PAVER OPTIONS
 - i. “Best Applications”, (Presented by Marcus Johnson, City Engineer)
 1. “Best Applications” document prepared by Engineer Johnson was a thorough comparison on the design and application of pervious vs impervious pavers.
 - a. Planning Recommendations
 - i. The City consider making a document similar to the one prepared by City Engineer Johnson generally available to City residents as an informational tool to who are considering installation of paver systems in the Village of Birchwood.
 - ii. The City code be updated to include terminology that mandates that applicants seeking to use “pervious paver systems” to offset the City’s “impervious surface” code thresholds, comply with the following:
 1. Use MN Pollution Control Agency - MN Storm Water Manual Resource: Design Criteria for Permeable Pavement for the design.

2. Provide a “pervious paver system design’ (including paver unit selection, infiltration and volume storage system calculations and design) approved by a registered professional engineer or secure written design approval from the City Engineer and City Planner.
3. Where requested by City Engineer, provide soil boring(s) and soil permeability calculation for the proposed pervious paver installation site.
4. The applicant provides photo documentation that the system was constructed per plan. (This is anticipated to include photos with visual documentation of construction techniques, subgrade conditions, materials, layer depths, and finished grades.) **Note:** This photo documentation is suggested in-leu of continuous on-site inspection, to provide future institute documentation on the paver system in case problems develop or the system needs to be rebuilt.
5. The applicant secure final positive as-built testing of the system by the City Engineer.
6. Provide a signed on-going “stormwater management/pervious paver maintenance plan” agreement with the Village including commitment to ongoing maintenance, and definition of periodic infiltration testing intervals and techniques. This agreement should bind with the property and not just the individual.

b. ITEM B - VARIANCE FINDINGS AND STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE CHECKLIST

- i. General discussion ensued related to the current BIRCHWOOD VILLAGE – Variance Findings Form
 1. **Planning Commission Recommendations**
 - a. City Planner was asked to review the form and offer suggestions on how to make the form as useful as possible especially as it relates to the consideration of issues of “special conditions or circumstances”, “practical

difficulties” and “reasonable use”. It is anticipated the suggestions will be presented for discussion at the April, 2026 Planning Commission meeting or subsequent work session.

c. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF ORDINANCE 301 AND 302

- i. City Engineer Marcus Johnson and City Planner Ben Wikstrom suggested there are elements of Ordinance Section 301 and 302 that are inconsistent and/or needing review. They requested the opportunity to assemble a list of items for review and discussion by the Planning Commission at the April, 2026 meeting or a subsequent work session.
- ii. **Planning Commission Recommendation**
 1. The Planning Commission agreed to participate in the suggested discussion when available.

ADJOURN 9:08 PM

- d. Motion by Maiers-Atakpu, 2nd by Muhm to adjourn meeting. Vote: Yes - 4, No – 0. Motion passed.