

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF BROOKLYN CENTER IN THE COUNTY OF
HENNEPIN AND THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

June 12, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Chair Koenig at 7:09 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Alexander Koenig and Commissioners Stephanie Jones (arrived at 7:18 p.m.), Stan Leino, Paris Dunn, and Stephen Schonning were present. Planning Manager Ginny McIntosh and Associate Planner Krystin Eldridge were also present.

Commissioners Randy Christensen and Mark Viste were absent.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – JUNE 12, 2025

There was a motion by Commissioner Schonning, seconded by Commissioner Leino, to approve the agenda for the June 12, 2025, meeting as presented.

Voting on the motion: Chair Koenig and Commissioners Dunn, Leino, and Schonning voted aye. The motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4a. May 8, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

There was a motion by Commissioner Schonning, seconded by Commissioner Dunn, to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2025, meeting as presented.

Voting on the motion: Chair Koenig and Commissioners Dunn and Schonning voted aye. Commissioner Leino abstained due to not being at the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

5. CHAIR'S EXPLANATION

Chair Koenig explained the Planning Commission's role as an advisory body. One of the Commission's functions is to hold public hearings. In the matters concerned in these hearings, the Commission makes recommendations to the City Council. The City Council makes all final decisions in these matters.

6. PLANNING APPLICATION ITEMS

6a. Planning Commission Application No. 2025-005 (Public Hearing)

Applicant: MMS Properties LLC

Property Address: 5831 Brooklyn Boulevard | 03-118-21-13-0101

Request: Variances and Major Site and Building Plan Amendment

Summary: The Applicant and Property Owner propose a renovation of the existing, approximately 4,005-square-foot Brooklyn Blvd Dental Clinic, and an approximately 780-square-foot addition to accommodate a larger patient waiting and reception desk area, three patient operatories, and an ADA-compliant restroom. As the existing building is non-conforming with respect to setbacks, certain variances are requested from Sections 35-2302 and 35-5100 of the City Code.

Planning Manager Ginny McIntosh reviewed a request for variances and site and building plan amendments.

Ms. McIntosh stated that MMS Properties LLC is requesting review and consideration of a proposal that would renovate the existing 4,000-square-foot Brooklyn Blvd Dental Clinic at 5831 Brooklyn Boulevard in construction approximately 780-square-foot addition to accommodate a larger waiting and reception area, three patient operatories, and an ADA-compliant restroom. As this property is non-conforming with respect to the new Unified Development Ordinance, specifically, certain variances are requested as part of the application.

Ms. McIntosh noted that this property is just over an acre in size, is located in a Neighborhood Mixed-Use zoning district, and is zoned for a Neighborhood Mixed-Use.

Ms. McIntosh showed images of the location of the property. She noted that there is a brand-new trail that was installed a few years ago on the west side of Brooklyn Boulevard, and there is parking on three sides of the property, with some shared access with the CVS property. She added that the site is developed, and was approved in 1968 for construction, with construction being finalized around 1970. She showed an additional image, which showed that between 1969 to 2024, not much had changed with the building or site.

Ms. McIntosh noted that City staff have been in discussions with the project representative from Calco Comprehensive Development regarding plans for expansion since last year. She added that the building was constructed around 1970 and is only known to have been a dental clinic, with the practice in operation with the current owners and mix of dentists since about 2000. She noted that they provide dental care to hundreds of patients in and around Brooklyn Center. The Applicant loves the location, but at this point, they have reached the need to expand or make some changes.

Ms. McIntosh added that the property originally came through the City in 1968 for a commercial office building, and what was originally in the City's C1 service/office district. She noted that in 1962, the city had contemplated a five-unit multifamily residential building, in which the then applicant would reside in one of the apartments, but the request was denied by the Council.

Ms. McIntosh stated that the Applicant provided the Staff with drawings, noting the building materials. She added that the front elevations facing Brooklyn Boulevard are where the Applicant would expand out about 780 square feet to create a new entrance way. New windows would be installed, the new roof would be tied into the existing roof, and they would reconfigure the sidewalk. She noted that the building is extending eastward towards Brooklyn Boulevard, and the exterior wall at its closest point is about 24.3 feet from the property line.

Ms. McIntosh explained that the Applicant does desire to renovate the building, and they do have a walkout basement, which they would like to make modifications to, adding a dedicated staff lunch space and break room, as well as new office space. She added that they would update the floor, apply new paint, and perform door and trim work on the interior. On the exterior, the Applicant would replace the existing windows and doors, install new landscaping along Brooklyn Boulevard, paint the brick, and re-route the sidewalk to accommodate the addition.

Commissioner Jones arrived at 7:18 p.m.

Ms. McIntosh stated that there are no plans to alter the existing parking lots, which wrap around on three sides and provide about 41 parking spaces, which have ADA parking spaces and a shared loading space. She noted that the Staff did calculate the necessary spaces because it is a major site and building plan amendment, and found that for medical and dental clinic uses, and assuming three dentists and twelve clinic staff, and in consideration of the building square footage, the Applicant would need 31 parking spaces. They could remove parking spaces, but City Staff do not see the point of that at this time as there are no proposed modifications to the parking lot. She added that the Applicant does plan to reconfigure the layout of the sidewalk. Staff notes that there does appear to be a gap in sidewalk connection from the front entrance to the trail along Brooklyn Boulevard, so Staff is requesting the Applicant tie in the private sidewalk to the public multi-use trail.

Ms. McIntosh noted that, typically, this addition, because it is so small, would not trigger a major site and building plan amendment, and would have just been reviewed by Staff, but because the Applicant is not meeting the setback requirements and they require a variance, it needs to be reviewed as a major amendment.

Ms. McIntosh stated that the Applicant did not provide a photometric plan, and as part of the process, Staff would like to review the lighting plan. She added that at this time, there does appear to be some non-conforming lighting, such as floodlights, which is generally not permitted unless in a loading or service area. Staff would need to see options to make sure they comply with the lighting requirements. She noted that at the entrance points, there should be enhanced lighting per code requirements.

Ms. McIntosh explained that for trash and screening, there is an existing trash enclosure in fair condition, and any new ground-mounted equipment or roof-mounted equipment would need to be screened.

Ms. McIntosh noted that the Applicant is working with the Staff on which building materials they will use; they are interested in using an LP or Hardie board type siding product in a board and batten configuration to help break up the brick. The brick would be painted to match the siding product. She added that this type of siding is not considered a class one material; it is class two, so a calculation needs to be done to make sure the Applicant is meeting City Code requirements for material use. She noted that Section 35-2302 of City Code requires each ground floor façade for a non-residential use to face a public right-of-way, such as Brooklyn Boulevard. The façade would need to provide transparent windows or other transparent glazed areas covering at least 50 percent of the ground floor façade area between three and eight feet above sidewalk grade. She added that the Applicant did send revised plans with the three- and eight-foot configurations, which City Staff still needs to work through, and the Applicant notes that they are complying with the 50 percent requirement at an identified 55 percent.

Ms. McIntosh stated that City Staff could not locate a landscape plan from 1968, which she is not surprised about, because the Subject Property was developed in the foundational years of the City, and many applications were coming through. She explained that the City's mixed-use zoning districts, where the property is located, use a project valuation system for determining minimum landscaping, so it is based on the valuation of the project, and then there is an assigned valuation for landscaping, which requires additional information to be given to the Staff. She added that the Applicant is proposing to remove two existing trees to accommodate the addition, and in their place, they would install Sumac or Boxwoods in the front yard, two new sunburst honey locusts, and Karl Foerster along the perimeter of the addition. She noted that, as a requirement, the city does require an irrigation system, so if there is nothing there now, they would need to install one.

Ms. McIntosh noted that for signage, there is no request at this time. She added that the sign may have been relocated during the Brooklyn Boulevard reconstruction project, but there is no proposal at this time, so if they needed new signage, they would need a permit.

Ms. McIntosh explained that City Engineering reviewed the plans in May and provided commentary regarding the expansion, but no major concerns were identified. She added that Hennepin County was not contacted regarding the project because there were no proposed changes to the curb cuts. She noted that the Building Official conducted a cursory review and submitted general comments, one of which was that fire sprinkler and monitoring systems are required. There are some exceptions where a fire sprinkler may not be required, but these would need to be looked into. She added that ADA regulations were noted and that it is important, especially since it is on a hill, so the Applicant would need to make sure they are making grades with the sidewalks and providing ADA parking. She noted that a SAC determination is required from the Metropolitan Council, and the Applicant may want to coordinate with Hennepin County Health for the kitchen area.

Ms. McIntosh stated that the Applicant is requesting approval for certain variances to forward their request for expansion, and this is the primary reason why the application is coming through the Planning Commission and Council. She noted that the two requests that they are making that they are not meeting at this time are that at least 50 percent of the first floor of the front façade of the building cannot be located more than 10 feet from the property line. She added that when this

building was constructed back in the 1960s, the setback requirements were substantial; there had to be at least a 50-foot setback off the property line, and a 50-foot to a 10-foot difference is a significant difference. She stated that the other major variance that was requested was from the front build-to line, where there is a minimum and maximum setback. She added that in this case, 20 feet is the maximum you can be from your front property line, and the Applicant is coming in at 24.3 feet.

Ms. McIntosh described that variances may only be granted when the Applicant for the variance establishes that there are practical difficulties in complying with zoning ordinance provisions, which come from state statute. She added that the City Council may approve of the variance where practical difficulties exist; however, all of the criteria must be satisfied. She noted that the variance must be in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the City's zoning, the variance has to be consistent with the comprehensive plan, the property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the Unified Development Plan, the plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property and not created by the landowner, and the variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.

She noted that Staff wanted to call out the 50-foot setback that was required at the time, so they came in at that minimum, and if they were to comply with the standards today for the Neighborhood Mixed-Use zoning district, they would effectively need to double the size of their building. She added that they currently have about 4,000 square feet between floors and noted they would need to add at least another 2,000 square feet to meet minimum setbacks. As part of their proposal, they are adding approximately 780 square feet and making the effort to move closer to Brooklyn Boulevard.

Ms. McIntosh noted the recommendation on the slides and that it is a public hearing. She is not in receipt of any public comments at this time and noted that the Applicant is present if there are any questions.

OPEN TO PUBLIC COMMENTS – APPLICATION NO. 2025-005

There was a motion by Commissioner Leino, seconded by Commissioner Schonning, to open the public hearing on Application No. 2025-005.

Voting on the motion: Chair Koenig and Commissioners Dunn, Leino, Jones, and Schonning voted aye. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC COMMENTS (HEARING)

There was a motion by Commissioner Leino, seconded by Commissioner Schonning, to close the public hearing on Application No. 2025-005.

Voting on the motion: Chair Koenig and Commissioners Dunn, Leino, Jones, and Schonning voted aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Koenig asked if any Commissioners had questions for the Staff or the representative for the Applicant, and that the Applicant could come forward to add anything to what had already been provided.

Commissioner Leino asked if connecting the sidewalk was a good idea or a requirement for the Applicant. Ms. McIntosh stated the requirement comes from the City's Unified Development Ordinance, where there is a standard for pedestrian connectivity, direct access, and not having to wander into the parking lot to get back out to the trail. She added the example that, if there was snow, and somebody took the bus or was walking into the dental clinic from the trail, they would either need to walk through the snow or into the parking lot to get back up on the private sidewalk, and it is on the hill. She noted that there are specific requirements for the MX-N2 zoning district where the Subject Property is located, so it is a requirement from City Staff perspective.

Commissioner Leino asked the Applicant about the easement they share with the southern property, and if it is a reciprocal access easement.

Applicant stated that it is a 50-year agreement with CVS for additional parking. The Applicant noted the dental clinic does not need that many parking spaces, but they are locked into the agreement.

Commissioner Jones asked if the Applicant was with the development company or with the contractor.

Applicant Josh Juairé stated that he is the general contractor.

Chair Koenig asked if they were using the front, which is currently a driveway and faces Brooklyn Boulevard, as the place for the expansion to go.

Mr. Juairé stated that it was not a driveway but more of a switchback sidewalk to be ADA-compliant, so it goes up and then turns to make the grade work or the maximum percentage of the ADA walkway work.

Chair Koenig stated that the front is where they are going to add the expansion. He asked how close to the trail the expansion will be once completed.

Ms. McIntosh stated that it would be 24.3 feet from the property line, and the trail runs through it.

Chair Koenig stated that it would be significant and that they would be adding landscaping and taking down a tree.

Mr. Juairé stated that they did remove one tree because half of it fell during a recent storm, and last year they had a big limb coming down as well. Neither hit the building, but it is probably good that they come down because they are starting to fail.

Chair Koenig asked if the building has a rear door, and, if so, if it is used regularly. Mr. Juairé noted that the building does have a rear door and stated that the door is not currently used because it is dilapidated and doesn't work well, so the plan is to put in a new door that will be used as a new staff entrance into the staff lounge in the basement.

Chair Koenig stated that the project is fabulous. He added that Brooklyn Center is putting in a lot of time, effort, and money into beautifying Brooklyn Boulevard and a lot of people are jumping on board with that, so as a member of the Planning Commission and a resident of the City, he would hope that for whatever is reasonably possible in terms of economics in the redesigned project, that they make it aesthetically pleasing to go along with what the City is doing as well. He noted that the public and potential clients of the building are drawn towards that which attracts people, and that includes buildings and businesses that seem to invite in and make people believe that they have confidence in what goes on there.

Mr. Juairé stated that this was part of the reason they wanted to do the project in the first place, because it is an old brick building, so they wanted to gain the additional space, but also give the building a facelift.

Chair Koenig stated that when the project came up, it took him a little while to think of the location of the building.

Mr. Juairé stated that he drove by it the first time he visited the building.

Chair Koenig noted that there is traffic there, but branding and visibility will be important for the company, and that they consider that when building.

Commissioner Leino stated that the clinic has been in the city for a really long time and has been a good and loyal citizen even in times when the area wasn't well kept. He added that there is a need in the community and that they don't want to drive this kind of business entity out of the City or make it difficult for them to be there.

Commissioner Schonning noted that he is having a hard time visualizing how James Hardie board and batten is going to make the building look nicer. He is aware of what it is but not sure how that will work with the brick.

Mr. Juairé stated that the board and batten were a suggestion from Dr. Spanish, who would like to do something different on the front of the building, as the whole building is the same brick all the way around, and would like to add some other texture. He noted that the doctor went online and found a picture that had 4x4 Hardie cement board with 4x4 squares of batten, and it was another dental office. He added that, originally, the doctor just wanted to paint, and he still wants to paint the brick because it is no longer in good condition, but he asked if there was a way to get some texture and a different look to the front of the building other than brick. He noted that it would all be the same color, but just a different texture.

Chair Koenig noted that up the road from this building, CAPI is building a substantial expansion, and the plan has been approved by Planning Commission and it is going to be a good-looking building, so he suggested to take a look at what is being done there for inspiration.

ACTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMISSION APPLICATION NO. 2025-005 SUBMITTED BY MMS Properties LLC

There was a motion by Commissioner Leino, seconded by Commissioner Dunn, to recommend City Council approval of Planning Commission Application 2025-005 for variances and a major site and building plan amendment at 5831 Brooklyn Boulevard.

Voting on the motion: Chair Koenig and Commissioners Dunn, Leino, Jones, and Schonning voted aye. The motion passed unanimously.

And the following voted against the same: None.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. McIntosh explained that the next and final stop in the process is review and consideration by City Council on June 23rd at 7:00 p.m.

Chair Koenig stated that they would love to tour the facility when the project is complete.

6b. Presentation: *Our Climate is Changing. Why Aren't We?*

Presenters: Brooklyn Bridge Alliance for Youth (BBAY), in collaboration with the Metropolitan Council

Summary: Youth leaders from Brooklyn Bridge Alliance for Youth (BBAY) have completed a twelve-hour research and conversation project to identify the best ways to respond to climate change in their community. During this presentation, representatives for the group will share the results of their research and recommendations for community action. This project is part of the Met Council's Community Climate Collaboration, which engages residents in the Twin Cities region in conversations about climate actions and community impacts to support a regional climate action plan.

Planning Manager Ginny McIntosh introduced the presenters from Brooklyn Bridge Alliance for Youth, BBAY. She noted that she was contacted by representation from the Metropolitan Council, who had been working with youth leaders from BBAY to complete a 12-hour research project to identify the best ways to respond to climate change in their community.

Presenter Masal introduced herself along with the three other presenters: Keira, Yanni, and Faithangel. She stated that the presentation was facilitated by the Brooklyn Bridge Alliance for Youth, and as representatives and residents of Hennepin County, they hope to create a livable space for the present and for those who come after them. She noted that the presentation would cover

cost, education, and some actions they hope to see in the future. She explained that the data used was pulled from 28 interviewees with ages ranging from 14 to 60, with ten questions each in two different circumstances, to better understand the needs of the target demographic.

There are four essential themes: education, in regards to climate change, addressing cost inequalities and opportunities for change, increasing awareness about the topics, and how change can happen for the better. She explained that the first theme is education and understanding, and that the issue is people not having enough information, and not enough people caring about climate change. She noted that it is important to the community because they can learn from other people's opinions and understand them. She added that this action matters because if others are well informed, they will take action towards bettering our community and world, and play a more active role in helping. She added some quotes and personal experiences from people, the first being, "I'd only get power in the daytime if I installed solar panels." She noted that from their data, people have stated that solar panels will only be beneficial during sunny days and won't be of much use. She explained that with education, it'll show that yes, it may only work during the day, but it can also save money and store energy for emergency uses like generators instead of using gas to power their homes.

She stated that the second theme is cost because it is a big issue when it comes to installing solar panels. She noted that the cost of actions that benefit our world environmentally is often very high, which creates large barriers to accessibility to environmentally friendly actions. She added that the cost of environmentally friendly actions can dissuade people of low socioeconomic statuses and lower-income households from making choices that could benefit the environment. She explained that lowering the cost of climate actions, such as solar panels, electric vehicles, and home audits, encourages and incentivizes people to take those actions. She shared that there are many quotes from the community about the cost factor, as it is more commonly shared by the community about why it is such a big issue. She noted the following quotes: "Money is my main issue with all of these actions, so if cost wasn't a barrier, I would do them," "100 percent, even though it seems a little expensive," "I would feel more comfortable asking if it didn't cost money," which was referencing a person asking if they would help or encourage their local people to adding solar panels, and "Sounds boring, but to save money in the long run it sounds work it. I love learning hacks to make life easier." She noted that cost is a very make it or break it factor in the implementation of solar panels.

Presenter Yanni stated that some actions that are recommended are making more accessible and easier walking and biking pathways, providing more accessible and safe public transportation, and programs to pay for solar panels. He noted that for the first action, they would like better-managed walk and bike paths. He added that everyone who lives in the Brooklyn area deserves the right to be able to walk or bike in their city, which would ensure safe, well-maintained pathways for people of all socioeconomic backgrounds to promote healthy living and prevent injury. He added that they should invest in better infrastructure to support safe, sustainable, well-designed streets and pathways to make communities stronger, healthier, and more connected. He noted that a common theme that they saw from their interviews was that many participants shared that they enjoy walking or biking and see it as beneficial for their health and the environment. He added that they collected three quotes: "Cost is not an issue for me for this action," "I walk a lot on my day to day

and not only is it good for the environment, but it is health conscious,” and “I love biking but I hate walking. I’ll bike to places anywhere between five to ten miles away.” He stated that Micro-Transit is a flexible, affordable, and tech-enabled transportation solution that bridges the gap between fixed bus routes and personal vehicle ownership. He noted that a strong example of it is the Metro-Micro Transit service that is available in Minnesota Cities such as Woodbury, Roseville, and North Minneapolis. He added that if this were to branch out into other communities such as Maple Grove, Brooklyn Park, and Brooklyn Center, it would be used a lot more because many are using Uber now, but cost can be higher, however, with Micro-Transit, it can lower and take you from one side of town to the other. He noted that a pilot Micro-Transit program in the Brooklyns would directly address transit inequalities, support working families, improve first/last mile access, and reduce citywide congestion, while being fiscally smart. He explained that the second action is accessible and safe transportation. He added that establishing more accessible and safe transportation would include more stops so that people would not have to walk long distances to their destination, and they would like to see low-emission Micro-Transit. He added that with more frequent stops, people would not have to walk so much to the bus stop because, especially in Minnesota, the sidewalks can be difficult to walk on, and people will not want to walk on the snow. He noted that implementing more accessible and safe transit for the people of the Brooklyns would help the community feel more comfortable taking public transit.

Additional quotes provided are that, “For me I would prefer to drive, it is more time effective. I don’t want to wake up two hours early to take the bus to work,” “A little less convenient but a good idea for saving,” and “I don’t know much about stops, nor do I want to pay.” She noted that the quotes stuck out to them because the community needs more accessible and convenient transit, and paying more attention to public transit will greatly affect whether people use it or not. She explained that action three is programs to pay for solar panels, which prioritizes public funding for solar panels and how having more public resources for solar panels might make it more attractive to not only businesses, but people and their households in the Brooklyns. She noted that during the interviews, they collected valuable information on solar panels and how people view them, which explained to them that if price were not such a determining factor, the citizens of Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park would be much more likely to install solar panels. She thanked the Commission for its time and attention to the presentation.

Chair Koenig asked if there were any questions.

Commissioner Leino asked whether someone who wants to install solar panels on their roof is required to obtain any permits.

Ms. McIntosh stated that they would possibly need them depending on how they are attached, and for wiring.

Commissioner Leino clarified that, from the architectural perspective, a permit might be needed even if the installation takes up minimal space.

Ms. McIntosh stated that within the new zoning code, they started implementing some solar panel requirements. She noted that they had an example of this recently, where a homeowner came to

the Staff and had a ground mounted 16-by-20-foot standalone solar array for install in the side yard. She stated that they have started implementing some solar panel requirements, such as that if it is roof-mounted, it cannot be positioned vertically because there are a few where they are projecting from the roof. She noted that they may require a permit, and they typically do need to be structurally approved of the additional weight on the roof and the house, so there are some requirements.

Chair Koenig stated that many of the issues that came up in the quotes were that it costs too much or what is it good for, but there are also some real-world issues, including visual blight. He added that it shows some of the other complexities that play a role in it. He noted that these are some of the other issues that sometimes some people, or younger people, think some adults are resistant to it or do not see the value in it, but not always. He noted that in one slide, a quote read, "Solar panels are not cheap, and I don't pay the bills. So, there would be a lot of backlash from my family."

Commissioner Jones stated that they did an excellent job with the presentation, and she was curious about the presenters' ages and more about BBAY.

The group of presenters stated that they come from a few different groups, with some from Youth OnBoard along with a few others. She noted that the groups try to campaign to the community to show what teenagers think and also advocate for things, such as solar panel implementation and lower costs for them.

Youth OnBoard helps youth get involved with the community and implement the values that they have and try to help the community.

Yanni noted that the Brooklyn Bridge Alliance for Youth, he thinks about the structure more like a hierarchy, with Brooklyn Bridge Alliance for Youth, and then there are different branches. A few are: Youth Council, Youth OnBoard, and Reimagine, which is for black mental health. He added that Brooklyn Bridge Alliance for Youth pushes the idea that there can be a lot of youth leadership and that they have their opinions and they have strong beliefs, and BBAY gives them power to express them.

Commissioner Leino stated that the bussing thing is interesting to him because having once spent a lot of time in the city of Marshall, they have their own intracity bus, and many years ago Circle Pines did this same sort of thing through charitable organization, although the city never took it on. He added that the autonomous vehicle thing was interesting, and a survey question that asked if someone would be interested in getting in an autonomous vehicle would be good to know. He added that Mayo Clinic was doing this years ago, where it would pick patients up from the front of the hotel and then only go to the front door of the Mayo Clinic. He asked if this is still operational and if people are using it.

Ms. McIntosh stated that she was unsure if they were still running it or if it was just a pilot program.

Commissioner Leino stated that it would be interesting to ask in the next survey if people would get in these vehicles. He added that right now he has the luxury to telecommute and drive where he wants to go, but if he did not have that luxury, he would think about it as an option.

Commissioner Dunn stated that the presentation was nice and clear. He added that he drove a car that drove itself under his control, which was initially scary, but he got used to it. He asked if they had thought up the initial costs to get it going versus how many years to level out and start making money.

Ms. McIntosh asked if he was referring to the vehicles or the solar panels.

Commissioner Dunn noted that he was talking about the solar panels.

Yanni stated that they had not talked about it.

Commissioner Leino stated that it is a good question because if you are going to reinsulate your house, how much does it cost versus what am I going to save on my heat for the next month, if this can be shown to people they may be willing to do it and the same is true with solar panels.

Chair Koenig stated that it would be an interesting thought experiment, without knowing how much it costs, to take guesses about what the costs of it might be, without looking it up, and then after thinking about the costs, look up the information with the aid of a mentor or teacher. He noted to think about what I think it would cost from what I know now, and then look into it and see what the surprises are that it actually does cost, and then that can be applied to many other things. He asked what examples of Micro-Transits were.

Yanni stated that it would be very similar to Uber.

One of the presenters stated that the Maple Grove Transit that goes through the Arbor Lakes Center, is able to be used in this manner where you call in and then you can plan out where to be picked up and dropped off. She noted that because she works there, she has tried to use it, but there are so many people who use it, and when she calls, it is not always available in a short amount of time.

The presenters stated that there would be increased stops, and rather than the buses going through Minneapolis, they would just be in Brooklyn Center with an increase in stops. This would decrease the stress associated with using the bussing system, and she envisions less strain and more stops for Micro-Transit.

Commissioner Dunn noted that he has experience with Micro-Transit in North Minneapolis, and it works pretty well, because there are a lot of buses that run every ten minutes, but you have to call ahead. It just takes a little planning.

Yanni stated that it would be helpful to have more of the Micro-Transit available for those who cannot afford Uber or it is too far to walk or bike, and it would be more convenient to have more of those cars or buses so that you don't have to get put on a waitlist or have to call so far in advance.

Chair Koenig asked if the presenters felt that the younger generation is more receptive to public transportation and using alternative methods, because, with his generation, many people thought it was important to get their driver's license and use it.

Yanni stated that he does see that with many of his friends and peers, but at the same time, many 16 to 17 year olds don't have a driver's license, and they would love to go to the mall or be able to get to a workplace, but they don't have their own transportation. He added that it is why it would be helpful for youth or citizens in general, so they can get to places more easily.

Another presenter stated that she does have her learner's permit and has gone through Driver's Ed, and has driven a little, but she has found that using public transportation is not that difficult. She added that in her journey with the marching band, she has used the Metro and that many of her friends have used it as well. She noted that many of her friends still get their license because they know someday they will need it.

Commissioner Dunn noted that there is a convenience factor because he catches the bus or drives his car, depending on what he is doing. Depending on where a person is going, they can get on the Micro-Transit without worrying about the extra fee of parking on top of everything else.

Commissioner Leino stated that anyone who does not think buses are an integral part of the city can look back to the last bus driver's strike in Minneapolis and see how bad it was because everybody had to start driving to get to work, and they almost had to call in the National Guard to operate a few buses, but then they reached an agreement. He added that it hit home for Brooklyn Center because the garage was in the city and they were out there picketing every night.

Chair Koenig stated that he became acquainted with the Chair of the Met Council and Mayor of Edina a few years ago and he was going to try to get on the main transportation committee with this gentleman, so he rode the buses all over the place to gain his education and he learned how slow it can be to get somewhere, but there is conveniences with buses as well. He added that for many citizens, if bus routes were taken away or limited, it would be catastrophic for the communities. He thanked the group for their presentation and encouraged them to continue with the duty and dedication to climate change and what they feel is important.

Commissioner Dunn encouraged the group to keep doing their research and to keep going.

Commissioner Schonning stated that in 2009 his daughter had a job with Brooklyn Center Alliance for Youth, so he really believes in what they are doing. He added that it is really important that they get involved, have a voice, and know that they can impact the community and be an integral part of being who they are in the community.

Chair Koenig thanked the people who put together the group and the presentation.

Ms. McIntosh suggested making a motion to accept the presentation.

There was a motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Leino, to accept the presentation.

Voting on the motion: Chair Koenig and Commissioners Dunn, Leino, Jones, and Schonning voted aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. McIntosh stated that when she came to the City, she was thrust into the update of the 2040 plans, because they were far behind in the process of starting the comprehensive plan update for the City, and now they are planning for the 2050 plan update. She added that in starting the process, the updates will need to be done by 2028, and that the Council has already said that climate change, climate action plans, etc. will be a central feature of this plan update. She noted the fact that there are so many youth in the City and the median age is 32 years old, with 30 percent under the age of 18 and almost 10 percent under the age of five, it shows how important it is to have the voice of the youth and that they will be a key factor Brooklyn Center's future in the next ten years.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7a. City Council and Planning Commission Updates

Ms. McIntosh stated that she did not think there would be a meeting in July. She noted that at City Council, Oh, Pretti! did receive their conditional use permit, and the Staff is working with the owners on the whole building permit process with the Building Official, trying to get it wrapped up so they can open their business in Humboldt Shopping Center. She added that Admiral Lane Addition was approved as well.

7b. Development and Construction Updates

Ms. McIntosh stated that CAPI is planning their groundbreaking celebration at the end of June, and she sent an invitation to see if the Commission is interested in attending, and to accept the invitation if they are going. She added that they are working with CAPI on the process because they will be moving out of their building for the next year, and they are temporarily relocating their food shelf, so the food shelf will be available. She noted that they will begin construction after July 4th, and it will be a year of construction. She explained that New Horizon Academy is planning to close on 7100 Brooklyn Boulevard, at the former credit union building, on June 24, so Staff is also working with them through their final items, building permits, closing documents, getting items filed, and they are already moving to demolition permits.

She explained the lender for the triplex site off Brooklyn Boulevard, who is now the new owner of the C Alan triplex site, is wrapping up the foreclosure process and assuming the property. She added that they have been meeting with contractors to get the triplex site up and running and under construction again. They might not finish out the entire project, but they want to do all the cleanup work, get the two triplexes wrapped up, finish out site improvement work, and receive their certificates of occupancy for the two triplexes. She stated that Treasure Hunt, a daycare center, had been stalled, but they are hoping it will open soon.

7c. 2025 Legislative Update

Ms. McIntosh stated that they are trying, and she has been getting updates from lobbyists and the League of Minnesota Cities, on some provisions that came through for open meeting law that the city will probably want to take notice of with respect to virtual attendance and remote participation. She noted that nothing was passed with the missing middle legislation for zoning, but she is assuming it will come back up again next year. She stated that there are some conversations about being proactive in making changes. The city of Bloomington has adopted a more streamlined development review process recently, which is one of the requests the Yes to Homes Coalition has made to expedite and allow for more approvals through city staff instead of having to go through Planning Commission and City Council.

Ms. Eldridge stated that it for between four units and sixteen units they will just come through City staff. She added that Richfield has it set up as an actual district, and so does South St. Paul.

Ms. McIntosh added that one of the big things is that a lot of cities are proactively trying to remove as many conditional uses as they can so that it doesn't have to go through Planning Commission or City Council because they are generally permitted, just with conditions. Similarly, with site and building plans, if you meet all the requirements and do not require variances, then it does not need to go through Planning Commission or City Council. She added that Rochester has been pushing this because of how much construction and development pressure is going on in that city; they cannot build fast enough, and effectively, nothing goes through the City Council so long as it is being designed within code requirements. The argument she has heard is that as City Council, and Planning Commission, as a recommending body, have adopted the zoning code and comprehensive plan, city staff takes direction from that, and that there should be no need for any other interpretation. The other push for this process has been to avoid some of the political complexities in bringing proposals before elected bodies.

Commissioner Leino stated that it circles back to the solar thing, that in some of the counties, an owner may approach the board to start a solar farm, and many of the neighbors would be upset about it, and the county commission would deny the permit based strictly on political pressure and no findings of fact, so then the board of appeals sends it back and says you can't just deny that, and this would cost the developer money. He added that within the Rochester model, they are still complying, and if people want to complain, they could still go to the City Council and do so.

Ms. McIntosh noted that there are provisions in the new code to conduct administrative staff review for minor amendments. She added that she has been informing people in City Hall that perhaps this is something to start looking at; if Brooklyn Center can start to remove hurdles that can kill a project, then that is beneficial for the City.

Chair Koenig stated that there are checks and balances, and going through the Commission to go to the Council has its benefits. For City Staff it comes down to ensuring there are templates and standards to follow.

Ms. McIntosh provided an update on the state level cannabis license process. She stated that the Office of Cannabis Management or OCM ran the first lottery for some of the first cannabis license types. City Staff are hoping to learn more soon. She added that the city will need to conduct a lottery process for cannabis retailers. The city has implemented a cap of no more than three cannabis retailers. She added that if it is coming through as a tribal compact or medical cannabis, those do not fall within the capped restriction for no more than three.

Chair Koenig stated that, for the sake of transparency for the lottery to use CCX and the little round balls so that all can see the lottery process.

Ms. McIntosh stated that at the State level, they did use the Powerball process.

Chair Koenig noted that a lottery process behind closed doors is an invitation for a million questions.

Commissioner Leino stated that he had not followed the tribal licenses were separate from this process and there was a separate licensing agreement.

Ms. McIntosh noted that some of the frustration that came out of this was that cities were trying to hurry to figure out the zoning rules, based on what they were being told, but in the same timeframe the state was still crafting their final rule. These rules were not finalized until a few months ago, one of those being the tribal compacts. She added that they were still changing things.

Commissioner Schonning inquired on the strip mall next to the former Target site, and who owned it. Ms. McIntosh stated that there are two separate owners, with ACER owning the longer section closest to the former Target site, which is owned by the City's EDA.

Ms. McIntosh provided an update on the former Brown College site located at 5951 Earle Brown Drive and stated that there are many bids to go through following the Hennepin County auction of the property. At the last update, Hennepin County has done three separate auctions for the property, which is behind the old Target. She added that in the first auction, the winner did not pay the money, so they re-listed the property. On the second auction, someone accidentally typed a nine in front of their bid, so they offered \$8.97 million, which was substantially more than the original \$2.3 million it was listed for. The previous auction ended at \$2.5 million. She added that the County re-listed it again, and there was a winner, but it did not go as they thought it would. The plan, as City Staff understood it, was for Hennepin County to go through all 454 bids, and there was no word on whether there was a winner or not yet. She noted that the City did not put in an offer, though.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There was a motion by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Dunn, to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting.

Voting on the motion: Chair Koenig and Commissioners Dunn, Leino, Jones, and Schonning voted aye. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Ginny McIntosh, Secretary

Alexander Koenig, Chair