

Regular Session
September 15, 2025
City Council Chambers

Call to Order	The Champlin Planning Commission met in Regular Session and was called to order by Chairperson Chad Darr at 7:00 p.m.
Pledge of Allegiance	Chairperson Darr led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.
Roll Call	Present were: Chairperson Darr, Commissioners Jeff Kendall, Kathy Manemann, and Bob Streitz. Absent: Ryan Reider, Jordan Simon, and Ben Uglem. Also present was City Planner Lexi Smith.
Role of the Commission	Chairperson Darr briefly reviewed the role of the Commission.
Approval of Agenda (September 15, 2025) Motion	Motion by Commissioner Manemann and seconded by Commissioner Kendall, to approve the agenda of the September 15, 2025, Planning Commission meeting as presented. All voted in favor and the motion carried.
Open Forum	No one was present for open forum.
Approval of Minutes (June 30, 2025) Motion	Motion by Commissioner Manemann and seconded by Commissioner Kendall, to table the minutes of the June 30, 2025, Planning Commission meeting as presented. All voted in favor and the motion carried.
A Request for a Variance to the Maximum Allowable Square Footage for Accessory Buildings and a Conditional Use Permit for a Garage Exceeding 1,000 Square Feet at 1213 Independence Avenue N by Craig Butler	<p><u>Public Hearings</u></p> <p>The City Planner stated that Mr. Craig Butler desires to add on to an existing detached garage to double its size. The garage is currently 864 square feet, and the proposed addition size is 864 square feet. The desire is to have additional space for storage and space to work on his classic cars. The original garage was 24' by 24', built in 1987, and a 12' by 12' addition was added in 1994. A Conditional Use Permit is required for a garage over 1,000 square feet, and a variance is requested for an accessory building exceeding the maximum allowable square footage per lot size, which is 1,200 square feet. Staff recommends denial of the variance and CUP.</p>
Public Hearing	<p>Chairperson Darr opened the public hearing at 7:08 p.m.</p> <p>Craig Butler, applicant, stated that he would like to place an addition onto the back of the garage. He noted that his lot is double deep and therefore would still leave 49 feet from the back of the expanded garage to the property line. He stated that this is a unique situation that will not bother anyone, and he has support from all his neighbors. He noted that he also has a privacy fence, and the only visual difference would be the roof extending further back into the yard.</p> <p>Dan Molden, 1210 Independence Avenue N, commented that he lives across from the applicant and reminded the Commission that this is a variance request. He stated that the neighbors have no issues with this request. He asked if any negative comments were received.</p> <p>The City Planner commented that three written public comments were received from two properties on Independence Avenue. She stated that there were no negative comments from either property.</p> <p>Mr. Mullen stated that all neighbors have spoken about and support this request. He noted that this would be an improvement for the property and would also increase property values. He stated that Mr. Butler takes great care of his property and believes that he should be rewarded. He noted that a variance is an exception to the rule, and this should be an instance when an exception could be made, as this is a reasonable request.</p>

Shirley Sprager, 1213 Independence, commented that the lot is just a bit smaller than a half-acre, noting that if it were a half-acre lot, they would be allowed a larger-sized building. She commented that they would like to bring their items to where they live rather than renting storage space or having items in the driveway. She asked how the square footage calculations were created.

The City Planner was unsure of the full history, but noted that there was math and a sliding scale that came into play, as well as review of other cities code to determine a reasonably sized accessory structure.

Ms. Sprager asked if the primary driver is aesthetics or hardcover.

The City Planner confirmed that both of those elements come into play. She noted that the desire is to have the home be the primary structure on a property, and if the garage is larger than the home, that could change the use of the lot.

Ms. Sprager commented that they like cars and would be putting those into the larger garage; therefore, the use of the property would not change. She noted that the view from the street also would not change, as the garage addition would go towards the back. She asked the Commission to consider approval of the request.

Commissioner Streitz recognized that Mr. Butler is a longtime resident and has support from his neighbors. He asked if a smaller addition would help the applicant.

Mr. Butler asked if they could reduce the request to 24' by 24' if the full request could not be approved.

The City Planner stated that 196 square feet could be added under Code, which would be an extension of eight feet with the current width of the garage.

Commissioner Kendall used the scenario in which the residents added onto their home and asked how much space would need to be added to the home in order to allow for this-sized garage.

The City Planner replied that any addition to the primary home would allow additional space for the garage as well, noting a ratio of one to one.

Ms. Sprager commented that it would be nice, but it is not within their budget to add onto the home as well.

Commissioner Manemann appreciated the input from the neighbor, mentioning common sense versus regulation. She stated that while she feels for the applicant, she also understands her role as a member of the Commission to review requests based on the City Code. She commented that the City Council does have more leeway to make exceptions. She recognized that the applicants have a large lot that would accommodate this improvement.

Chairperson Darr commented on what a great community Champlin is and appreciated the support provided by Mr. Butler's neighbors for this request. He recognized that some requests do not fall within the standard rules, and while they could support this request, they must make their recommendation based on the City Code.

Commissioner Kendall asked if there were any other variances similar to this that could have set a precedent.

The City Planner replied that there have not been any variances approved for a larger accessory structure size.

Commissioner Streitz asked if the shed had been taken into the calculation.

The City Planner confirmed that the square footage of the shed has been included in the calculation. She stated that if the shed were removed, another 140 square feet could be added to the garage.

Chairperson Darr asked how the square footage requirements within the Code compare to other communities.

The City Planner commented that she does not have that information with her tonight, but confirmed that the comparison was done in 2019 when the Code was updated and the allowances were in line with the other communities.

Chairperson Darr reminded the applicant that this is a recommendation that will go forward to the City Council for the final decision.

Commissioner Streitz commented that Commissioner Manemann did a good job of explaining the reasons why the Commission must vote in this manner.

Motion

Motion by Commissioner Streitz and seconded by Commissioner Manemann to recommend that the City Council deny the request for a variance and Conditional Use Permit at 1213 Independence Avenue. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

It was noted that this item is scheduled for the September 22, 2025, City Council meeting.

September Project Updates

Other Business

The City Planner highlighted the updates found within her written report.

Commission Vacancies

The City Planner noted current Commission vacancies and welcomed interested residents to apply.

Adjourn Motion

Motion by Commissioner Streitz and seconded by Commissioner Kendall, to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor and the motion carried. The Champlin Planning Commission meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.



Chad Darr, Chairperson

Attest:



Lexi Smith, City Planner

