

**CITY OF ELYSIAN
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 7, 2025**

The Elysian Planning and Zoning Commission met in regular session on Tuesday, October 7, 2025 at City Hall at 6:00 pm.

Present were Chairperson Paul Hunter; Commissioners Patrick Ely, Dan Engebretson, and Doug Stanke; Zoning Administrator Lorri Kopischke. Absent: Commissioner Kim Denn.

On motion by Ely, seconded by Engebretson, all voting in favor, to approve the agenda of the October 7, 2025 meeting with the following addition:

1. Discussion on Accessory Structure in Roemhildt Addition

On motion by Stanke, seconded by Ely, all voting in favor, to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2025 Regular Meeting as presented.

On motion by Engebretson, seconded by Ely, all voting in favor, to close the Regular Meeting and open the Public Hearing at 6:01 pm.

Cynthia Fenn and Nick Wolff are requesting a variance to demolish an existing garage, build a new garage, and build an addition to the existing cabin. The property is located in the R-1 Shoreland Zone. The lot area is 9,622 square feet. The Shoreland Ordinance requires 20,000 square feet. Therefore, this is a non-conforming lot.

The Shoreland Ordinance allows 25% lot coverage. The current coverage is 1,804 square feet or 18.7%. The proposed lot coverage is 2,754 square feet or 28.6%.

The existing garage is 359 square feet and the proposed garage is 1,080 square feet. The required setbacks are three feet and the location of the structure will meet all setback requirements.

The existing cabin is 671 square feet and the proposed cabin with addition is 1,069 square feet. The proposed cabin does not meet the side yard setback, the 75-foot OHW setback or the setback requirement from the private drive.

A certificate of survey showing the proposed structures was provided but no architectural drawings were provided.

The DNR has commented on the variance request as follows:

Good morning Lorri,

I don't have any additional comments for this one. Since this is a historical non-conforming lot and the landowner does not own any adjacent lots, combination to bring the lot into compliance is not an option. The impervious is slightly over, the council could look at mitigation for that, if interested.

Todd Piepho

Area Hydrologist | Ecological and Water Resources. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

The applicant was not present at the meeting.

Public Comments:

Joshua Lorenz, 110 Willow Point Drive, stated that his biggest concern was the violation of the setbacks with the new structure. The existing structure is already really close to the property line and the owner is not respectful of that. Lorenz is also concerned with the shoreland setback and does not want to lose his view of the lake. He asked that the renovation not be allowed to further compromise the existing setbacks.

Larry Howe, 113 Willow Point Drive, stated that his biggest concern is drainage due to where the garage is located. The existing garage is elevated. The water that drains there goes around the garage and into the pond away from the homes. He is concerned that if the area is filled in and the garage is bigger, the water will run toward the lake and the homes located there, rather than to the pond. He asked that the applicant be required to provide a plan for the drainage. Howe also asked that the impervious surface issue be addressed as to how that will affect the drainage.

Written Comments:

We are questioning the permit to build a new garage and adding onto the existing house.

Yes, the garage needs to be torn down and replaced but looks like a lot bigger structure, so will he be bringing fill in to bring the garage up so the water isn't going to be in it? and will the water sit in the corner of the lot then when this happens and add water to the road and damaging the road more? Who is going to build it and finish it with it a time frame.

We are understanding Nick would be finishing it and he hasn't been out there for 2 years or more so when would it get done?

As far as the house goes. That structure needs to be condemned. There was or maybe still is a broken water pipe in the trailer and was never repaired. Understanding there is mold and is very nasty inside. This place has been added unto several times with a small trailer home in the inside of it. Maybe they should consider demo the home also and starting over.

Guess this is just our opinion but maybe take another look at what is going to be done.

Thanks

The Joe Strong Family
111 Willow Point Dr.

There were no further Public or Written Comments.

On motion by Engebretson, seconded by Ely, all voting in favor, to close the Public Hearing and open the Regular Meeting at 6:11 pm.

It was noted that the City Attorney has recommended that the request either be denied or be tabled to provide an opportunity for the applicant to provide a revised plan that will meet the setback requirements.

On motion by Stanke, seconded by Engebretson, all voting in favor, to table consideration of the variance request of Cynthia Fell and Nick Wolf for the property located at 109 Willow Point Drive to the November 4, 2025 meeting and that the applicant provide the following information:

1. A plan that meets the setback requirements.
2. A plan that meets the 25% impervious coverage requirement.
3. An engineered drainage plan.
4. An architectural drawing of the proposed structures.
5. Removal of the sheds on the property.

On motion by Engebretson, seconded by Stanke, all voting in favor, to close the Regular Meeting and open the Public Hearing at 6:20 pm.

Jeremy Brown has submitted a request for a Planned Unit Development to build a twin home on 308 Francis Circle North and a twin home on 312 Francis Circle North (adjoining lots). The lots are located in the R-2 Shoreland Zone. The lots are 15,951 square feet and 15,336 square feet. The proposed twin homes meet all setback requirements.

Consideration of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) is subject to §156.071 and §156.092 of the Elysian Code of Ordinances. The request has been reviewed by Todd Piepho, Department of Natural Resources, Brent Kavitz, SEH Engineering, and City Attorney Jason Moran.

All the required documentation for a PUD has been received. The shoreland tier division has been calculated. The lots are located in Tier 3. The density allowed for this property is up to six units. If the project meets the Maintenance and Design Criteria, the City may approve the additional density up to six units. The specific criteria that needs to be met for these lots is as follows:

1, Open space requirements. Planned unit developments must contain open space meeting all of the following criteria.

- (a) At least 50% of the total project area must be preserved as open space.
- (b) Dwelling units or sites, road rights-of-way or land covered by road surfaces, parking areas or structures, except water-oriented accessory structures or facilities, are developed areas and shall not be included in the computation of minimum open space.
- (c) Any areas with physical characteristics unsuitable for development in their natural state and areas containing significant historic sites or unplatted cemeteries must be included in open space.
- (d) Open space may include outdoor recreational facilities for use by owners of dwelling units or sites, by guests staying in commercial dwelling units or sites and by the general public.
- (e) Open space must not include commercial facilities or uses, but may contain water- oriented accessory structures or facilities.
- (f) The appearance of open space areas, including topography, vegetation and allowable uses, must be preserved by the use of restrictive deed covenants, permanent easements, public dedication and acceptance or other equally effective permanent means.

2. Open space preservation. Deed restrictions, covenants, permanent easements, public dedication and acceptance or other equally effective and permanent means must be provided to ensure long-term preservation and maintenance of open space.

(a) Development organization and functioning. Unless equally effective alternative community framework is established, when applicable, all residential planned unit developments must use an owners association with the following features.

- 1. Membership must be mandatory for each dwelling unit or site purchaser and any successive purchasers.
- 2. Each member must pay a pro rated share of the association's expenses and unpaid assessments can become liens on units or sites.
- 3. Assessments must be adjustable to accommodate changing conditions.
- 4. The association must be responsible for insurance, taxes and maintenance of all commonly owned property and facilities.

Brown has submitted a site plan with the designated open space denoted. With regards to the formal mechanism to ensure that the open space remains protected and maintained over time, the applicant has requested the following:

“We intend to sell these units individually with a Common Interest Community (CIC) Plat. Required by MN State Statute the CIC plat will need to be filed with a CIC Declaration. We will include language leaving 50% of the lot as open space in the CIC Declaration (as noted on the attached plan). The CIC declaration is not yet prepared but will be prepared in the coming month. If allowed, we would like the City to consider allowing construction with the provision that we provide a copy of the CIC Declaration to the City for review and approval before the Certification of Occupation (CO) is issued.”

Public Comments:

Barbara Stelten, 304 Tustin Circle North, stated that she is opposed to the development of twin homes on these lots. Twin homes are not compatible with the single-family characteristics of this neighborhood. She purchased her home here one year ago. She is concerned that the twin homes will impact her property value. She is also concerned that if this trend continues in Elysian, the farmland to the west of her property may develop into multi-family housing. The development of twin homes will bring a lot of traffic and an influx of people in and out of the neighborhood. This area should be restricted to single family housing only. This is not conducive to the character of the neighborhood.

Chuck Taylor, 310 Tustin Circle N, stated that he had assumed that there would not be rental properties in this area. Most of the residents in this neighborhood are retired. He is concerned with the increased traffic and the rental part of this. He would like to see single family homes.

Staff noted that Matt Conroy, 300 Francis Circle North, had visited City Hall earlier today and expressed his concern with increased traffic and rental of the twin homes.

There were no further Public or Written Comments.

On motion by Stanke, seconded by Engebretson, all voting in favor, to close the Regular Meeting and open the Public Hearing at 6:33 pm.

Jeremy Brown, developer and owner of the property at 308 and 312 Francis Circle North, stated that the trends across Minnesota show that this type of housing is needed. This development will allow four single family residences, at a price point where people can stay here. The market is demanding rentals.

Engebretson asked Brown if he would be willing to add a clause to his Common Interest Community (CIC) Declaration that the twin homes are not allowed to be used as rental units.

Brown stated that he would not be willing to do that. He plans to develop and hit the market with a product that is in demand. The rental option will cater to those who can't afford a mortgage but can afford to rent or lease.

Hunter noted that the Elysian Comprehensive Land Use Plan states that the City of Elysian will encourage the provision of a well-balanced mix of housing for all types of households. A mix of properties to include rental properties will attract people to the City. When making the assumption that the twin homes will affect the character of the neighborhood, there is an assumption that a duplex will cater to only one demographic. The reality is that a duplex can

cater to multiple demographics such as retired, widowed, and young people. And this use is allowed in this zoning district.

Ely stated that he understood the concern with traffic. He had lived in this area when he was younger. He thought that this development may only add a couple of cars a day and he did not think that this amount of traffic would create issues.

Engebretson agreed. He did not agree that the twin homes would negatively affect property values in the area. He owns a town home in the Lake View Manor development and his property value has increased from \$250,000 to \$450,000 over the last 10 years. His is a nice neighborhood. A quiet neighborhood. He asked if the lease terms might be set at a length to discourage people from moving in and out.

Ely noted that the City needs more rental units. The houses in Elysian are either real small and inexpensive or very large and expensive. There needs to be some middle ground.

Brown stated that this is a new development concept and he was not certain of the price point. He estimated \$1,500 to \$1,600 per month.

Brown stated that he lives in Elysian. His daughter lives in Elysian, in this very neighborhood with his grandchildren. There will be background checks on all renters. He cares about this community and would not build something that would be a detriment to the neighborhood.

Engebretson asked if Brown would be open to installing a buffer on the sides of these properties that abut the single-family residences. He suggested four 4-6 foot, either deciduous or evergreen trees or shrubs that would grow to 8-12 feet tall. The intent is to provide a buffer and break up the sight line.

Brown stated that he would be willing to work with the City on that type of landscaping plan.

Barb Stelten, 304 Tustin Circle North, stated that she did not understand how this type of unit could be placed in a single-family neighborhood. The Commission noted that this area is zoned R-2 Residential and this type of housing is allowed in this neighborhood.

Brown suggested that there is a misconception with the term rental. It is not a bad thing. It is a necessity. He stated that these units will be respectful and well received.

On motion by Stanke, seconded by Ely, all voting in favor, to recommend approval of the planned unit development request of Jeremy Brown to build a twin home on 308 Francis Circle North and to build a twin home on 312 Francis Circle North as the proposed use is within the spirit of the City's Zoning ordinance, it is beneficial to the City's tax base, the use makes good use of the land in issue, the proposed use does comply with the City's existing Zoning Ordinance, and is in the best interest and general welfare of the City of Elysian, and subject to the following conditions:

1. That four 4-6 foot either deciduous or evergreen trees or shrubs that will mature to 8–12 foot tall be planted on the side of each of these properties that abut a single-family residence with the intent to provide screening and break up the sight line.
2. That the City allows construction of the twin home on 308 Francis Circle North and 312 Francis Circle North with the provision that the builder will include language leaving 50% of the lot as open space in the Common Interest Community (CIC) Declaration. The

builder will provide a copy of the CIC Declaration to the City for review and approval before the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) is issued.

The City Council will consider this recommendation at the October 13, 2025 meeting.

The Commissioners reviewed the Comprehensive Plan Elements Work Document. This will be presented to the City Council at the October 13, 2025 meeting.

The Commissioners reviewed a shed located at 130 Shoreview Drive for compliance with Elysian Code of Ordinance §156.121 (G). The shed is not in compliance. Staff will work with City Attorney to resolve the non-compliance.

Staff reported that the driveway removal at 2 Roots Beach Lane has been completed. The concrete has been removed and the curb stop is exposed. The area was dug down to 1 foot and a base of 1-1/2 inch gray trap from Morgan, MN was installed. Once that is packed, a layer of ¾ inch gray trap will be added.

There was no further business to come before the Commission.

On motion by Ely, seconded by Stanke, all voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Attest:

Paul Hunter, Chairperson

Lorri Kopischke, Zoning Administrator