



Approved:

**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
SPECIAL PLANNING COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2025
6:30 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY HALL**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Chair Collins called to order the Special Planning Commission meeting at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present were: Chair Joshua Collins, Commissioners Jessica Birken, Brad Bjorklund, Patrick Burlingame, Nancy Jacobson, and Ben Lindau.

Absent: Commissioner Stephen Erler.

Also present were: Community Development Director Jacob Reilly and Council Liaison Kurt Weber.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – DECEMBER 10, 2025

Chair Collins requested Item 5C – Staff Report be added to the agenda.

Commissioner Birken moved, seconded by Commissioner Lindau, to approve the December 10, 2025, agenda as amended adding Item 5C. The motion carried unanimously (6-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

None.

PLANNING CASES

A. Planning Case 25-015 – 4440 Round Lake Road – *Public Hearing*

Community Development Director Reilly stated the Subject Property was previously occupied by Saltbox, a business offering suites leased by individual businesses - usually startup/small digital commerce companies - in this building. Saltbox went through Concept Review with the City Council in March of 2022 (Planning Case #22-005) and Site Plan Review with the Planning Commission and City Council in May and June of 2022 (Planning Case #22-007). As part of improvements to the property in 2022, a new site plan was approved to reconfigure the parking lot layout to allow for 144 parking stalls. Portal Warehousing (“The Operator”) became the new

operator of the building in 2024 and has been operating under the same flexible warehousing business model operated by Saltbox. Portal handles the on-demand logistical services for receipt and delivery of packages and/or products and provides order fulfillment assistance to small business owners. Products arrive at the loading dock(s) and the on-site logistics staff ensure items are delivered to individual suites or to secure warehouse space. Approximately one half of the warehouse is unoccupied. The Applicant purchased the property early in 2025.

Community Development Director Reilly explained at the October 27, 2025, work session meeting, the City Council reviewed a concept plan for Portal to operate a cannabis warehouse operation in addition to the existing flexible warehouse and office suites offered in the building. The legalization of adult use cannabis by the State Legislature offers a new market for warehousing pre-packaged cannabis products for wholesale distribution. The Applicant seeks to offer similar flexible warehouse spaces to cannabis wholesalers and Portal will continue to coordinate operations at the site. The discussion at the Council work session revolved around the operations of the building, the number of jobs, and vehicle circulation.

Community Development Director Reilly reviewed the Site Data, the Plan Evaluation and provided the Findings of Fact for review:

1. The subject property located at 4440 Round Lake Road is zoned GB, Gateway Business Zoning District and is designated for office and industrial use in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
2. Cannabis, wholesale is a conditional use in the GB Gateway Business Zoning District.
3. A state license is required for each wholesaler.
4. The Applicant, Hempel Real Estate, dba HRE Arden Hills, LLC is the sole owner of the property and applied for a conditional use permit for cannabis wholesale operations at the site.
5. The Applicant's site plan shows sufficient parking for 10% office and 90% warehouse use, a use that continues an existing legal nonconforming use.
6. The Applicant's narrative notes the specifics of the proposed business, including the sourcing of products and customer and employee education, and indicates odor suppression, security, and licensing as required by state law will be followed.
7. The materials submitted show adequate circulation on site to prevent adverse effects to the surrounding neighborhood or the community as a whole.
8. Standards and conditions in Section 1325.047 Cannabis Business Conditional Use Permit are met.
9. Standards and conditions in Section 1320.06 District Requirements Chart (GB Gateway Business District) are met.
10. Standards and conditions in Section 1325.06 - General Regulations, Off-Street Parking Requirements are met, given the existing nonconforming nature of the site.
11. A public hearing for a Conditional Use Permit request is required before the request can be brought before the City Council. The required public hearing was held on December 10, 2025.

Community Development Director Reilly stated suggested conditions of approval for Planning Case 25-015 for a Conditional Use Permit to allow cannabis, wholesale at 4440 Round Lake Road:

1. All existing and any future refuse/recycling containers on site must be enclosed prior to issuance of the Conditional Use Permit.

2. No additional exterior signage related to the cannabis wholesale use shall be permitted.
3. The Applicant shall comply with all sections of the City Code and with applicable State Statutes.
4. An odor management plan must be submitted to the City prior to issuance of the Conditional Use Permit.
5. The Applicant shall for the duration of the Conditional Use Permit continue to provide evidence to the City of the status of each operator's state licensure annually and no later than the first business day of December of each year.
6. Not more than 10% of the building's floor area may be used for office use.

Community Development Director Reilly reviewed the options available to the Planning Commission for a decision on this matter:

1. Recommend Approval with Conditions
2. Recommend Approval as Submitted
3. Recommend Denial
4. Table

Chair Collins opened the floor to Commissioner comments.

Chair Collins asked to clarify that the only reason the Planning Commission was reviewing this case was because this was a cannabis use.

Community Development Director Reilly reported this was the case.

Commissioner Lindau asked what kind of internal security measures would be put in place for the individual units.

Brandon Champeau, applicant, explained items would be stored within individual, secure units. He reported the 52,000-foot vacant space would have to comply with any State Statute with respect to internal security. He noted the building had security and alarms as well.

Chair Collins opened the public hearing at 6:46 p.m.

Chair Collins invited anyone for or against the application to come forward and make comment.

There being no comment from the public, Chair Collins closed the public hearing at 7:46 p.m.

Commissioner Burlingame stated after reviewing the operational safeguards and the clear alignment with the Gateway Business District he would be offering his support for this project. He recommended one condition be considered to require an odor plan to be in place prior to occupancy.

Chair Collins reported Condition 4 states: An odor management plan must be submitted to the City prior to issuance of the Conditional Use Permit.

Commissioner Burlingame indicated he would like this condition to be amended to read: An odor management plan shall be submitted for review and approval by City staff prior to the occupancy of each cannabis wholesale tenant. Odor control measures must be tailored to each tenant specific products and packaging to ensure there is no detectable odor at the property line.

Chair Collins asked how this differed from what the State required.

Commissioner Burlingame explained the odor management plan from the City would address each tenant versus the overall property.

Commissioner Lindau stated he would like to better understand the State’s requirements when it comes to odor mitigation.

Commissioner Birken questioned if the City had to be concerned about odor on this property, given that the products will not be manufactured on site, rather the products would be prepacked and stored on this site.

Mr. Champeau stated he did not anticipate there would be any odor issues because the products would be prepacked and sealed. He noted there would be a lot of tenants operating in this space and if one was smellier than the others, he would not want them in the space because it would upset the other tenants.

Chair Collins inquired if all products would arrive at the space prepackaged.

Mr. Champeau reported this was the case noting no production would take place onsite.

Chair Collins indicated he supported the language for Condition 4 as proposed by staff.

Commissioner Burlingame stated he would redact his recommended language changes for Condition 4.

Commissioner Birken moved and Commissioner Lindau seconded a motion to recommend approval of Planning Case 25-015 for a Conditional Use Permit to allow cannabis, whiles at 4440 Round Lake Road based on the findings of fact and the submitted plans, as amended by the conditions in the December 10, 2025, report to the Planning Commission. The motion carried unanimously (6-0).

Chair Collins reported this item would be reviewed by the City Council on January 12, 2026.

UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS

None.

REPORTS

A. Report from the City Council

Councilmember Weber provided the Commission with an update from the City Council. He stated the Council greatly appreciated the work this group was doing on behalf of the City. He noted he would continue to serve as the Planning Commission liaison in 2026. He reported the Council approved a balanced budget and levy increase of 12.5% at their most recent meeting. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.