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**DATE:** March 9, 2026

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
Jessica Jagoe, City Administrator

**FROM:** Elena Fransen, AICP, Senior Planner

**SUBJECT:** **Planning Case #25-016 – No Public Hearing Required**  
**Applicant:** Bruce Gardner  
**Property Location:** 3628 Connelly Avenue  
**Request:** Site Plan Review and Variances

**Budgeted Amount:**  
N/A

**Actual Amount:**  
N/A

**Funding Source:**  
N/A

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**Council Should Consider**

Motion to approve, table, or deny the following:

- Adoption of Resolution 2026-012 for Planning Case 25-016 to allow a retail sales use to operate in an existing nonconforming 9,839 square foot manufacturing and warehousing facility with a lower number of off-street parking spaces than is required by the City Code through the Site Plan Review process for the property located at 3628 Connelly Avenue (“Subject Property”). Bruce Gardner (“The Applicant”) is requesting Site Plan Review because retail uses have a greater off-street parking requirement than the existing industrial use and Variances from minimum parking requirements and design standards.

**Background**

**1. Overview of Request**

The Applicant has submitted a land use application for Site Plan Review and Variances at the Subject Property. The Applicant seeks to purchase the property and relocate an existing retail business, Scale Model Supplies, from Saint Paul to Arden Hills. The Subject Property is owned by Waters Edge Enterprises Inc., and the building is occupied by JV Pallets, a company that manufactures and recycles wood pallets. The existing use is an existing nonconforming use that has been in operation as a light industrial/manufacturing and warehousing site since 1959. The

B-2 zoning district today does not allow this use as a principal use. The proposed retail use is permitted within the B-2 zoning district.

The proposal includes reconfiguring access to the parking lot and restriping parking spaces within the existing parking lot. Three existing parking spaces, partially located within the right-of-way, are proposed to be removed and replaced with landscaped areas. The Applicant proposes to convert an overhead door to a standard retail dual door entryway. Other minor modifications to the exterior of the structure are proposed for safe and convenient access to the structure for customers.

The proposal includes a variance request to allow for fewer on-site parking spaces than required in the Zoning Code. This retail use requires 50 parking spaces. The Applicant has applied for a variance to the parking standard to use 24 existing spaces in the parking lot, stating that this number is sufficient to operate the business.

Scale Model Supplies has been in business for more than 43 years. The store specializes in model trains and model kits as well as other hobby-related products. The business owner seeks to downsize from a 20,000 square foot space located in Saint Paul and find a space compatible with growing the online sales side of the business. The Applicant anticipates using approximately 7,500 square feet for retail sales and the remaining 1,800 square feet would be allocated for office, storage, restrooms, and utilities. The Subject Property would allow for a combination of retail space for direct sales and inventory space for both direct and online sales.

The Applicant states that on the busiest days, the business does not require more than 22 parking spaces at one time. Recent checks showed that at the current location, a maximum of 13 spaces have been used at one time, and the average number of parked cars is eight. The store is a destination for customers who plan their visit, know what they are looking for, and do not linger for long periods of time. Therefore, sales are typically spread throughout the day, and the existing parking lot will accommodate the need.

The business is open Monday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. with typically four (4) employees on site at a given time. The business receives deliveries from standard-size courier vans and does not regularly use overhead doors or a loading dock. The Applicant states these operations are likely to continue.

## **2. History of the Subject Property**

The Subject Property was developed in 1959 as a manufacturing use consisting of a 9,839 square foot principal structure on a 21,720 square foot lot. Previous occupants of the site include various manufacturing operations, ranging from metal stamping and cabinet manufacturing, basket manufacturing, and sheet metal manufacturing. The building consists of three main areas, two open warehousing spaces and an office. In 1966, the City Council approved a land use application from Proto Sheet Metal Shop for an addition to the existing workshop. The 1966 building permit for the addition noted that the parking lot contained 24 parking spaces. The building and manufacturing use predate the current city's zoning code. Both the structure and the use have been nonconforming since at least 2008.

The Subject Property has street frontage on Connelly Avenue, which is a city street that connects to County Road E West. This commercial corridor is used by a number of small and large businesses for a variety of retail, manufacturing, distribution, warehousing, and office uses.

## Approvals

### 1. Site Plan Review

The Applicant is proposing to convert the Subject Property from an existing nonconforming manufacturing use to a permitted retail sales use. The proposed retail sales use is allowed in the zoning district and, based on Section 1325.06-G *Commercial or industrial buildings for a use which is proposed to be converted to accommodate another allowable use which has a greater off-street parking requirement shall be required to apply for Site Plan Review and approval to assure the adequacy of off-street parking*, a site plan review is required. A retail sales use requires a greater number of off-street parking spaces compared to a manufacturing use. The site plan review includes a review of requirements for parking and design standards as they relate to the zoning district and proposed use.

### 2. Variance

Variances are required of the Applicant due to the proposal not meeting all of the design standards applicable to the proposed use in the Subject Property's zoning district. The Subject Property and its current use are nonconforming with the current standards for the B-2 Zoning District. The proposal shall bring the property more into conformance with the applicable standards and where standards are not met, required variances have been applied for.

## Plan Evaluation

The proposed is subject to Zoning Code standards established in Section 1320, District Provisions, Section 1325.05, Design Standards, Section 1325.06, Requirements for Parking, Loading and Circulation, and Section 1355.04, Procedural Requirements for Specific Applications. Due to the Subject Property's B-2 Zoning, the request is subject to additional design standards for modifications to an existing site. The following evaluation identifies how the Applicant's proposal addresses where standards are met and/or nonconforming and/or where a variance is required.

## Chapter 13, Zoning Regulations Review

### 1. District Provisions (B-2 General Business District) – Section 1320

Under the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, this site is guided as Community Mixed Use (CMU) on the land use plan and is zoned B-2. The Future Land Use designation is for a broad range of retail, shopping, services, and office space to meet the needs of the community and surrounding areas. This area may also include medium-to-high-density housing with a potential density of three (3) to twenty (20) units per acre.

Direction	2040 Comp. Plan Land Use	Zoning	Existing Land Uses
North	CMU – Community Mixed Use	B-2 – General Business	Office/ Warehousing
South	CMU – Community Mixed Use	B-2 – General Business	Medical (veterinary) Clinic
East	CMU – Community Mixed Use	B-2 – General Business	Warehousing
West	CMU – Community Mixed Use	B-2 – General Business	Commercial Recreation, indoor

Retail sales is a permitted use within this district. The table below provides the standards for the B-2 District and the preliminary analysis for the principal structure and the site:

<b>B-2 District Standards</b>		<b>Existing</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Maximum Floor Area Ratio	0.8	.45	
Maximum Structure Coverage	45%	45%	
Minimum Landscape Lot Area	20%	13.8%	~14.3%
Minimum Front Yard Setback	50 feet	9.15 feet	
Minimum Rear Yard Setback	20 feet	18.03 feet	
Minimum Side Yard Setback	10 feet (min)/20 feet (total)	1.94 feet and 72.16 feet/74.1 feet	
Minimum Lot Area	13,000 square feet	21,720 square feet	
Maximum Building Height	50 feet	14 feet	

The Subject Property has existing nonconforming landscaping and setbacks. The Applicant proposes to remove three existing parking spaces and replace the paved surface with landscaping.

**2. Design Standards – Section 1325.05**

**Landscaping – Existing nonconforming, variance requested.**

A landscaping plan is not required for this application. Only new development construction or expansion of an existing building or parking lot require a landscaping plan to be submitted. The minimum landscaped area required for the B-2 Zoning District is 20 percent of the total lot area. The Subject Property contains an existing landscaped area of 13.8 percent of the total lot area. The Applicant is proposing changes that would increase the existing landscaped area with the removal of existing paved parking spaces located within the right-of-way and replacing it with a 120-square-foot landscaped area and reconstructing the curb at the right of way. With the additional 120 square feet in landscaping, the proposed landscaped area is increased to 14.3 percent, reducing the existing nonconformity. A variance is requested and evaluated below.

**Lighting – Standard met.**

The Subject Property does not have any existing lighting in the parking lot. There are several lights on the west side of the building. The Applicant intends to add lighting to the south side of the building to illuminate the new front entrance and parking lot. The Zoning Code requires lighting be directed away from adjoining lots and public streets and directed to only the site to which the lighting is intended. Based on the Applicant’s proposal, the lighting described meets the standard. A proposed condition of approval has been added to verify that lighting on the site is consistent with the described.

**Design Standards for New Development, Redevelopment, and Modifications to Existing Sites in the B2 and B3 Districts**

The Subject Property is an existing nonconforming site in the B-2 Zoning District and is subject to design standards established in 1325.05 Subdivision 8. The standards in this Section apply only to the building or site elements being developed or altered. The design standards shall be applied proportionately to the degree of change proposed. Upon recommendation from the Planning Commission, the City Council may waive specific design standards based on the scale of the project. The City Council shall make the final determination on compatibility and consistency with the design standards.

It is stated in the application that the Applicant intends to make cosmetic updates to the interior and exterior of the building including removing awnings, replacing an overhead door with a dual door entryway, repainting the building, and resurfacing and restriping the parking areas. The

building and parking area changes are subject to the standards established in the code and are evaluated below:

**Architectural Style, Building Character, Materials and Design** – *Existing nonconforming, variances requested.*

*Buildings shall be constructed of materials that are enduring, timeless, and well-detailed. Evaluation of a project shall be based on the quality of its design and on its relationship to its surroundings.* The existing single-story building is constructed from cement block and includes windows on the south and west sides and overhead roll-up doors on the south and west sides. The existing structure is nonconforming with the present standard and the proposal includes minor changes to the character of the existing building to update the façade and site. An overhead door located on the south elevation will be removed and replaced with an entryway to the sales floor with additional transparency. While the additional transparency would enhance the materials of the building, the Applicant is seeking a variance from these standards to generally maintain the existing building style, character, materials and design.

**Window and Door Openings** – *Existing nonconforming, variance requested.*

*Fifty percent (50%) of all first level building façades that front a public street shall be comprised of transparent windows or doors in order to allow views of interior uses and activities. If the building is a one-story design and the first-floor elevation exceeds twelve (12) feet, then only the first twelve (12) feet shall be included in calculating the façade area.* The west elevation of the existing building fronts Connelly Avenue and has four windows. Of the 1,284 square foot elevation, approximately 28 square feet, or 2 percent of the elevation, contains windows.



***West side, facing Connelly***

The Applicant is not proposing to modify the west exterior of the building at this time, which is where the business storage area and office are located. On the south elevation of the building, a set of glass doors common for retail establishments are proposed to be added and will increase the overall transparency of the building façade. The building remains a non-conforming structure in the B-2 District.

A variance from the 50% standard is requested. Evaluation of the requested variance is below.

**Building Color** – *Standard met.*

*Building colors shall be muted and recommended colors include browns, grays, tans, beiges, and dark or muted green, blues, and reds.* The existing exterior is a muted gray. The Applicant intends to repaint the building in one of the recommended colors.

**Signs** – *Standard met.*

The Applicant states they intend to install signage in conformance with the City Code. The Subject Property is located within Sign District 7, which includes commercial properties without frontage on Lexington Avenue, County Road E, or Highway 96. Sign District 7 allows for a maximum of 45 square feet in internally or externally illuminated wall signage and a maximum of 25 square feet in externally illuminated freestanding signage. Conditions of approval have been added to address future signage at the Subject Property. A sign permit is required.

**Screening** – *Standard to be met.*

*Section 1325.05, Subd. 8, K, Trash and recycling equipment, materials, and containers shall be fully enclosed and integrated into the architecture of the buildings. All mechanical equipment, whether roof-mounted or ground-mounted should be integrated into the architecture of the building. Truck docks and delivery areas shall face away from the public street and shall be integrated into the architecture of the building.* There is no trash enclosure on the existing site and there are two delivery areas for the principal structure on the west and south elevations. The Applicant will provide a trash enclosure on the site, adjacent to the west elevation exterior door. The location of the proposed trash enclosure is shown in Attachment E and is subject to a condition of approval.

The existing mechanical equipment meets the standard. There are two existing overhead doors, one of which has a truck dock component. The Applicant proposes to prevent access to the west-facing truck dock/bay and to replace the south facing overhead door with a standard retail-style dual door. Deliveries will be to the retail and office doors on the south side of the building. The delivery area faces the parking lot away from the public street and is integrated into the architecture of the building.

**Landscaping** – *Existing nonconforming, variance requested.*

*The minimum landscaped area required in the B2 zoning district is 20% of the lot area. A minimum of one (1) tree shall be placed along the right-of-way every forty (40) feet.* The Subject Property has 181 feet of right-of-way and currently has one tree along the right-of-way. Approximately five trees would be required by this standard. The Applicant states they intend to plant additional trees near the business entrance, though the site is constrained by the portion of the right of way which is impervious surface. At the February 4, 2026, meeting, the Planning Commission asked the Applicant if they would plant trees to the east of the existing structure and the Applicant said they were willing to do so. The proposed would bring the property closer to the standard for trees along the right-of-way and to total landscaped area. A variance from the standard is requested and evaluated below.

**Parking** – *Existing nonconforming, variance requested.*

*Sufficient parking shall be provided to accommodate reasonable hourly peak on a given site. Parking standards include using plantings to soften and shade parking lots, screening parking adjacent to public streets, and using parking islands to break up expansive lots.* The existing parking lot has room for approximately 24 parking spaces (9 feet by 18 feet). The existing parking

lot does not include plantings, screening, or parking islands. The standard for landscaping within parking areas includes a minimum requirement of 10 percent of the total landscaped area to include perennials and shrubbery and at least 10 percent of the parking areas include planting islands. A variance has been requested from these standards and is evaluated below.

The proposal is also subject to additional parking requirements in Section 1325.06 which are evaluated later in this report.

**Traffic Study** – *Recommendation to waive requirement.*

A traffic study shall be required for all new developments, redevelopments, and significant modifications to existing sites unless waived by the City Council. The Applicant offers sufficient data in the application to demonstrate the proposed use will not result in a large amount of additional traffic and that the current conditions of the site can support the anticipated traffic. The Planning Commission recommended that the traffic study requirement be waived at the February 4, 2026, meeting.

**Lighting** – *Standard met.*

The Zoning Code requires exterior lighting that is consistent in type, design, scale, and color to create unity in the district. Exterior lighting for parking lots and buildings shall not be excessive and shall be directed at their intended purposes. Any light or combination of lights shall not cast light that exceeds a meter reading of one foot candle on the travel lanes of adjoining public streets or 0.4 foot candles on adjoining residential property. The Applicant has described that additional lighting that meets code will be added to the south façade.

**Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation** – *Standard met.*

The Zoning Code establishes standards for pedestrian and bicycle improvements in the B-2 Zoning District. The Subject Property does not connect to any public sidewalk but there are pathways from the building entrances to the right-of-way and site parking lot. The proposal does not include any changes to these existing conditions.

**Bicycle Parking** – *Standard to be met.*

Subdivision 8 requires bicycle parking in new development and site modifications in the B-2 Zoning District. For commercial uses, one bicycle parking space shall be provided for every twenty (20) automobile parking spaces. A minimum of two (2) parking spaces is required. The Applicant confirmed with staff that they intend to install two bicycle parking spaces near the building entrance.

### **3. Section 1325.06 - Requirements for Parking, Loading and Circulation**

The Applicant's proposal includes resurfacing and restriping the existing parking area and recentering the driveway access to the parking lot. The proposed modifications are in line with the parking size and construction standards established in Section 1325.06. Staff have evaluated the proposal based on the requirements for commercial parking spaces.

**Location** – *Existing nonconforming, variance requested.*

The City Code requires off-street parking spaces to be located at a minimum of 20 feet from the right-of-way of any public street. For side and rear setbacks, off-street parking spaces are required to be located a minimum of five (5) feet from rear and side lot lines. The existing parking lot is nonconforming with the required setback from the right-of-way of Connelly Avenue and is also

nonconforming with the side setback from the south property line and the rear setback from the east property line. Additionally, there are three parking spaces that encroach into the right-of-way.

The Applicant proposes to remove the three parking spaces and the associated concrete apron that encroach into the right-of-way and install new curb and gutter and landscaping. The parking lot will remain nonconforming from the minimum distance from the right-of-way, side and rear lot lines. The Public Works Department has been notified of the Applicant's intent to install new curb and gutter and relocate the driveway. The Assistant Public Works Director confirmed a Right-of-Way permit is required for the work described and that a grading and erosion control permit is required if there is any land disturbance greater than 2,500 square feet. Staff has notified the Applicant of this requirement and the City's standards for driveways, curbs, and gutter. Conditions of approval for a City Public Works permit are included.

**Conversion or Alteration of Approved Uses** – *Site Plan Review required, variance requested. Commercial or industrial buildings proposed to be converted, remodeled, or modified to accommodate another allowable use which has a greater off-street parking requirement shall be required to apply for Site Plan Review and approval to assure the adequacy of off-street parking.* A manufacturing use falls under the category of Other Business and Industry, which requires a minimum of 1 for each 1,000 square feet of floor area, or 10 required parking spaces. The minimum number of off-street parking spaces required for retail sales use is 1 for each 150 square feet of gross retail sales floor space. The Applicant proposes to use 7,500 square feet of the structure for sales floor space, which would require 50 off street parking spaces.

The Applicant proposes to operate the retail business at the Subject Property with 24 parking spaces instead of the required 50 and has applied for a variance from the minimum parking requirement. The Applicant submitted a narrative stating that the business has never needed more than 22 parking spaces at one time to accommodate both customers and employees. The applicant states that the proposed 24 parking spaces are sufficient for business needs. The Applicant references historical data collected by the business about parking needs at peak operating hours and typical number of employees working.

**Snow Storage** – *Standard met.* *Snow storage areas shall be provided so that the number of parking spaces is not reduced below the minimum required.* The Applicant shows a snow storage area on the site plan in the northwest corner of the property, separate from the parking lot.

**Driveways** – *Standard met.* As part of the proposal, the Applicant intends to recenter the driveway access to the parking lot and install new curb and gutter in the right-of-way adjacent to the southwest corner of the structure. Recentering the driveway allows for safer maneuvering within the parking lot. Curb and gutter will be installed to the city standard.

#### **4. Procedural Requirements for Specific Applications – Section 1355.04**

The Applicant is requesting variances from several standards in Section 1325.05 Design Standards to operate a permitted retail sales use on the property located at 3628 Connelly Avenue. The City Council must use the following variance findings and criteria to determine if there are practical difficulties with complying with the zoning regulations. If the Applicants do not meet all the factors of the statutory test, then a variance should not be granted. Variances are only permitted when they are in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance.

1. **Purpose and Intent.** *The variance shall comply with the purpose and intent of the provisions of the City's Zoning Regulations and with the policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan.*

The Applicant is proposing to establish a retail sales use in the existing principal structure on the Subject Property. The Subject Property is zoned B-2, General Business District and is designated for Community Mixed Use in the 2040 Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Retail Sales is a permitted use. The variances comply with the purpose and intent of the provisions of the City's Zoning Regulations and the policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

2. **Practical Difficulties.** *The Applicant for a variance shall establish that there are practical difficulties in complying with the provisions of the Arden Hills Zoning Regulations. The term "Practical Difficulties" as used in the granting of a variance means:*

- a. *Reasonable Use. The property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the Zoning Ordinance.*

The proposed use is a permitted use in the zoning district. The Subject Property includes an existing nonconforming structure and a lot that does not conform to existing standards for landscaping, parking, and window and door openings. The proposed use is permitted in the district and the manner in which the property is to be used is reasonable.

- b. *Unique Circumstances. The plight of the property owner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.*

The existing nonconforming nature of the structure, landscaping, parking location and window and door openings is are circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner. The parking lot is constrained by grade changes to the east, the layout of the structures and properties to the north and south, and the roadway to the west. The existing structure is described as sufficient for the retail use by the Applicant. The Applicant proposes to increase the amount of transparency on the south side of the building and is not able to increase the amount of transparency on the west side of the building due to the nonconforming nature of the building.

- c. *Character of Neighborhood. The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood.*

The essential character of the neighborhood is suburban in nature with a mix of retail, entertainment, and service businesses. Some non-conforming industrial uses remain. The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood, and will instead bring the property more in line with the stated intent of the B2 zoning district. The Applicant states that cosmetic updates to the building including removing awnings, repainting the building, resurfacing, and re-stripping parking areas will improve the current conditions of a warehouse with outside storage.

### **Additional Review**

*Building Official*

The Building Official has reviewed the plans and has no additional comments at this time. A Building Permit will be required prior to any construction taking place. This has been added as a condition of approval.

*Public Works Director/City Engineer*

The Public Works Director/City Engineer has reviewed the plans. A Right-of-Way Permit is required to install the curb and gutter and new driveway apron. A grading and erosion control permit is required for any land changes over 2,500 square feet in area. This has been added as a condition of approval.

*Fire Marshal*

The Fire Marshal has reviewed the plans and does not have additional comments at this time.

**Findings of Fact**

The Planning Commission reviewed this application at the February 4, 2026 meeting and offers the following findings of fact for your consideration.

*General Findings:*

1. The Subject Property is located within the General Business District designated for Community Mixed Uses on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
2. The Subject Property is zoned B-2 General Business.
3. The Subject Property contains an existing nonconforming principal structure and existing nonconforming setbacks, landscaping and parking lot.
4. The Subject Property has been used for manufacturing continuously since 1959. Manufacturing is not a permitted use in the B-2 General Business District.
5. The Applicant submitted site plan review and variance applications to establish a retail sales use in an existing manufacturing and warehousing facility at 3628 Connelly Avenue. Retail sales is a permitted use in the B-2 General Business District.
6. Site Plan Review is required when a project proposes to reuse an existing property for a use that requires more parking than the previous use. In the parking requirements table, manufacturing use falls under the category of Other Business and Industry, which requires a minimum of 1 for each 1,000 square feet of floor area, or 10 required parking spaces. The minimum number of off-street parking spaces required for retail sales use is 1 for each 150 square feet of gross retail sales floor space. The Applicant proposes to dedicate 7,500 square feet of the structure sales floor space, which would require 50 off street parking spaces.
7. The Applicant is seeking a variance to provide 24 off street parking spaces where the Zoning Code requires 50 parking spaces, a variance of 26 spaces.
8. The Applicant is seeking a variance from design standards in Section 1325.06 related to required parking location, parking islands, landscaping, boulevard trees, architectural style, building character, materials and design, and windows and door openings.
9. The Applicant is proposing to remove three existing parking spaces that encroach on the right-of-way from Connelly Avenue and to increase the landscaped area on the property.
10. The Applicant requests to waive the requirement for a traffic study. The Applicant offers sufficient data in the application to demonstrate the proposed use will not result in a large amount of additional traffic and that the current conditions of the site can support the anticipated traffic.
11. The proposed plan does not conflict with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Code or the Comprehensive Development Plan for the City.

12. The proposed use is not anticipated to create a negative impact on the immediate area or the community as a whole.
13. The proposed plan will not produce any permanent noise, odors, vibration, smoke, dust, air pollution, heat, liquid, or solid waste, and other nuisance characteristics.
14. The proposed plan is not expected to have significant impact on traffic or parking conditions.
15. A public hearing is not required for site plan review.
16. Property owners within 500 feet of the subject property were notified of the application as established in city code.

*Variance Findings:*

17. The Applicant is seeking variances from design standards in Section 1325.06 related to required parking, parking location, parking islands, landscaping, boulevard trees, and windows and door openings.
18. Variances are only permitted when they are in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance.
19. The proposed is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the ordinance.
20. The proposed is a reasonable use of the property that would not be allowed under the rules of the Zoning Code without the requested variance.
21. The proposed would not alter the essential character of the neighborhood.
22. The variance request is not based on economic considerations alone.
23. A public hearing is not required for variance requests.

**Options and Motion Language**

The Planning Commission reviewed this application at the February 4, 2026 meeting. At that time, it recommended Condition # 11 “The Planning Commission recommend waiving the traffic study requirement” as a condition of approval. The Planning Commission passed a motion to approve with conditions the application from Bruce Gardner for the proposed retail sales use unanimously (7-0). The following are motion language options for the City Council to consider.

*Site Plan Review and Variance*

- Approval with Conditions: Move to *adopt* Resolution 2026-012 approving Planning Case 25-016 for a site plan review and variances from parking and design standards for a permitted retail sales use at 3628 Connelly Avenue, based on the findings of fact and the submitted plans, as amended by the conditions in the March 9, 2026, report to the City Council:
  1. The project shall be completed in accordance with the submitted plans as amended by the conditions of approval. Any significant changes to these plans, as determined by the Community Development Director, shall require review and approval by the Planning Commission and City Council.
  2. The proposed parking area shall conform to all other regulations in the City Code.
  3. A Building Permit shall be obtained for interior and exterior alterations to the existing principal structure where appropriate.
  4. Attached security lighting shall be shoebox style, downward directed with flush lenses. In addition, any lighting under canopies (building entries) shall be recessed and use a flush lens.

5. A Right-of-Way permit shall be obtained from the City's Engineering Department prior to working in the right-of-way including, but not limited to parking lot resurfacing, driveway apron installation, and installing curb and gutter.
  6. Curb and gutter must be installed according to the City's standard plate.
  7. A Grading and Erosion permit shall be obtained from the City's Engineering Department prior to commencing any grading, land disturbance or utility activities greater than 2,500 square feet. The Applicants shall be responsible for obtaining any permits necessary from other agencies, including but not limited to Rice Creek Watershed District and Ramsey County prior to the start of any site activities. Verification of approved permits or documentation from other agencies that a permit is not necessary shall be provided to the City.
  8. A separate sign permit shall be required for each sign on the site.
  9. A required future trash enclosure shall use gates and be constructed on three sides using the similar or complementary materials, colors, and patterns used on the building. Locations shall be approved by the Planning Department.
  10. All disturbed boulevards shall be restored with sod. All areas of the site, where practical, shall be sodded or seeded and maintained. The property owner shall mow and maintain all site boulevards to the curb line of the public streets.
  11. The requirement for a parking study is waived.
- Approval as Submitted: Motion to *adopt* Resolution 2026-012 approving Planning Case 25-016 for a site plan review and variances from parking and design standards for a permitted retail sales use at 3628 Connelly Avenue, based on the findings of fact and the submitted plans in the March 9, 2026, report to the City Council.
  - Recommend Denial: Motion to *deny* Planning Case 25-016 for a site plan review and variances from parking and design standards for a permitted retail sales use at 3628 Connelly Avenue, based on the following findings: *findings to deny should specifically reference the reasons for denial and why those reasons cannot be mitigated.*
  - Table: Motion to *table* Planning Case 25-016 for a site plan review and variances from parking and design standards for a permitted retail sales use at 3628 Connelly Avenue: *a specific reason and information request should be included with a motion to table.*

### **Public Comments**

Notice was published in the *Pioneer Press* on February 25, 2026. Notice was prepared by the City and mailed to property owners within 500 feet of the subject property. At the time of report drafting, the city had not received public comments on this planning case.

### **Deadline for Agency Actions**

The City of Arden Hills received the completed application for this request on January 5, 2026. Pursuant to Minnesota State Statute, the city must act on this request by March 3, 2026 (60 days), unless the city provides the petitioner with written reasons for an additional 60-day review period. The sixty (60) day timeline begins on the day the City is in receipt of what has been determined to be a complete application.

Based on the date of completeness, and the city meeting schedule for February and March, the city provided the Applicant with written reasons to extend the City's review period from 60 days to

120 days so that the planning case may be heard by the City Council on March 9, 2026. With consent of the applicant, the City may extend the review period beyond the initial 120 days.

**Attachments**

- A. Land Use Application
- B. Location Map
- C. Narrative
- D. Existing Site Plan
- E. Proposed Site Plan
- F. Draft Planning Commission Minutes
- G. Planning Commission Memo
- H. Resolution 2026-012
- I. Presentation