



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA  
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2025

**7:30 PM REGULAR MEETING**

**1. Call to Order**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a work session of the Independence Planning Commission was called to order by Acting Chair, Tearse at 7:30 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

PRESENT: Tearse, Dumas, Volkenant, Alternates Story and Usset

ABSENT: Thompson, Gardner

STAFF: City Administrator Kaltsas, Administrative Services Director Simon

VISITORS: See Sign-in Sheet

**3. Approval of Minutes:**

- a. October 21, 2025, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.
- b. November 4, 2025, City Council Meeting Minutes (For Information Only).

**Motion by Story, seconded by Dumas to approve the minutes. Ayes: Volkenant, Dumas, Tearse, Usset and Story. Nays: None. Absent: Gardner and Thompson. Abstain: None.**

**Motion Approved. 5-0**

**4. PUBLIC HEARING – Mark Moorhouse (Applicant/Owner) is requesting the following action for the properties located on County Road 11 (PID No's. 08-118-24-12-0001, 08-118-24-11-0002 and 08-118-24-14-0001) in the City of Independence, MN.**

- a. A minor subdivision to allow a lot combination of the following properties: (PID No's. 08-118-24-12-0001, 08-118-24-11-0002 and 08-118-24-14-0001). The proposed combination would consolidate the three (3) properties into one (1) property.

City Administrator Mark Kaltsas presented the first application requesting a minor subdivision to allow a lot combination for properties surrounding 8145 County Road 11. Kaltsas explained that

the request would consolidate three properties owned by Mark Moorhouse into one property: Parcel A (39.99 acres), Parcel B (76.8 acres) which includes a house and accessory structures, and Parcel C (41.9 acres) which is located against Robina Lake. The combined property would total 158.7 acres.

Kaltsas noted that the city allows minor subdivisions for property rearrangements that do not create additional lots. He explained that the properties would continue to meet all requirements for the agriculture zone, and no new nonconformities would be created. Kaltsas added that the county had previously requested 17 additional feet of right-of-way along County Road 11, which would be included as a condition of approval.

In response to Commissioner Dumas's question about building eligibility, Kaltsas clarified that in their current condition, Parcel A and Parcel C each have eligibility for a dwelling unit, while Parcel B has already used its eligibility despite being over 40 acres. By combining the properties, the applicant would be giving up these separate eligibilities, retaining only one principal structure on the combined property.

### **The public hearing was opened.**

Several residents spoke with concerns:

Karen Carlson, a resident at 3450 County Road 92 North, asked about the purpose of the combination and how it would affect future lot divisions. She expressed concerns about the lack of information regarding the long-term plans for the property and noted ongoing construction noise issues.

Steve Eckman, a former commissioner, raised questions about the property's ownership structure (Robina Acres LLC) and potential tax implications. He voiced concerns about the extensive development activity occurring on the properties, describing it as "an industrial zone for the last 2 years" with continuous truck traffic and construction.

Tim Carter expressed concern about the possibility of additional outbuildings being constructed once the lots were combined. He acknowledged the applicant would have fewer options for future lot splits but more flexibility for accessory buildings.

Kent Anderson, a resident south of the property, asked how much influence resident concerns have on commission decisions and expressed frustration about ongoing noise pollution from construction activities.

### **The public hearing was closed.**

Commissioners discussed the application and acknowledged neighbors' concerns but noted that the request itself was straightforward and met all requirements. They discussed that the application would actually reduce future development potential by eliminating building eligibilities.

**Motion by Usset, seconded by Story to recommend approval of the application for the minor subdivision to allow a lot combination at 7949 County Road 11, subject to staff recommendations 1 through 5. Ayes: Volkenant, Dumas, Tearse, Story and Usset. Nays: None. Absent: Gardner and Thompson. Abstain: None. Motion Approved. 5-0**

5. **PUBLIC HEARING** – Mark Moorhouse (Applicant/Owner) is requesting the following action for the properties located on County Road 11 (PID No's. 09-118-24-22-0004, 09-118-24-22-0005 and 09-118-24-21-0001) in the City of Independence, MN.
  - a. A minor subdivision to allow a lot combination of the following properties: (PID No's. 08-118-24-12-0001, 08-118-24-11-0002 and 08-118-24-14-000). The proposed combination would consolidate the three (3) properties into one (1) property.

City Administrator Kaltsas presented the second application from Mark Moorhouse, requesting a similar minor subdivision to combine three properties adjacent to 7949 County Road 11. The three parcels measure 41.16 acres, 37.54 acres, and 39.3 acres, for a combined total of 118.08 acres.

Kaltsas explained that the applicant was required to combine two of these properties (7949 County Road 11 and 7855 County Road 11) as a condition of a previously approved conditional use permit for a ground-mounted solar array. He noted that these two properties had previously been a single parcel before being split prior to the current ownership.

The public hearing had been conducted jointly with the previous item, so all public comments applied to both applications.

During deliberation, commissioners discussed recommending that the City Council consider expanding the notification radius for future applications and explore potential actions to address the concerns about ongoing construction noise that were raised by multiple residents.

**Motion by Usset, seconded by Story to recommend approval of the application regarding the minor subdivision at 8145 County Road 11, subject to staff recommendations 1 through 5, with additional recommendations that Council consider: (1) increasing the radius for notification as a city business rule or potential ordinance, and (2) exploring potential actions to mitigate noise and disruption to neighbors from ongoing construction activities. Ayes: Volkenant, Dumas, Tearse, Story and Usset. Nays: None. Absent: Gardner and Thompson. Abstain: None. Motion Approved. 5-0**

6. Open/Misc.

City Administrator Kaltsas informed the commission there would be no December meeting. He mentioned that results from a comprehensive water study would be available in the coming weeks, which would lead to further discussions about developing a water system for Independence that could potentially serve the airport property south of town.

Commissioner Tearse asked about activity on County Road 92 north of Highway 6, and Simon confirmed it was drain tile work being done on a farm property.

7. Adjourn.

**Motion by Story, seconded by Volkenant to adjourn the meeting at 8:35pm.  
Motion Approved. 5-0**

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Simon/Recording Secretary