



**CITY OF ZEELAND
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
CITY HALL – 21 SOUTH ELM STREET
MARCH 5TH, 2026
5:45PM**

-5:45PM – Chairman Elhart called the meeting to order and requested a roll call of Planning Commissioners.

Present: Commissioners CJ Otteman, Amanda Cooper, Sheri Holstege, Bob Blanton, Rebecca Perkins, Rick VanDorp, Tim Klunder, and Chairman Bill Elhart.

Absent: Commissioner Daniel Klompmaker

Also Present: City Attorney Jim Donkersloot, Zoning Administrator Timothy Maday, and Recording Secretary Kristi DeVerney

- Moved by Perkins, Supported by Holstege to excuse absent members. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Maday requested to add Farm Stands discussion at the end of tonight's meeting.

Maday then reviewed his memo to request to vacate Division Street, north of Main Avenue with the Commissioners.

Request to Vacate Division Street north of Main Avenue

On February 16, 2026, City Council acted in accordance with the City's established street vacation procedure and referred to the request from Mead Johnson, LLC to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation, consistent with the July 13, 2011 memorandum from the City Attorney outlining the City's process for street vacations.

The Planning Commission needs to determine whether to require a traffic study prior to making a recommendation. The Commission may hold a public hearing as they develop a recommendation, but it is also required to hold a City Council public hearing prior to final action by Council.

Mead Johnson representative, Allan Barron, indicated they do not believe a traffic study is warranted, given that the street segment is not a through street and is bordered entirely by property under their ownership.

At this time, staff does not anticipate a need for a traffic study based on the current configuration and limited use of the street. However, the Planning Commission may require a traffic study if it determines one is necessary, or if information presented during the public hearing suggests additional analysis would be beneficial.

Motion 2026.03

Moved by Perkins to schedule a public hearing at the April regular meeting, April 16, 2026, to hear comments regarding the February 6, 2026, request from Mead Johnson, LLC to vacate a portion of North Division Street.

Supported by Holstege

Roll Call Vote on Motion 2026.03

Ayes: CJ Otteman, Amanda Cooper, Sheri Holstege, Bob Blanton, Rebecca Perkins, Rick VanDorp, Tim Klunder, and Chairman Bill Elhart

Nays: None.

Absent: Daniel Klompmaker.

Motion Passes.

-Motion by Klunder to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes from the February 5, 2026 meeting. Supported by Cooper. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Downtown Parking Assistance Report 2026

As downtown Zeeland continues to experience growth and reinvestment, ensuring that our parking strategy supports that momentum remains essential. With that in mind, the Shopping Area Redevelopment Board (SARB) and city staff that oversee downtown projects support the *Parking Report and Recommendations* prepared by Rob Bacigalupi, AICP, Principal of Mission North, LLC, dated February 6, 2026.

Following several city-initiated parking changes last year, our team felt it was both responsible and strategic to seek guidance from a professional in the parking industry. We were hopeful that, after studying Zeeland's parking supply, our unique downtown culture, and our previous parking study, a consultant might identify new ideas or uncover something we had missed that would alleviate our perceived parking challenges.

To our own surprise, we did not find any such singular issue or overlooked solution. Instead, this report has clarified our understanding of the realities we face and strengthened our confidence in our team's ability to approach parking with a big-picture perspective. The findings affirm that Zeeland provides a high level of service, while also acknowledging the increasing pressure created by new development, the complexity of coordinating numerous public and shared-use lots, and the long-term sustainability questions associated with funding and management.

Importantly, the report outlines practical and phased recommendations:

- **Quick Actions**, including improved signage and enforcement in municipal lots, targeted supply enhancements for unrestricted parking, and on-street striping to improve efficiency and encourage appropriate use.
- **Midterm Strategies**, such as exploring a residential permit program, assessing long-term management and fiscal capacity, and considering tools to charge for parking, like special assessments or payment-in-lieu-of-parking for new developments.

- **Longer-Term Planning**, including consolidation of parking assets and conducting a parking deck feasibility study to proactively plan for future growth.

From a downtown vitality and economic development standpoint, SARB and staff believe these recommendations align with broader community goals and will continue to strengthen the greater downtown. The report reinforces that thoughtful management, education, enforcement, and strategic investment — rather than a single dramatic change — are the keys to long-term success. If the Planning Commission is comfortable with the direction outlined in this report, the next step would be to return the document to the Parking Working Group for final review and coordination. Following that process, it would be forwarded to City Council for acceptance, marking formal authorization for staff to begin developing a plan for implementation of the recommended actions.

Motion 2026.04

Moved by Cooper to endorse the Downtown Parking Assistance Report 2026.

Supported by Holstege

Roll Call Vote on Motion 2026.04

Ayes: CJ Otteman, Amanda Cooper, Sheri Holstege, Bob Blanton, Rebecca Perkins, Rick VanDorp, Tim Klunder, and Chairman Bill Elhart

Nays: None.

Absent: Dan Klompmaker.

Motion Passes.

Farm Stands

Maday stated farm stands have become more prevalent in 2025. Because the City of Zeeland does not have an ordinance for these stands, staff are requesting clear expectations. The Commission directed Maday to contact other surrounding cities to get their feedback.

6:24 PM – Moved by Perkins, supported by Holstege, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Kristi DeVerney
Recording Secretary