

CITY OF STEINBACH
Regular Council Meeting
March 18, 2025

MINUTES

1. Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of City of Steinbach Council held on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at City of Steinbach Council Chambers.

2. Mayor Earl Funk called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m., with the following members of Council present: Councillors Jake Hiebert, Michael Zwaagstra, Bill Hiebert, Jac Siemens, Susan Penner & Damian Penner. Also present: City Manager, Troy Warkentin, Manager, Corporate Services, Adam Thiessen, and City Clerk, Amanda Dubois.

3. Councillor Michael Zwaagstra opened the meeting.

R25-054 4. Councillor B. Hiebert, Councillor D. Penner RESOLVED that the agenda be adopted.

-Un. Carried-

R25-055 5. Councillor S. Penner, Councillor J. Siemens RESOLVED that the minutes of March 4, 2025, Regular Council Meeting be approved.

-Un. Carried-

6. Council meeting recessed and Public Hearing was called to order at 7:35 p.m., by Mayor Earl Funk. Public Hearing was to consider Rezoning By-Law 2261.

By-Law 2261 – Rezoning

Owner/Applicant: Brandon Thiessen

Civic Address: 189 Hanover Street

Legal: Lot 9 Block 4 Plan 8532 Exc. SELY 60 Feet

Purpose: To rezone the property from “RLD”: Residential Low Density to “RMD” Residential Medium Density to allow for a multi-family development to be constructed.

6.1 Troy Warkentin, City Manager introduced By-Law 2261 and reported that notices pursuant to The Planning Act had been completed.

6.2 8 items of correspondence had been received objecting to the application.

6.3 Written correspondence has been received from Manitoba Municipal Relations - Community Planning Branch regarding By-Law 2261 voicing no concerns.

6.4 Brandon Thiessen, 24 Oak Crescent, and Taylor Rempel, were present at the hearing and presented the following:

- A professional was hired to ensure the plan complies with all zoning by-laws and are committed to building a high quality design that will achieve an aesthetically pleasing building.
- Key features included building a 2 storey with little or no steps, making the height of the building consistent with neighbourhood, engineered wood siding to provide an appealing exterior, black triple pane windows and 2nd floor balconies of the front to maximize privacy to neighbors. A fence will be built in the rear and sides and shrubs and trees will be planted.
- In addition to the required 10 parking stalls they have an additional 3 garage stalls.
- The site is designed to have a drive-in/out entrance, rather than backing onto the street.
- 25 neighbouring properties were visited to meet, provide information and answer questions. Contact information was left with those who were not home.

6.5 Brandon and Taylor were prepared to answer questions of council.

7. Council discussion and questions followed.

8. Graham Bell of 197 Home Street was present at the public hearing to voice his objection, citing concerns about increased traffic and street parking. He also expressed that, given the size of the lot, the proposed development is not a good fit for the neighborhood, which consists primarily of single family homes.

9. Cathy Sawatzky of 195 Hanover Street was present at the public hearing to object. She felt that the proposed development does not align with the character of the neighborhood. She raised concerns about a loss of privacy to neighbours, increased noise, traffic, and a busy parking lot, as well as a potential decrease in property values. She suggested that by allowing this development, it would create a push for additional housing in the area. Ms. Sawatzky expressed a preference for a single-family home or duplex to be built in the area instead.

10. Heidi Duerksen of 325 Elm Avenue was present at the public hearing and questioned whether there is a broader goal to replace single-family homes with multifamily developments. She expressed concern that such projects may deter single-family homeowners from remaining in the neighborhood.

11. Mayor Funk clarified that City Council does not mandate. He emphasized that the public hearing serves as an opportunity for residents to express their concerns or support for the proposal. After all public comments have been heard, council will make its decision.

12. Joe Wiebe of 322 Reimer Avenue was present at the public hearing in support of the project. He noted the remarkable changes in the area over the past 30 years and suggested that businesses rely on a strong downtown population to thrive. He expressed that growth and development are beneficial and questioned concerns about parking, stating that many downtown tenants do not own vehicles. He also pointed out that just down the street, Hanover Street already has a number of multi-family residences.

13. Jessica Reimer of 168 Hanover Street was present at the public hearing to voice her objection. She believes the proposed six-plex does not align with the character of the community and is unlikely to attract families with children, which she and her family would prefer to see. She noted that similar buildings near 7-Eleven appear significantly taller than a typical two-story home and expressed concerns that the development would block the view and sunlight for surrounding backyards.

14. Stephen Krasnianski of 180 Hanover Street was present at the public to object. He noted that his street is already one of the busiest streets in Steinbach, and additional on-street parking from the proposed development would make it even more congested.

15. Stephanie Thiessen of Blumenort acknowledged that although she was not from Steinbach, she was familiar with multi-family developments. She pointed out that starter homes don't exist anymore. Those who are moving to multi-family rentals are typically individuals who cannot afford homes priced at \$300,000.00 or more. The proposed high-end townhouses would not attract low-income tenants. She suggested that the focus should be on creating quality housing for people who cannot afford to buy a home in Steinbach.

16. Cathy Sawatzky of 195 Hanover Street returned to the podium and stated that she is supportive of housing for people, but in a better area than the proposed location.

17. Brandon Thiessen and Taylor Rempel returned to the podium. Mr. Thiessen confirmed that the apartments by 7-Eleven were built by their builder, but clarified that that building has basement suites, which makes them 4-5 feet taller than what they are proposing. The parking that they are providing don't lead them to believe that on-street parking would be an issue.

Ms. Rempel explained that with the design of the building they believe that they will attract great people who want to live in downtown Steinbach and become part of community.

18. There being no further discussion, Council meeting re-opened at 8:06 p.m.

R25-056 19. Councillor J. Siemens, Councillor M. Zwaagstra RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach deny By-Law 2261, being a rezoning by-law.

-Un. Carried-

20. Councillor M. Zwaagstra excused himself from the meeting due to a conflict of interest.

21. Council meeting recessed and Public Hearing was called to order at 8:13 p.m., by Mayor Earl Funk. Public Hearing was to consider Variance V-2025-04.

Variance V-2025-04

Owner: Steinbach Bible College Inc.

Applicant: Abe G. Bergen

Civic Address: 333 Loewen Boulevard

Legal: Block 1 Plan 23263, Parcel 4 Plan 7508, Lots 4 & 5 Plan 22188 & Parcel B Plan 54264 Ex All Mines and Minerals

Purpose: To permit a west side yard of 20.87 feet whereas the “E/I” Educational/Institutional Zone requires a minimum of 25 feet.

21.1 Troy Warkentin, City Manager introduced Variance V-2025-04 and reported that notices pursuant to The Planning Act had been completed.

21.2 The applicant was present at the public hearing and was prepared to answer questions of council.

21.3 There was no one present at the public hearing with questions or concerns.

21.4 There being no further discussion, Council meeting re-opened at 8:17 p.m.

R25-057 22. Councillor D. Penner, Councillor J. Hiebert RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach approve Variance V-2025-04.

-Un. Carried-

23. Councillor M. Zwaagstra returned to the meeting.

24. Council meeting recessed and Public Hearing was called to order at 8:18 p.m., by Mayor Earl Funk. Public Hearing was to consider Variance V-2025-05.

Variance V-2025-05

Owner: 6262148 Manitoba Ltd.

Applicant: Prairie Ag Contracting Co. Inc.

Civic Address: 7 Brandt Street

Legal: Lots 1, 2 & 3 Block 3 Plan 8532

Purpose: To permit a rear yard setback of 10’4” whereas the “C2” Commercial Community Zone requires a minimum rear yard setback of 20 feet.

24.1 Troy Warkentin, City Manager introduced Variance V-2025-05 and reported that notices pursuant to The Planning Act had been completed.

24.2 Vince Loeppky of Mitchell was present at the public hearing and provided the following:

- They would like to add onto their shop, adding a couple of bays for reconditioning and cleaning vehicles.
- They have spoken with the City Planner, who saw no issues and they own 2 adjacent lots on Hanover Street and the adjacent residential lot on Elmdale and should have no concerns from neighbours.

24.3 Mr. Loeppky was prepared to answer questions of council.

24.4 There was no one present at the public hearing with questions or concerns.

24.5 There being no further discussion, Council meeting re-opened at 8:21 p.m.

R25-058 25. Councillor M. Zwaagstra, Councillor J. Siemens RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach approve Variance V-2025-05, subject to an updated lot grading and site servicing plan being approved by the City.

26. Council meeting recessed and Public Hearing was called to order at 8:23 p.m., by Mayor Earl Funk. Public Hearing was to consider Variance V-2025-06.

Variance V-2025-06

Owner: 4948441 Manitoba Ltd.

Applicant: Three Way Builders Ltd.

Civic Address: 85 Acres Drive

Legal: Lot 7 Plan 45984

Purpose: To permit a rear yard setback of 5 feet whereas the “M2” Heavy Industrial Zone requires a minimum rear yard setback of 10 feet.

26.1 Troy Warkentin, City Manager introduced Variance V-2025-06 and reported that notices pursuant to The Planning Act had been completed.

26.2 The applicant, Nic Thiessen of 50 Granite Park Boulevard, on behalf of Three Way Builders Ltd. was present at the public hearing and provided the following:

- An industrial client would like to build a warehouse. The 5 foot setback is to maximize the usage of the site. They will back onto a public reserve with no neighbours to be affected.

26.3 The applicant was prepared to answer questions of council.

26.4 There was no one present at the public hearing with questions or concerns.

26.5 There being no further discussion, Council meeting re-opened at 8:27 p.m.

R25-059 27. Councillor S. Penner, Councillor J. Hiebert RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach approve Variance V-2025-06, subject to a lot grading and site servicing plan being approved by the City.

-Un. Carried-

28. Delegation: Michelle Bezditny, Director of Economic Development, Christine Beaumont, President and Henry Nickel, Vice President, were present at the meeting to provide an update on the Steinbach Economic Development Corporation.

28.1 Ms. Bezditny spoke to the Steinbach Economic Development Corporation’s Impact.

- Community Leadership

SED is driving impactful growth through visionary leadership and engaged participation in 90% of the core factors that define a healthy community. These include physician recruitment, safety, education, recreation, project development and economic immigration. Ms. Bezditny provides leadership, insight and guidance from an economic development perspective while sitting on the Southeast Event Centre board, the Steinbach Community Development Corporation, the Community Safety and Wellbeing Committee and the Mayor’s Physician Recruitment and Retention Taskforce.

- Education & Training

SED is accelerating progress in establishing Steinbach as rural Manitoba’s education and training hub, with confirmed projects set to deliver a net economic benefit of 2.9 million per training cycle. Initiatives create new career paths for residents and attract talent, business and investment to the region. SED has been fostering relationships with post-secondary institutions, industry leaders and government stakeholders, ensuring Steinbach remains a center for innovation, skills development and long term economic prosperity.

-Investment Attraction

SED has propelled Steinbach’s recognition as a premier destination for provincial, national and international investment, achieving a 200% increase in lead generation year after year since 2022. In 2024, SED identified the United Kingdom and Germany as target markets and is strategically focusing on agriculture and food processing, ag tech, transportation and building products and services.

-Workforce Development

SED drives workforce development initiatives with a direct economic impact exceeding \$12 million annually. This has been accomplished with the Rural Community Immigration Pilot Program (RCIP). Steinbach was one of 14 communities selected to participate. An initiative aimed at targeting highly skilled top tiered workforce shortages, fueling economic immigration in the region. SED will manage RCIP without financial support from the Federal government, relying entirely on internally generated funds.

This program will officially launch in April or May. The program will prioritize five key industry sectors. Businesses are encouraged to pursue employer designation. Once a candidate has been selected, SED will issue a letter of recommendation, the final requirement of a candidate to proceed with their application for permanent residency.

Ms. Bezditny will be meeting with IRCC’s RCIP department in Ottawa in April.

28.2 Ms. Bezditny was prepared to answer questions of council.

29. Mayor Funk requested that Ms. Bezditny and he meet once she is back from Ottawa to find out more about the RCIP program.

30. Mayor Funk thanked Ms. Bezditny for the presentation and information provided.

31. Troy Warkentin, City Manager, reported that the City has received The 2024 Steinbach Annual Traffic Count Program, as submitted by WSP Canada Inc. The traffic count and analysis program were conducted at 20 intersections in Steinbach along PTH 12 North & Brandt Street and PTH 52 West & Main Street. The traffic counts were conducted on Thursday September 26, 2024, Friday September 27, 2024 Thursday October 3, 2024 and Friday October 4, 2024 during the weekday peak period from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

31.1 Mr. Warkentin Highlighted the following sections:

- 1) Traffic volume trends
- 2) Traffic signal warrant analysis
- 3) Recommendations

- PTH 12 North at Clearspring Centre / Golfair Road does operate acceptably under existing conditions but should run as coordinated during the weekday p.m. peak period. MTI has initiated implementation of a coordinated timing plan.

- PTH 12 North at the Superstore / Co-op access has suggestions on improving traffic flows.

- PTH 52 West and Industrial Road traffic volumes and operations be monitored to determine any benefits that can be gained from revisions to the intersection.

- Traffic signal timing should be reviewed with MTI prior to the 2025 traffic count study to confirm where they are using fixed versus floating coordination mode.

31.2 The Steinbach Annual Traffic Count Program was acknowledged by City Council and discussion and resolution followed.

R25-060 32. Councillor M. Zwaagstra, Councillor D. Penner
BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach accept the 2024 Steinbach Annual Traffic Count Program as presented.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach forward a copy of the Steinbach Annual Traffic Count Program report (dated March 3, 2025) to Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure;

-Un. Carried-

R25-061 33. Councillor J. Siemens, Councillor B. Hiebert RESOLVED that the following accounts be approved for payment:

Accounts Payable (March 12, 2025)	\$	1,276,400.32
Monthly Pay Period No. 03 (March 4, 2025)		48,220.43
Bi-Weekly Pay Period No. 06 (March 11, 2025)	\$	296,465.19

-Un. Carried-

R25-062 34. Councillor J. Hiebert, Councillor M. Zwaagstra RESOLVED that the building permits as issued during the month of February 2025 be accepted. (list attached)

-Un. Carried-

R25-063 35. Councillor S. Penner, Councillor D. Penner RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach accept the following business licences. (list attached)

-Un. Carried-

- R25-064

36. Councillor J. Siemens, Councillor B. Hiebert RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach accept that pursuant to Section 326 of The Municipal Act, the supplemental taxes and other property taxes as presented be adjusted. (list attached)

-Un. Carried-
- R25-065

37. Councillor D. Penner, Councillor M. Zwaagstra RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach accept Municipal Board Order A-24-297, being a 2016 Business Tax Adjustment.

-Un. Carried-
- R25-066

38. Councillor S. Penner, Councillor B. Hiebert RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach accept Municipal Board Order A-24-298(c), being a 2016 Realty Tax Adjustment.

-Un. Carried-
39. Correspondence and a request for support/funding from the Manitoba Cornhole Association 2025 Provincial Championships were acknowledged.
Received as information.
40. Correspondence and grant funding request from the Steinbach Economic Development Corporation were acknowledged.
41. Consensus of council was to add it to the July Summer Study Session agenda.
42. Councillor J. Hiebert, Councillor B. Hiebert RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned.

-Un. Carried-

Time of adjournment: 9:10 p.m.

*ad

Mayor

City Manager