

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
City Council Workshop
City Hall
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

MINUTES
Wednesday, April 8, 2026
6:00 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 PM

B. ROLL CALL: GUSTAFSON_X_ MAY_X_
MIELKE_X_ MOGEN_X_ WASSENBERG_X_

STAFF PRESENT: LINEHAN_X_ MYHREN_X_

C. POLICY ITEMS:

1. Consideration of Fairway Commons Planned Unit Development Amendment Proposal

Linehan introduced the workshop's purpose, explaining that the goal was to discuss the Fairway Commons project with the development team, review potential amendments to the Planned Unit Development (PUD), and allow council members to ask questions in an informal workshop format before the formal presentation during the regular meeting.

Community Development Coordinator Myhren provided an overview of the project, noting that the Planning Commission had voted to recommend approval of the amendment. She explained that this proposal essentially involves swapping out the previously approved Amber Flats plans with the new Fairway Commons plans. While Amber Flats had three main deviations from city code (impervious surface, height, and parking), Fairway Commons has only two main deviations: building height up to 50 feet and slightly insufficient underground parking (just under the required 80% of parking spaces below ground).

Myhren detailed the Planning Commission's five original conditions and presented ten additional and revised conditions that staff had developed. Key conditions included tree replacement requirements, snow storage limitations, open space maintenance, electric vehicle charging stations, height restrictions, side yard setback provisions, parcel recombination, parking lot maintenance agreements, and on-site property management requirements.

The discussion then focused extensively on several specific issues:

- Electric Vehicle Charging Stations: Mielke raised concerns about the placement and accessibility of the required four charging stations. The Planning Commission had recommended they be placed at least 50 feet from the main entrance to prevent non-electric vehicle users from parking in these spots simply because they're convenient. Council Member Wassenberg, describing himself as a longtime electric vehicle owner, strongly recommended placing the charging

stations in the least desirable parking spots to prevent "icing" (internal combustion engine vehicles parking in electric-only spaces).

Developer Marty O'Connell expressed concerns about public access to the charging stations, preferring to limit access to residents and their guests for security reasons. Gustafson questioned whether requiring public charging stations was appropriate, given that this would be a first-time requirement not applied to other multifamily housing in the city. The discussion revealed that while the city's code doesn't require charging stations to be public, the PUD format allows for such specific conditions.

After considerable back-and-forth, the group discussed whether the stations could be split between indoor (underground garage) and outdoor locations, with the developer noting that two dual-port charging stations would serve four vehicles total.

- **Property Management Requirements:** The condition requiring an on-site property management staff person sparked significant discussion about operational requirements. O'Connell explained their standard business model includes a property manager and maintenance technician on-site Monday through Friday, 8:00 to 4:30, with after-hours emergency response through an on-call system.

Gustafson questioned whether requiring specific operational details was appropriate for a PUD, noting that the city doesn't typically dictate operating hours for other businesses or rental properties. Council members debated whether this was an overreach of municipal authority or an appropriate condition for a variance. Ultimately, they agreed to keep the language general, requiring property management staff to be "maintained on-site" without specifying exact hours.

Technical Zoning Issues: Wassenberg identified a technical issue with side yard setbacks, noting that if the building reached the full 50-foot height allowance, the required side yard setback of half the building height would be 25 feet, but the current plans showed only 24.5 feet. This prompted discussion about whether this constituted an additional variance or could fall under the city administrator's 5% variance authority.

After mathematical calculations, staff determined this could be addressed by specifically stating the side yard setback as shown on the approved plans rather than creating an additional variance requirement.

- **Building Modifications:** Myhren noted that the developer had made slight modifications to increase the size of one-bedroom units by approximately 96 square feet per unit, creating bump-outs on the building's east side. This change would slightly increase impervious surface coverage from 62.7% to 63.3% but would remain well under the maximum allowed percentage and wouldn't affect setback requirements.

The council members expressed general satisfaction with the project and the revised conditions. Gustafson noted the community need for senior housing, sharing that a coworker had recently asked about senior housing options in Falcon Heights. The developer confirmed their timeline of beginning

construction in July if approvals are received, with completion expected in approximately 18 months.

2. Consideration of the City's Acquisition of 1407 Larpenteur Avenue West

Linehan explained that while this item had been discussed extensively in closed sessions throughout 2025 and 2026 due to the sensitive nature of real estate negotiations, he wanted to provide council members an opportunity for any final questions or concerns before the formal presentation during the regular meeting.

Linehan noted that detailed information wasn't included in the workshop packet to avoid premature public disclosure during negotiations, but the information would be available for the regular meeting. He emphasized that having a signed purchase agreement would significantly improve the city's ability to secure grants for site remediation, as grant agencies prefer applicants with site control rather than those merely in negotiations.

Council members expressed satisfaction with how the acquisition process had been handled. Linehan mentioned having already begun working on a grant application that day. The council indicated readiness to proceed with the formal consideration during the regular meeting.

The discussion confirmed that acquiring the property would open opportunities for various grants to help with remediation costs, and having site control through a purchase agreement would be much more favorable for grant applications than simply being in negotiations.

D. ADJOURNMENT: 6:56 PM

Councilmember Wassenberg motions to adjourn the meeting;
Approved 5-0

DISCLAIMER: City Council Workshops are held monthly as an opportunity for Council Members to discuss policy topics in greater detail prior to a formal meeting where a public hearing may be held and/or action may be taken. Members of the public that would like to make a comment or ask questions about an item on the agenda for an upcoming workshop should send them to mail@falconheights.org prior to the meeting. Alternatively, time is regularly allotted for public comment during Regular City Council Meetings (typically 2nd and 4th Wednesdays) during the Community Forum.

Dated this 22nd day of April, 2026



Jack Linehan, City Administrator



Randall C. Gustafson, Mayor