

**CITY OF WOODBURY
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
January 12, 2026**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a regular meeting was held at Woodbury City Hall, 8301 Valley Creek Road on Monday the 12th of January 2026.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair John Kollm called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call the following members were present: John Kollm, Stephanie Swanson, Marcia Kennedy, Shae Seabrooks, Jim Gentile, Jacob Guzik, and Gisele Parnell.

Absent member: Saurin Shah, Riyaan Hilowle

Council Liaison Present: Steve Morris

Staff Present: Eric Searles, Assistant Community Development Director/City Planner, Gina McCormack, Senior Planner and Dan Krumwiede, Planner I.

DEVELOPMENT ITEMS

ITEM 1: PET MEMORIES CREMATION, CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT, PROJECT NO. 18-2025-00599

Dan Krumwiede, Planner one said J. Wade Jackson has submitted an application for a Conditional Use Permit to operate a pet cremation service with an eco-friendly water based process called Aquamation. He advised the proposed location is at 2357 Ventura Drive. The land is currently zoned I-1, Light Industrial District and guided as Places to Work on the Land Use Plan.

Mr. Krumwiede said the original development was approved by City Council in 1988. The 35,865 square foot building at 2357 Ventura Drive was constructed in 1989.

Mr. Krumwiede discussed use stating that Pet Memories Cremation is proposed to occupy 2,875 square feet of the 35,865 square foot building. He said the Applicant is proposing to use a cremation process called Aquamation, which is an eco-friendly alternative to traditional flame-based cremation services. He stated staff has identified that the Conditional Use Permit process is the appropriate zoning process to evaluate this use.

Mr. Krumwiede discussed water use stating the max capacity of the machine holds 47 gallons of water. He said it is anticipated that the machine will run 2-3 times per week for the first 6 months. He said after the business is established, it is anticipated that they could run the machine once per day. He said the applicant identified the machine is not full most runs and may run at half water capacity. He stated the technologies for this Aquamation process are improving and the applicant anticipates reduced water usage per run in the future.

Mr. Krumwiede said a Conditional Use Permit is required for uses not identified within the I-1, Light Industrial District. City Code Section 24-43 outlines the guidelines for granting a Conditional Use Permit.

Mr. Krumwiede said the Applicant is proposing to utilize the two (2) existing full access points from Ventura Drive into the site for vehicle access.

Mr. Krumwiede said the building has 63 parking stalls onsite. He stated the proposed cremation use is anticipated to take 2,875 square feet of the building which equates to 6 required stalls for the proposed use. He said the use is proposing to have 2,000 square feet of warehouse space and 875 square feet of office space. Warehouse space requires 1 stall per 2,000 square feet and office space requires 1 stall per 200 square feet. He said the Applicant has indicated they don't anticipate using more than 2 spaces at

any given time since their clientele is by appointment only. He said the existing parking found on-site is more than adequate for the proposed use.

Mr. Krumwiede said a neighborhood meeting was held on January 5th, 2026 and stated that there were zero residents that attended.

Dan Krumiwede stated that staff recommends approval of the Conditional Use Permit, Project No. 18-2025-00599, for Pet Memories Cremation, subject to the following conditions outlined in the Staff Report.

Chair Kollm asked if the Applicant wanted to make any additional comments, with none he opened it up to the Commission.

Commissioner Shae Seabrooks asked if the process would emit any kind of smell. Wade Jackson, The Applicant responded but was unable to hear the response as the microphone was not facing the Applicant to record the response.

Commissioner Stephanie Swanson asked if this were a facility for people as well as animals if there would be a different process that would be taken. Mr. Searles responded, saying the process would still be a Conditional Use Permit and advised that there are several within the City of Woodbury that have been through that process.

Ms. Swanson asked if specifics were needed to describe or consider that this facility is just for the cremation of animals. Mr. Searles gave information on the document that implements the Conditional Use Permit saying that it is written to say the facility is specifically for pet cremation.

Ms. Swanson asked how the chemical disposal would be handled and if any of the chemicals were reused or if they were just disposed of. The Applicant, Wade Jackson, said that the chemicals neutralizes itself and will dispose of down the drainage system. He provided more specific details on the process and how it is a positive environmental discharge.

Commissioner Jacob Guzik asked about the discharge and if it would make the wastewater harder to treat and if there were any approvals from MetCouncil that would be needed regarding this before it can be approved. Mr. Krumwiede stated Met Council would review any industrial discharge approvals, which are reviewed as part of the building permit process through the city.

Commissioner Marcia Kennedy asked if there would be noise that would be carried over outside the facility. Mr. Jackson described the noise sounding like a commercial dishwasher stating it is very quiet and a faint noise. He gave the timing of the process and some background on his experience.

Ms. Kennedy confirmed with the Applicant that there was also a drying area that would be utilized prior to disposal. Mr. Jackson confirmed and described the process with the drying area.

Ms. Kennedy confirmed the location would be an appointment only facility where drop-off and pick-up would occur. Mr. Jackson confirmed, there would not be staffed and appointments would be required much like vet clinics.

Ms. Kennedy asked if there would be any space needed for bereavement. Mr. Jackson said there would not be any viewing or show room for the process.

Ms. Kennedy asked if there would be more than one animal cremated at a time. Mr. Jackson gave specifics on the machine, completing this by weight and each animal being in a separate chamber when the process occurs. Ms. Kennedy stated that she imagined that it would be important to families to have their pet remains only during this process. Mr. Jackson described the process in further detail.

Ms. Kennedy asked how large the animals could be that come to the facility. Mr. Jackson stated it would be a maximum of 100-pound pets which most domestic household pets would fit into that range.

Ms. Kennedy asked about the process for licensing in Minnesota for this type of facility. Mr. Jackson advised that there aren't any state regulations but advised he is a licensed funeral director and gave details on adhering to the same standards and operation processes as if it is regulated.

Ms. Kennedy asked if pet owners would get their pets remains back after the process. Mr. Jackson stated, yes, they would.

Chair Kolm asked about the findings of fact and health and safety to ensure that there are proper handling and care of these animals and not creating any health hazards for animals waiting for the cremation process and ensuring these processes are being executed properly. Mr. Searles advised that there are not any state regulations as Mr. Jackson stated and advised he wasn't aware of any county regulations regarding pet cremation. He advised that the Commission wanted to add a condition in the recommendation portion but advised of challenges without statutory or ordinance requirements. Mr. Searles advised that this only includes indoor activities. Mr. Jackson stated that a refrigeration system would be utilized much like a funeral home to ensure proper care would happen.

Chair Kolm asked if there were any additional questions from the committee or residents online or in person. With none, he asked if there would be a recommendation for the project.

MOTION: Stephanie Swanson moved to approve Pet Memories Cremation, Conditional Use Permit, Project No. 18-2025-00599 subject to conditions as outlined in the Staff Report.

SECOND: Marcia Kennedy

VOTING: All in Favor: John Kollm, Stephanie Swanson, Marcia Kennedy,, Shae Seabrooks, Jim Gentile, and Jacob Guzik.

Absent: Saurin Shah

ITEM 2: WOODBURY LEADERSHIP ACADEMY, SITE AND BUILDING PLAN, PROJECT NO. 04-2025-00590

Gina McCormack, Senior Planner stated Collaborative Design Group, Inc. has submitted an application on behalf of Woodbury Leadership Academy for a Site and Building Plan for a 15,000 square foot, two-story addition to the existing Leadership Academy School. She said the addition will include eight (8) classrooms, specialist rooms, offices and the like to serve the expanded school capacity. She said the property is located at 8147 Globe Drive, south of Hudson Road. She stated the property is zoned B-1, Office Park District and is guided as Places to Work on the Land Use Plan.

Ms. McCormack said at their March 22, 2006 meeting, the City Council approved the Planned Unit Development (PUD), Conditional Use Permit (CUP), and Final Site and Building Plan for the Minnesota School of Business/Globe University. She said the approvals one three-story structure and one two-story structure that served as the corporate headquarters for the Minnesota School of Business/Globe College and also include post-secondary education through Globe College.

Ms. McCormack gave background saying that at their July 25, 2018 meeting, City Council approved the Amended Planned Unit Development, Conditional Use Permit and Site and Building Plan for 8089 Globe

Drive to be converted into a K-8 school facility for Woodbury Leadership Academy (WLA). She said that at that time, they reviewed and approved the use, site access, landscaping, lighting, parking, and future concept plans for the site. She said a building addition which included a multi-purpose gym space for the school, physical education support spaces, a stage, and additional classrooms was approved in 2021.

She said that at their June 11, 2025 meeting, the City Council approved the conditional use permit to expand the existing school use to 8147 Globe Drive, identified as the "Upper School", to ultimately serve grades 9-12. She said the approvals included a review of site circulation, parking and future concept plans for additional infrastructure onsite.

Ms. McCormack talked about the traffic study saying the proposed addition identifies, at ultimate capacity, WLA will serve approximately 1,350 students onsite. She said due to the increased trip generation from the existing capacity of approximately 1,050 students, staff identified the need to complete a traffic study. She said the traffic study identifies at the 2029 enrollment stabilization conditions, the queuing for parent pick up will extend beyond the eastern access point for Globe Drive

She stated that to address the expanded queue and vehicle conflicts extending the line to the point, the conditions of approval require the following traffic mitigation solutions:

1. Add additional pick-up windows to the existing system to spread out the peak pick-up trips.
2. Construct additional parking to allow for more parking and pick-up operations on the school site.

Ms. McCormack said a condition of approval will memorialize the traffic study findings to be required in advance of final school enrollment stabilization in 2029.

Ms. McCormack talked about the use saying Woodbury Leadership Academy explaining that it is a tuition free charter public school that has been operating in Woodbury since 2014. She said at the start of the 2025-2026 school year, WLA now occupies both 8089 Globe Drive as the "Lower School" and 8147 Globe Drive as the "Upper School" serving students in grades K-10. She said with the proposed addition, the school would be able to complete their charter and program for a school serving all grades, K-12. She stated a typical school day starts at 9:20 a.m., and ends at 3:50 p.m. Staff are expected to be on site from 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Ms. McCormack said the existing commercial tenants within 8147 Globe are anticipated to be vacated by spring of 2026 with the exception of the daycare which will remain onsite until at least 2031 or later.

Ms. McCormack discussed site access and parent circulation saying vehicular access to the site is provided by Globe Drive, which is a private drive with access onto Woodduck Drive and Hudson Road. Globe Drive was designed to handle the trips generated by school uses. She said the eastern access is the entrance and exit for vehicular drop off and pick up, shown with purple star, while the western access is for bus access only. She said per the 2018 conditions of approval, vehicle stacking is not permitted to occur on Woodduck Drive.

Ms. McCormack stated that due to this restriction and number of parents accessing the site to pick up students, the school has created a traffic solution to ensure queue lengths are sufficient and contained within the site. She said the school worked with City staff to identify the need for dual pick-up lanes which extend onto Globe Drive as a one way from the central access point, as shown below. She stated that as enrollment has risen and additional conflicts at the eastern access were created, the school further implemented a phased pick-up system that requires parents to sign up for 12-15 minute windows and are provided with a colored pass for that specific window. Ms. McCormack stated WLA staff actively manages the required windows by physically checking passes, directing parking lot traffic, and assist students into vehicles for efficient pick-up movements. She said these on-site management activities have been

successful to manage the queuing onsite. She stated that a condition of approval requires this traffic circulation implementation to continue for the life of the school.

She said construction for the addition is identified to remove a number of parking spaces and minimally impact parent pick up locations. All construction staging, equipment and contractor parking shall be required to occur on lots three (3) and four (4). She said that due to the construction impacts onsite, the school shall be required to provide parking for staff within the bus turn-around area as needed.

Ms. McCormack discussed parking saying the Zoning Ordinance requires three (3) spaces per classroom and one (1) stall per every 100 students for elementary and junior high schools and one (1) space per four (4) students and one (1) space for every two (2) employees for high schools. She said the Applicant has provided the table below identifying ultimate capacity for elementary, middle and high school students for the 2029-2030 school year and beyond.

Ms. McCormack said the proposed addition is located within an existing parking area and is anticipated to remove 50 stalls from the existing site. She stated that once removed, parking onsite is identified to be 237 stalls. She said the school has identified the need for 203 stalls for staff, parent pick up/visitor parking, and students which is below the existing stall count. She said the remaining stalls will serve the daycare use which has identified the need for 15 stalls. She advised that there are an additional 75 temporary stalls within the bus pick-up area that can be utilized for overflow events and temporary staff parking should the need arise.

Ms. McCormack said that based on the findings within the traffic study and the ultimate enrollment, the school has provided the below proof of parking plan for their open area site (lots 3 and 4) to the north of the school buildings. She said this plan identifies a total of 104 additional parking stalls can be constructed. She stated that as a condition of approval, the proof of parking shall be installed one (1) year in advance of stabilization, identified as fall of 2029, or earlier as required by city staff based on site conditions. She said WLA shall be required to apply for a land disturbance permit for this work to ensure adequate stormwater management is provided.

Ms. McCormack discussed the site plan saying the Applicant is proposing to construct a two-story, 15,000 square foot addition to the south of the existing building located at 8147 Globe Drive. She said the addition is strategically placed to provide drive aisle access the southern portion of the parking lot for parent pick up. Ms. McCormack said in addition, the Applicant is proposing to construct a new pedestrian connection from the Upper School (8147) to the Lower School (8089) through the parking lot. She said this pedestrian connection will be located within a median to provide safe access for students.

Ms. McCormack talked about landscaping saying the Applicant is proposing to remove existing trees that were planted with the original development within landscape medians. She said the Applicant is required to meet 25 percent canopy coverage for the site and proposes to plant 11 trees, 31 shrubs, and numerous grasses and perennials. She said the final landscaping shall be reviewed and approved by the Environmental division.

Ms. McCormack talked about architecture saying the conditions of approval for the PUD state that any future additions shall be constructed of the same materials as the original building. She said the Applicant is proposing to utilize pre-cast panels with cast in brick to match the existing building along with full-depth stone base. She said the same method of construction was used for the lower school building and most recently on the gym addition. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a materials board shall be submitted for review and approval.

Ms. McCormack discussed stormwater management, saying the existing stormwater management system is designed to meet quality, quantity and rate control. She said the Applicant is proposing to construct a sand filter system to increase the capacity for the new added impervious within the bench of the existing

pond to the north. She stated this filter and the full stormwater system design shall be reviewed and approved by Engineering prior to the issuance of a Land Disturbance Permit.

Ms. McCormack closed her presentation stating staff recommends approval of the Site and Building Plan for the Woodbury Leadership Academy Addition, Project No. 04-2025-00590, subject to the following conditions outlined in the Staff Report.

Chair Kollm asked if the Applicant wanted to make any additional comments. Jonas Beugen the superintendent for Woodbury Leadership Schools, thanked staff and the Commission. Mr. Beugen gave information on the project and advised he was available for any questions.

Chair Kollm asked if there were any questions online, with none he opened it up to the Commission for questions.

Commissioner Jim Gentile asked about the site access and the green star showing in the plans stating it is bus only and recommended additional signage stating that would be one way only for traffic. Ms. McCormack stated that staff and the school have not identified any conflicts of vehicle staging at the location and stated it is bus only entry and exit during the student pick-up times. Ms. McCormack stated the school can speak to any additional signage that they may have planned. Mr. Beugen acknowledged Mr. Gentile's question and recommendation but stated they have not had any conflict with cars accessing the location where the bus only pick up and drop off is located. He advised that they have trained parents in this to ensure safety of students and flow of the traffic. Mr. Beugen said they can certainly add signage to prevent confusion and provide drivers with more direction.

Commissioner Marcia Kennedy asked if the original building attaches to the additional building and if there is one elevator that services both floors. She asked if there was a sidewalk at the new building and if it would attach to the new building. Mr. Sean Smith with Woodbury Leadership talked about the site plan and student travel being a large discussion item. He gave information on the sidewalks and connections. Ms. McCormack showed the red line on the paper plans provided in the documents for further clarification. Mr. Searles referenced plan pages showing this as well.

Ms. Kennedy asked if the trees that were to be removed would be accounted for on the other side of the existing building. Ms. McCormack showed the landscape plan and said some of them would go back into the medians.

Commissioner Guzik asked what the construction schedule was anticipated to be. Mr. Smith discussed the first phase of renovating the existing building in April and May and discussed further details regarding the construction schedule and how they anticipate to submit a building permit next month.

Mr. Guzik asked if they thought any of the construction traffic would interfere with the queuing of the cars. Mr. Smith said they didn't and stated they start the day around 6 a.m. and would vacate the vicinity before the students were dismissed. He also stated most of the work would be completed during the summer months. Ms. McCormack advised that an area would be fenced off and would hold the construction material.

Mr. Guzik asked what the trigger was for parking. Ms. McCormack said they have been actively monitoring the site and working with the Applicant for the last few years where they identified different site improvements then staff would identify that sooner. She explained the process if that were to happen and what it would trigger as well as options on how that would be handled if necessary.

Commissioner Swanson thanked the Applicant on the construction of the pathway and how she appreciated that the path was there now. Ms. Swanson asked what would happen if a student was not able to make it to school during their pickup window slot. Mr. Beugen explained the pick-up process and how the school handles it to ensure things run smoothly. He also explained that there is a fair number of staff present at the pickup and the drop-off times to assist in these situations.

Commissioner Seabrooks asked about the lighting and if there was any lighting being replaced or added to help with the security. Mr. Smith discussed the code and zoning ordinance where the lighting is mandated. He said they have site lighting timers and discussed the options of adding lighting as the high school grows but stated they have not had any issues with lighting. Ms. McCormack discussed the parking lot lighting including the lumen level and other specifics in that lighting.

Student Commissioner Gisele Parnell asked how distractions to students and other tenants in the facility would minimize during the construction process. Mr. Smith discussed the interior construction areas being sealed off. He gave specifics on the rotating classes and testing periods that would be known where construction would cease. Mr. Beugen gave details on the drilling framing and demo would be done after hours.

Chair Kollm asked for help understanding how the parking was calculated. He asked if the code requires 239 stalls plus the additional with the expansion. Ms. McCormack directed the Commission to the graphic on page five (5) of the staff report and said the code requirements are listed. She read them to the Commission and gave the explanation and details on parking.

Chair Kollm asked for the reference around 75 temporary stalls within the bus pickup area shown on the site plan. Ms. McCormack said that staff did not count these as this area is frequently gated and off limits and is where some of the gyms are located and gave instances where those could be utilized.

Chair Kollm asked for clarification on condition number 22 and if the condition was saying the additional proof of parking stalls would need to be constructed by 2028 and sooner if staff saw the need or if the entire conclusion is dependent on city staff communication. Ms. McCormack said they are required to provide the parking to meet the ordinance, which is at least 46 stalls. Ms. McCormack said the drawing provided for concept was to show that they could accommodate 104 with the layout. Mr. Kollm suggested that be updated for clarity and gave his suggestion. Ms. McCormack agreed.

Chair Kollm asked how the daycare operations impact the drop off and pick up execution. Mr. Beugen stated there is very minimal traffic from the daycare as they have their own entrance. He stated they have marked parking showing daycare parking only. Mr. Smith gave information on the daycare, saying it is not full year-round. He gave staff specifics and other details. Ms. McCormack advised here the entrance, and exit was located in a separate area.

Chair Kollm asked if there is a crosswalk going from the new parking area to the school buildings. Ms. McCormack said that was a condition on the previous application's approval that was approved and will be implemented.

Chair Kollm asked if there is a plan for a field for sporting events. Ms. McCormack said there is a field currently. Mr. Kollm asked if there was lighting for the field currently and if it would come back to the Commission if that were to be added. Ms. McCormack said there wasn't lighting and if they were to add it, they would work with staff to ensure proper lighting would be implemented and utilized.

Chair Kollm asked about landscaping and how he saw that around the fencing may need evaluation that could be implemented in the current landscape plan.

Chair Kollm asked if there were any additional questions from the Commission or the public.

Ms. McCormack added that the conditions that would be added would be prior to the issuance of a building permit, and the expanded directional signage for the bus area should be reviewed and approved by staff. She also added that staff and the applicant would work on the edits recommended for condition number 22.

Ms. Swanson asked about condition number 22 saying they have to add 104 stalls when they are only 46 spaces shy. Ms. McCormack said that Ms. Swanson was correct, and it should say parking should be provided to meet the ordinance requirements.

Chair Kolm asked if there were any additional questions from the committee or residents online or in person. With none, he asked if there would be a recommendation for the project.

MOTION: Stephanie Swanson moved to approve **Woodbury Leadership Academy, Site and Building Plan, Project No. 04-2025-00590** subject to conditions as outlined in the Staff Report and the added condition on signage and amendment on condition number 22.

SECOND: Jacob Guzik

VOTING: All in Favor: John Kollm, Stephanie Swanson, Marcia Kennedy, Shae Seabrooks, Jim Gentile, and Jacob Guzik.

Against: None

Absent: Saurin Shah

COUNCIL REPORT

Councilmember Steve Morris provided an update of Council activities and meeting which was held last and events upcoming. For further information about the Council meeting, refer to the minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Stephanie Swanson moved to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission held on October 20, 2025 as submitted.

SECOND: Marcia Kennedy

VOTING: All in Favor: John Kollm, Stephanie Swanson, Marcia Kennedy, Shae Seabrooks, Jim Gentile, and Jacob Guzik.

Against: None

Absent: Saurin Shah

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.