

WRIGHT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting of: May 22, 2025

Minutes

The Wright County Planning Commission met on Thursday, May 22, 2025, in the County Commissioners Board Room at the Wright County Government Center, Buffalo, Minnesota. Chairman, Dan Mol, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with members present: Ken Felger, Sandy Greninger, Larry Smith, Jeanne Holland and Dan Bravinder. Absent was Pat Mahlberg. Brian Wold, Assistant County Attorney, was the legal counsel present. Barry Rhineberger, Planning & Zoning Administrator, represented the Planning & Zoning office.

ACTION ON May 1, 2025, MINUTES

Greninger motion to adopt the minutes for the May 1, 2025, meeting as printed. Seconded by Felger.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Jered Brenny – Cont. 5/1

LOCATION: 1436 72nd St SE, 10.00 AC SE1/4 OF SW1/4 EX TR DES IN DOC 1267389 in Section 05, Township 118, Range 25, Wright County, Minnesota. (Franklin Twp) Tax #208-200-053400 Property Owner: JERED J BRENNY

Petitions for an Interim Use Permit to operate a non-commercial contractor's yard for a lawn care and snow removal business contained within a 16,000 square foot outdoor storage space, as regulated in Sections 155.003(30), 155.031 & 155.048, Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Jered Brenny

- A. Rhineberger displayed the proposed site plan and reminded the Commission that the request is for an Interim Use Permit to allow a non-commercial contractor's yard for a lawn care and snow removal business. The item was continued from the last meeting to allow time for the applicant to meet with the Township. That meeting has taken place, and Franklin Township has recommended approval of the request. No other comments have been received.
- B. No comments from Brenny or the public.
- C. Bravinder stated he does not have any concerns but addressed the issue of screening. Upon reviewing the property, he felt there were no major areas of concern, except for a small section that is more open. He believes the area where the equipment will be parked is well screened.
- D. Mol noted that similar applications often require equipment and materials to be stored in sheds or designated storage areas, whereas this proposal involves outdoor storage. He asked whether the Commission wished to discuss this matter further, as he does not recall an IUP request where everything was stored outdoors. Felger responded that the property is zoned General Agriculture, and based on the aerial photo, it appears to be isolated. Therefore, he does not believe additional screening is necessary and is comfortable with the equipment being stored outdoors.
- E. Bravinder moved to approve an interim use permit for a non-commercial contractor's yard in accord with the plans and narrative submitted and the discussion at the hearing, with the following condition: 1) All work must be conducted off-site; 2) Exterior storage is limited to the locations noted on the site plan; 3) Outdoor screening requirements must meet the requirements of section 155.078 of the Wright County Code of Ordinances; 4) Township to review in one year, with subsequent reviews at an interval established by the Township; 5) This permit shall immediately and automatically expire upon transfer, termination of any lease agreement, change in business operations or ownership, or change in homestead classification. Motion seconded by Greninger.

VOTE : CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. **Randall Stoick** – New

LOCATION: 12402 DUFFIELD AVE NW – The NE 1/4 of the SW 1/4, Section 33, Township 122, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Silver Creek Twp.) Tax #216-100-333100 Property Owner: RSS PROPERTIES LLC

Petitions for a Conditional Use Permit to allow a single-family dwelling unit with an attached garage to be relocated to the roughly 40-acre property, as regulated in Sections 155.029, 155.048 & 155.92, Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Randy and Sharon Stoick

- A. Rhineberger displayed the site plan and reviewed the request, which is to move a single-family dwelling unit with an attached garage onto the property. The 40-acre parcel is located at the southeast corner of 127th Street NW and Duffield Avenue NW. It is zoned General Agriculture (AG) and designated as Rural Residential in the Northwest Quadrant (NWQ) Land Use Plan. The property has one residential building entitlement. The move-in structure was inspected by Wright County's Building Official, who found no significant structural deficiencies. Photos of the structure were presented. If the request is approved, the current home will either be removed or converted into a storage building. Silver Creek Township has approved the request. No additional responses have been received.
- B. R. Stoick stated that the removal of the existing home is scheduled for the last week of May or the first week of June. Rhineberger noted that the existing septic system will need to be addressed and should be included as a condition of approval if granted. R. Stoick added that a septic designer was on site today and has a design ready when needed.
- C. No comments from the public.
- D. Felger asked whether the move-in home is prefab or stick-built. R. Stoick confirmed that it is stick-built.
- E. Rhineberger explained that projects of this nature typically include an established completion date as part of the conditions. He stated it is up to the Commission to determine a reasonable date. Mol proposed December 31, 2025, as a possible deadline. R. Stoick responded that they hope to complete the project by August.
- F. Mol stated that the request appears straightforward and noted that the Building Inspector had no concerns.
- G. Felger moved to approve a Conditional Use Permit to relocate a single-family dwelling unit in accordance with the discussion, plans, and description held on file, with the following conditions: 1) Building and septic system permits are obtained; 2) The house may not be occupied without an approved certificate of occupancy and the septic system is installed and inspected prior to occupancy; 3) Existing dwelling must be removed within 180 days of occupancy, or a permit issued to convert to a storage building and the conversion permit must pass a final inspection with 180 days of occupancy; 4) The project completion date must be no later than December 31, 2025. Motion seconded by Holland.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. **Caleb Wright** – New

LOCATION: 15007 County Road 75 NW – Part of N 1/2 of NW 1/4 in Section 21 and part of the SW 1/4 of the SW 1/4 in Section 16, all in Township 122, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Silver Creek Twp.) Tax #216-100-212202 & -163303 Property Owner: Schany Marital Trust

Petitions for an Interim Use Permit for a trailer and shed sales operation to include office space and retail sales and outdoor storage of sheds, as well as retail sales and outdoor storage of utility, cargo, and dump trailers as well as truck beds, as regulated in Sections 155.031 & 155.053(B)(2), Chapter 155, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Carter Goodson

- A. Rhineberger displayed property details and the proposed site plan while reviewing the request. The property is familiar to the Commission and, as a reminder, is located east of the intersection of County Roads 8 and 75, and north of Interstate 94 at the Hasty interchange. It consists of two parcels, identified as PID 216-100-212202 and PID 216-100-212201. The site is zoned B-1 Highway Business and designated as Commercial in the Northwest Quadrant (NWQ) Land Use Plan. The property has a history of commercial use; most recently, in January 2024, the Planning Commission approved an Interim Use Permit for a semi-trailer rental business that includes office space, repair services, and storage for trucks and trailers. This request is to establish a trailer and shed sales business, which would include office space, retail sales, and outdoor storage of sheds and trailers. The primary inventory will consist of cargo, utility, and dump trailers, truck beds, sheds, and related parts. If approved, the existing building on the site may be improved, and a perimeter fence will be installed around the operational area. Silver Creek Township has approved the request. No other responses have been received.
- B. Goodson reviewed the displayed site plan and provided a general overview of the intention to store trailers and sheds outdoors.
- C. Mol asked whether additional lighting will be installed. Goodson responded that some additional lighting is anticipated and will be directed onto the site and inventory. Security cameras are also planned. Mol emphasized that all lighting should be directed inward onto the property, and Goodson agreed.
- D. No comments from the public.
- E. Mol noted that the Commission has previously visited the site and should be familiar with both the property and surrounding area. He stated he has no concerns with the request and asked if any other members had questions or comments.
- F. Greninger moved to approve an interim use permit for a trailer and shed sales operation to include office space, retail sales, and outdoor storage of sheds, as well as retail sales and outdoor storage of utility, cargo, dump trailers, and truck beds, in accord with the plans and narrative submitted and the discussion at the hearing, with the following conditions: 1) Signage on site must be in accordance with County sign regulations; 2) Exterior storage is limited to the locations noted on the site plan; 3) All waste, oil, and hazardous materials must be properly disposed of or recycled; 4) Any future road improvements must be completed according to Wright County Highway Department guidelines; 5) This permit shall expire upon transfer of the property, termination of any lease agreement, change in business ownership or operations, or change or expansion of operations, except for the original transfer from the current owner to the applicant. Motion seconded by Bravinder.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. **Skies Limit LLC** – New

LOCATION: xxxx Baker Ave NW – Gov't Lots 1 & 2, Section 11, Township 121, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Silver Creek Twp.) Tax #216-000-114100. Property Owner: Skies Limit LLC

Petitions to rezone Parcel F, as referenced on the survey by Otto Associates Inc., Project No. 24-0166, from General Agriculture (AG) with a Residential-Recreational Shorelands District Overlay (S-2) to Agricultural/Residential (A/R) with a Residential-Recreational Shorelands District Overlay (S-2) and establishment of a Rural Planned Unit Development overlay district, as regulated in Sections 155.028, 155.047, 155.048, 155.057 & 155.09, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Paul Otto with Otto Associates and Donavon DesMarais with Skies Limit

- A. Rhineberger displayed the property details and proposed site plans while reviewing the request. The parcel is approximately 80 acres and recently underwent several lot line adjustments with the Board of Adjustment. The request is to rezone 72.1 acres from General Agriculture (AG) to Agricultural/Residential (AR) with an S-2 Shoreland Overlay and to establish a Rural Planned Unit Development (PUD) overlay district. The property is designated as Rural Residential in the comprehensive plan and is currently zoned AG. The Township submitted a recommendation for approval of a revised request. Discussions have taken place regarding the establishment of the PUD; however, the final revision and approval shifted to a split zoning instead of the AR-PUD. The revised request would eliminate the PUD and require split zoning: Urban/Rural Transition (R-1)/S-2 for the four proposed lakeshore lots, and AR/S-2 for the four lots west of the road. This revision eliminates the outlot and the lakeshore access it would have provided to the four larger “backlots,” addressing one of the concerns raised by the lake association. Both the original and revised plans were displayed and reviewed. Due to the proposed zoning changes, it is recommended that the Commission discuss the item tonight but continue it to the June 12th meeting to allow time for renotification. The Township also noted that improvements to Baker Avenue, north of Lot 1 (AR), should be addressed as part of the process. Two responses have been received from the Lake Ida Association, one including a petition requesting denial.
- B. Otto stated at the Township meeting, residents expressed concerns with the outlot and allowing of lake access for the lots off the lake. With that taken into consideration changes were made to eliminate the common space. At the meeting, it seemed that everyone in attendance supported the revisions, and a resolution was reached. The parcel is 71 acres, and under a PUD, the allowed density would permit 11 lots, but the proposal has been reduced to 8 lots. Otto believes the property is being developed responsibly by conserving wooded areas, limiting lakeshore development to just four lots, preserving the area's character, and protecting both wetlands and forests. He emphasized that the impact on wetlands should be minimal, noting that the developers are not maximizing density but are instead working with the land to preserve its natural features.
- C. Greninger asked whether the lake has a public DNR access. Otto responded that there is a public access located southeast of the property.
- D. Felger clarified that Lot 4 of the unplatted area will not have lake access. Otto confirmed this. Rhineberger displayed the revised plan and reviewed the changes made regarding the outlots and current proposal.
- E. Mol invited the public to step forward, requesting that comments be kept to four minutes.
 - Tom Morris, representing the Lake Ida Association, stated that Lake Ida is 226 acres (per DNR) and supports around 100 parcels, with 80 year-round dwellings and the remaining 20% being seasonal cabins. The Association is proactive in maintaining lake quality, conducting numerous water and AIS tests throughout the year, and frequently staffing the landing with an inspector. He described the

- Township meeting as productive, noted that the developer and the Association reached an agreement, and expressed satisfaction that the development plan had been changed. The primary concern had been the outlot's lake access, which the revised plan addresses. The Association supports moving forward with the current proposal.
- Chuck Gardner, a member of the Lake Ida Association Board and the Wright County Invasive Species Committee, as well as a water tester for the lake, emphasized that Lake Ida is one of the few non-impaired lakes in Wright County. He stressed the importance of maintaining this status and preventing increased boat traffic from outlot access, which could jeopardize the lake's health.
- F. Felger stated he is pleased both parties were able to come to a peaceful agreement.
- G. Mol brought up concerns about larger Lot 4 (20 acres), questioning whether bluff areas could impact buildable space and lead to potential variance requests. Otto acknowledged the presence of bluff areas but said there is enough suitable land for building without requiring variances. Rhineberger explained that while the area may or may not meet the bluff slope definitions, the regulations include language regarding drainage towards water bodies, leaving room for interpretation. He noted that the southern lakeshore lot has some bluff areas near the proposed septic location, which limits buildable space. Mol reiterated his concern and emphasized the importance of avoiding variance requests. Otto responded that he believes there is adequate space, especially considering the lots are larger than those typically reviewed by the variance board, with the smallest being 1.2 acres. He said the plan was developed thoughtfully, and the client is aware that variance approvals are not guaranteed.
- H. Felger asked for clarification on the Township's comment regarding improvements to Baker Avenue and whether additional right-of-way would be required. Otto replied that the Township would like to see improvements to the road but that exact plans are not yet clear. Further discussion with the Township is planned.
- I. Bravinder pointed out that this is only the rezoning hearing. He referenced a property north of this parcel, where three lots were rezoned in 2024 with minimal lake impact. He believes the revised proposal will similarly have minimal impact. If rezoning is approved, he would like to see detailed road specifications and agreement terms with the Township. Otto acknowledged and agreed.
- J. Greninger moved to continue the matter to the June 12th meeting for a site inspection and renotification due to the change in requested zoning. Seconded by Holland.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Noted by Rhineberger the Township approved the revised plan so he doesn't see a need for the applicant to revisit with the Township.

5. **Matt Brummer** - New

LOCATION: 1605 Highway 55 NE – Part of the W 1/2 of NE 1/4 & the West 2 rods of Gov't Lot 3 north of public road, Section 32, Township 120, Range 25, Wright County, Minnesota. (Buffalo Twp.) Tax #202-000-321300
Property Owner: MINNESOTA BUILT BUFFALO LLC

Petitions to convert the existing Conditional Use Permit for a mini-storage use, granted in 2023, into an Interim Use Permit and to amend the previously approved plans and condition #4 of the 2023 CUP regarding screening and fencing, as regulated in Sections 155.029, 155.031, 155.055 & 155.057 Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Matt Brummer and Jason Hagemeyer

- A. Rhineberger displayed original and proposed site plan and reviewed the request. The property is 17 acres located along State Highway 55 NE that was before this Commission in 2023 for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a self-storage facility, which was approved. This request is to convert the existing CUP for the mini-storage and outdoor storage facility into an Interim Use Permit (IUP), modify the placement of the buildings and sizing, and amend condition #4 regarding screening and fencing. The property borders the railroad along Highway 55 and a new development, to the west, within the City of Buffalo. With the revised plan on display Rhineberger reviewed the changes. Staff could administratively have approved the change in building sizes and arrangement, but it was decided with the amendments to the screening conditions it was required the request come before the Commission for review and approval. The applicant is now proposing to screen the west property line along the length of the outdoor storage area with a roughly 5 to 6-foot berm and plant a native grass mix. A short portion of fence would remain on the south terminus of the berm to connect with existing fencing. Along this east boundary, the plan would be to replace the current fence with the new chain-link fencing with slatting. The applicant has not met with Buffalo Township regarding the proposed revisions. The Buffalo Fire Chief responded that they want to ensure truck access and turn around ability is adequate.
- B. Brummer stated that when they met with Planning & Zoning staff to review the plan, it was determined that the proposed changes were common-sense improvements. The west property line now borders a residential development, with homes situated at a higher elevation than the subject property. A berm planted with native grasses will be taller than a fence and offer better visual screening for those neighboring homes. On the east side of the property, the elevation is significantly lower, and beyond a certain point, screening would serve no practical purpose due to the sightlines. The proposal is to install screening up to the lowest effective point, which is approximately 200 feet from the area that is already screened. Additionally, the changes in building sizes have reduced the overall footprint, eliminating any potential impact to wetlands—one of the primary reasons for the design revisions.
- C. Mol asked whether dirt would need to be brought onto the site to construct the berm. Brummer responded that there is already sufficient material on-site to build the berm.
- D. Holland recalled the site and asked about a driveway leading to an old home. Brummer confirmed that there is still a home at the back of the property. Holland noted that the fire department had previously used that driveway for access. Brummer confirmed that fire trucks can access the site either via Highway 55 or through the back driveway.
- E. Felger asked whether the number of buildings planned remains the same, and if the changes only involve structures that have not yet been built. Brummer confirmed this and added that the total number of buildings would remain the same or possibly be reduced. Felger asked whether the berm would include trees. Brummer explained that the current plan is to plant native grasses on the berm. Felger also asked if the entire property

would be fenced. Brummer clarified that there are two different gates and various areas of outdoor parking. While there is fencing along the berm and Highway 55, some portions of the property—particularly areas that become wet—are not fenced. Brummer noted that the current fencing and operational setup have not resulted in any security issues.

- F. No comments from the public.
- G. Felger asked for clarification regarding the Fire Department's comments. Rhineberger explained that the Fire Department expressed concerns about adequate truck access and turning radius within the site. They want to ensure that emergency vehicles can navigate the property safely and efficiently.
- H. Mol asked whether the applicant had met with the Township. Hagemeyer responded that he had reached out but had not received a response. Mol stated that while he doesn't believe the proposed changes are significant, it's still important to hear from the Township. Greninger agreed, saying she prefers to have input from the Township before making a decision. Smith, who serves on a Township Board, emphasized the importance of being given the opportunity to review and comment. Holland concurred, stating she would also like to hear the Township's position.
- I. Felger moved continue the matter to June 12, 2025, for Township review. Motion seconded by Holland.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. **Paula Dalbec** – New

LOCATION: 5957 35TH ST NE – N836.42FT OF W552.5FT OF E 618.5FT OF E1/2 OF SE1/4 EX S394.18FT THOF (134102), Section 13, Township 120, Range 25, Wright County, Minnesota. (Buffalo Twp.) Tax #202-000-134101 Property Owner: PAULA E DALBEC

Petitions to rezone the property from Suburban Residential (R-2a) to Urban/Rural Transition (R-1), as regulated in Sections 155.028, 155.049 & 155.051, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Paula Dalbec

- A. Rhineberger displayed the proposed site plan and reviewed the request. The property, approximately 5.6 acres in size, lies at the southwest corner of Gabler Avenue NE and 35th Street NE in Buffalo Township. The City of St. Michael is located directly east of the parcel. The property is zoned Suburban Residential-A (R-2a) and designated as Agricultural under the Northeast Quadrant (NEQ) Land Use Plan. In 2004, the property's parent parcel was split into two lots, each slightly over 5 acres. This request is to rezone the 5.6-acre property from Suburban Residential-A (R-2a) to Urban/Rural Transition (R-1). If the rezoning is approved, the applicant would likely apply for a three-lot platted subdivision. The R-1 zoning district requires a minimum lot size of 1 acre, a minimum of 150 feet of road frontage (lot width), and a depth of at least 300 feet from the road frontage. Buffalo Township recommends approval of the request.
- B. Dalbec stated that her situation is unique, as the R-1 zoning district lies directly south of her property. She had previously split off the parcel directly south of her, and the proposed parcels meet road frontage requirements.
- C. No comments from the public.
- D. Mol requested the concept plan and questioned the reasoning behind the proposed L-shaped lot lines, noting they are not straight. Dalbec responded that she was trying to retain as much land as possible for herself, while meeting road frontage requirements and allowing for a sizable home set back a good distance from the road. She also noted that, at the Township meeting, member Anne Newman had expressed dislike for the initial design. Rhineberger used the document camera to display the initial plan as the options were discussed. Greninger agreed that the proposed lot lines were illogical. Mol then asked the Commission to consider the broader implications of rezoning a 5-acre lot. While there are many 5-acre parcels in the county, this request would rezone the property again to allow for further subdivision. He emphasized the importance of considering whether this action could set a precedent.
- E. Felger clarified that the Land Use Plan designates the area as Agricultural, though the parcel has already been rezoned for higher density. Rhineberger confirmed that the parcel had been rezoned previously for the 5-acre configuration. Felger then inquired about the origin of the R-1 lots to the south, with Rhineberger explaining that a platted subdivision was approved in 1972.
- F. Mol asked whether the property and surrounding area are designated Agricultural or Agriculture/Residential in the Land Use Plan. Rhineberger confirmed the designation is strictly Agricultural. He further explained that the subject property was rezoned to R-2a in 2004 in conjunction with a two-lot subdivision.
- G. Bravinder expressed that the situation is challenging because, although the property aligns with the subdivision from 1972, the surrounding lots—aside from that subdivision—are between 5 and 10 acres in size or larger.

- H. Mol asked what makes this particular lot unique enough to justify a rezoning. He noted that the area is designated for Agricultural use and is now being considered for increased density with 1-acre lots. He asked the Commission if they had further questions, concerns, or would consider a site visit. Bravinder indicated he would like to visit the site, with Greninger agreeing.
- I. Holland moved to continue the matter to the June 12th meeting for a site inspection. Motion seconded by Greninger.

DISCUSSION: Bravinder commented to the applicant that, with the current plan, he is struggling with the 80-foot-wide section of the parcel, noting that it is quite narrow and doesn't provide much room to work with. Dalbec stated that she was trying to accommodate what was mentioned at the Township meeting and had no problem reverting to the original plan. Greninger and Mol expressed a preference for straight lot lines, and Rhineberger showed a rough drawing on Beacon illustrating straight lines that meet the lot requirements for depth and width. Dalbec stated that she would be willing to adjust the lines, as she is trying to maintain a minimum of one acre per lot while meeting the necessary requirements.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. **Maddie Mithun** – New

LOCATION: 4875 37th Street SE. – Part of SE 1/4 of NE 1/4 and part of the E 1/2 of SE 1/4, Section 23, Township 119, Range 25, Wright County, MN. (N. Crow - Rockford Twp.) Tax #215-100-234100 & 215-100-234400 Property owners: Apple Jack Orchards LLC

Petitions to amend an existing Interim Use Permit (IUP) to expand a Commercial Agricultural Tourism use to allow outdoor spaces for weddings and events and the construction of two deck structures to shoot apple cannons and paintballs, as regulated in Sections 155.003(25), 155.031, 155.048(D), 155.057 & 155.109, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Present: Maddie Mithun

- A. Rhineberger displayed a proposed site plan and reviewed the request details. The property in question is known to the Commission as Apple Jack Orchard and consists of multiple parcels totaling approximately 90 acres. Most recently, in 2024, the Commission approved an amendment to the Interim Use Permit (IUP) allowing for the addition of a commercial slide, conversion of a shed for additional retail, and alcohol sales. At that time, the amendment should have formally converted the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to an IUP but was not updated accordingly. That correction is now being addressed as part of this request. The second portion of the request is to expand the Commercial Agricultural Tourism use to allow outdoor space for weddings and events, and to construct two deck structures for launching apple cannons and paintballs. With the site plan on display, Rhineberger reviewed the details of the request, noting that each deck structure would be approximately 18' x 30', with a ramp for accessibility compliance. The outdoor event space would be roughly 78,000 sq. ft. Details related to event operations are included in the staff report. Rockford Township has recommended approval of the request. No other comments have been.
- B. Mithun had no additional comments.
- C. Public Comment
 - Christine Demeules, who lives directly west of Apple Jack's, stated that she and her family were aware of the orchard operations when purchasing their home. They are currently comfortable with the seasonal nature of the orchard, which operates for four months per year and typically closes around 5:30 p.m. They appreciate the quiet evenings without excessive traffic and noise. However, she expressed concern about how extended hours and added events would affect their quality of life. She fears that events could bring disruptive behavior, loud or inappropriate music, alcohol consumption, and late-night noise. While she understands some growth is expected, she views this request as a significant and unwelcome change. She emphasized the desire to maintain the quiet, rural environment.
 - Mary Schmitz, who borders the orchard to the east, echoed concerns about noise. She inquired about the exact location of the deck structures and the direction in which apple cannons and paintballs would be shot. She mentioned finding litter from the orchard on her property in the past and expressed concern about parking arrangements for large events. She asked about measures to prevent trespassing, noting there is currently no fence or barrier between properties. She is particularly worried about noise continuing late into the night.

- Tom and Karen Bertoldi, who live south of the orchard on Farmington, agreed with the previous commenters. T. Bertoldi questioned the exact location of activities and voiced strong concerns about safety, especially in relation to potentially intoxicated attendees. He mentioned concerns about increased evening traffic and impaired drivers. He asked whether events would occur year-round and when the apple cannon and paintball activities would take place. He noted that they can already hear the gun club three miles away, as well as trains, and is concerned that these additional events will worsen noise issues. He requested more information about the proposed events operations, including time of day, seasonal limitations, music levels, and maximum attendance. His primary concerns are noise and road safety.
- D. Mithun acknowledged the concerns raised and emphasized the intention to be respectful of neighbors. She stated that apple cannon and paintball activities are already occurring, and the current request is simply to construct a roof and deck to make these areas safer and ADA-compliant. No changes to the location or intensity of these activities are proposed. Using the site plan, she reviewed the location of the existing activities and reiterated that nothing would change in terms of operation for paintball and apple cannons. As an event planner by profession, Mithun acknowledged the common concerns around noise and stated they receive frequent requests for weddings, graduations, and corporate gatherings. Currently, only agriculture-related events are permitted, so they have had to decline other requests. While they aim to grow the business, they want to comply with neighborhood expectations. Events would remain centralized within the orchard. Using the site plan, she explained the proposed layout relative to the rest of the property.
- E. Felger confirmed that paintball and apple cannon activities are already taking place. Mithun reiterated this and clarified that the only changes would be the addition of roofs, decks, and ADA ramps. Felger asked whether the main request was for a wedding venue. Mithun confirmed but added that it would also be used for corporate and graduation events, or anything not specifically agriculture-related.
- F. Mol asked whether a building was being proposed for events. Mithun stated that no building is currently proposed; instead, the plan involves utilizing the property for events with the potential use of tents. Mol asked how music would be managed without a building, and Mithun responded that tents could have side panels and that music might be limited to certain times. When asked about designated areas for events, tents, and parking, Mithun said existing parking areas would be used. She pointed out the proposed event space on the site plan, which would involve clearing trees to open the area. The goal is to keep events centralized on the property.
- G. Bravinder referenced the narrative, which indicated events would be offered year-round. Mithun said they are currently seasonal and had included broader dates in the narrative to allow flexibility. However, she does not expect events in the dead of winter and would be comfortable extending the season from April through November. Bravinder also noted the narrative mentioned 4–6 events per month, with 2–3 on weekends of that month. Mithun clarified that this would be the potential maximum, but they do not expect to exceed 4–6 monthly events. Bravinder recalled another Ag Tourism approval that included specific weekday and weekend event caps and he is trying to narrow down this request similarly.
- H. Holland asked about the number of guests per event. Mithun stated that the narrative includes 1–300 guests, though 150–200 is more realistic. They have sufficient parking for larger numbers. Felger asked about parking logistics, and Mithun used the site plan to show parking to the south of the road, with patrons crossing to reach the event area. If attendance warrants, they would have a sheriff on-site, as they currently do, and may provide golf cart shuttles. Felger asked about sanitation; Mithun stated they would continue to use portable toilets. Regarding security, she confirmed it would be required for larger events or those serving alcohol.

- I. Felger asked whether the proposed buildings would be open-sided. Rhineberger used the proposed building plans to clarify that they would be covered decks without walls.
- J. Rhineberger referenced a recent approval for a similar request that limited events to May through November, with no more than 15 events, and a restriction specifically on the number of weddings. All events were capped at 135 guests and 100 vehicles.
- K. Mol asked whether the Commission wanted to visit the site to assess the layout and scale of the proposed event area. Felger agreed that a site visit would be beneficial, and Holland concurred.
- L. Felger moved to continue the item to the June 12th meeting to allow time for the Commission to visit the site. Seconded by Bravinder.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. **Michael Dockendorf** – New

LOCATION: 7982 AETNA AVE NE – Part of Gov't 1, Section 30, Township 121, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (Cedar Lake - Monticello Twp.) Tax #213-100-301201 Property Owner: KEVIN M FLESCH

Petitions for a Conditional Use Permit for a land alteration to exceed 50 cubic yards of cut/fill within a shore impact zone for an 8-foot x 40-foot boulder retaining wall, as regulated in Sections 155.029, 155.030, & 155.101, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Michael Dockendorf

- A. Rhineberger displayed the proposed site plan and reviewed the request details. The property is a 1.44-acre R-1 lot on Cedar Lake. The request is for a land alteration project related to the new home they are currently building that would involve the movement of approximately 75 cubic yards of material and include a retaining wall that is greater than 4' and, therefore, requires engineering and a building permit. The Township has met and has deferred the decision to the Planning Commission without a formal recommendation. No other comments were received.
- B. Dockendorf reviewed the plan and described the proposed work. The goal is to provide safe lake access for the property owner and stabilize the shoreline. Engineered plans have been prepared, with the intention that the retaining wall will serve as a long-term solution for managing runoff and maintaining the shoreline.
- C. No comments from the public.
- D. Greninger, Felger, and Mol feel the request and plan are straightforward.
- E. Bravinder moved to approve a Conditional Use Permit for a land alteration of approximately 75 cubic yards for an 8x40' boulder retaining wall, in accord with the plans submitted with the following conditions: 1) Appropriate erosion control measures must be installed prior to construction and kept in place until the site is stable and grassy cover has been established; 2) A building permit be obtained for the retaining wall; 3) No work to be done below the Ordinary High Water Mark without DNR approval. Motion seconded by Greninger.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. **Kolles Sand & Gravel, Inc.** – New

LOCATION: 966 35TH ST NE & 3997 BRADDOCK AVE NE – Part of the SW 1/4 of the NE 1/4 along with part of the NW 1/4 of the NE 1/4 and all of the NE 1/4 Section 18, Township 120, Range 25, Wright County, Minnesota. (Buffalo Twp) Tax #202-000-181101, 202-000-181400, 202-000-181302 Property Owner: BETTY LOU L MCALPINE & WILLIAM L & NATALIE R DAVIS

Petitions for an Interim Use Permit to expand the existing mining operation approximately 1 1/2 acres onto the adjacent parcel for one year, to include the removal of approximately 20,000 cubic yards of material, as regulated in Section 155.031, 155.048(D), 155.057 & 155.100, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Jason Kolles

- A. Rhineberger displayed the proposed site plan and reviewed the request. The request is to expand the existing operation by approximately 1.5 acres. Material was found across a property line that the applicant would like to mine. The Township approved the request, and no other comments were received.
- B. Kolles stated that the cut will be about 18 feet deep, with roughly 20,000 cubic yards of material available. They hope to have the material stockpiled in the Davis Pit by the end of fall. Mol asked whether the goal is to move the material this year and stockpile it for later use. Kolles confirmed and stated that reclamation would begin immediately
- C. Holland noted that there are not many neighboring properties in the area.
- D. Felger asked whether there are plans for further expansion. Kolles responded that there is no additional material available, clay lies to the west, and the area to the north is lowland. Felger also inquired whether the Davis Pit is mined out. Kolles replied that it is not yet exhausted but is close to being depleted.
- E. No public comments were received.
- F. Mol asked the Commission if there were any additional questions or comments. None were offered.
- G. Greninger moved to approve an Interim Use Permit for a 1 ½ acre expansion of the existing pit into the McAlpine property as shown on the mining plans dated April 10, 2025, from Meyer Rohlin with the following conditions: 1) 1 ½ acre expansion area to be fully mined and restored by January 1, 2027 2) All other requirements of the Wright County code of ordinances be met. Seconded by Smith.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SITE INSPECTION

The Commission scheduled a site inspection for Thursday June 5th, with the Commission to meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Government Center.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Barry J. Rhineberger".

Barry Rhineberger
Planning & Zoning Administrator

BR:sd

cc: Planning Commission

Pence

Twp. Clerks