

WRIGHT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting of: August 21, 2025
Minutes

The Wright County Planning Commission met on Thursday, August 21, 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: Jeanne Holland, Ken Felger, Sandy Greninger, Pat Mahlberg, and Dan Bravinder. Brian Wold, Assistant County Attorney, was the legal counsel present. Barry Rhineberger, Planning & Zoning Administrator, represented the Planning & Zoning office.

ACTION ON JULY 31, 2025, MINUTES

Greninger motioned to adopt the minutes for the July 31, 2025 meeting as printed. Seconded by Holland.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. **KRAINA LAND LLC** – Cont. 6/12 & 7/10 & 731
LOCATION: 3755 BRIARWOOD AVE SE - E 1-2 SW EXC PRT DESC IN BK 190-31 in Section 20, Township 119, Range 25, Wright County, Minnesota. (Crawford Lake - Rockford Twp.) Tax #215-100-203100 Property Owner: JEROLD A UNTIEDT & SUSAN J UNTIEDT

Petitions to rezone the north 32.43 acres of the property, as referenced on the Certificate of Description by Otto Associates Inc., Project No. 25-0166, from General Agriculture (AG) with a Residential-Recreational Shorelands District Overlay (S-2) to Urban/Rural Transition (R-1) with a Residential-Recreational Shorelands District Overlay (S-2), as regulated in Sections 155.028, 155.048, 155.049 & 155.057, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

No representative present.

- A. Rhineberger explained that the applicant has decided that at this time they do not want to pursue the matter any further and would like the matter dismissed without prejudice.
- B. Bravinder moved to dismiss the matter without prejudice, at the applicant's request. Greninger seconded the motion.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. **JOHNATHAN CELANDER** – New

LOCATION: 5834 FAIRHILL DR SE - Part of the NE 1/4 of Section 12, Township 119, Range 25, Wright County, Minnesota. (Rockford Twp.) Tax #215-100-121300. Property Owner: RACHEL L CELANDER & JOHNATHAN R CELANDER

Petitions to convert an existing Conditional Use Permit for a Commercial Agricultural Tourism use, granted in 2021 and amended in 2023, into an Interim Use Permit and allow a change from 40 to 50 larger weekend events year, add 12 weeknight large events a year, security to be present for events with alcohol only, and a change to bathrooms, as regulated in Sections 155.003(25), 155.031, 155.048(D) & 155.109, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Rachel and John Celandar

- A. Rhineberger displayed the proposed site plan and reviewed the request. The Commission may recall this property as Farm at Fairhill. The property recently changed ownership and is now referred to as Howling Moon Wedding and Events. The applicant is present tonight to request convert the existing Conditional Use Permit (CUP) into an Interim Use Permit (IUP) and request amendments to the existing previous conditions. The property is located along Fairhill Drive SE in Rockford Township. In July 2020, a CUP was approved for commercial outdoor recreation use, including weddings and large events. In July 2021, another CUP was approved for Commercial Agricultural Tourism, allowing public events and group activities to occur in the existing barn. In March 2023, the Planning Commission approved an amended CUP to revise a previous condition, allowing some amplified music in the barn. Today's request includes the following: Convert the existing CUP for Commercial Agricultural Tourism into an Interim Use Permit (IUP); Increase the number of large weekend events from 40 to 50 per year; Add 12 large weeknight events per year; Require security only for events serving alcohol, instead of all large events; Modify portable toilet requirements, considering the existing indoor restrooms; Update the description of Commercial Agricultural Tourism activities. A full summary of previous CUP approvals, created by staff, has been provided by the applicant and is included in the staff report. Other notable considerations include that activities must be in conjunction with agricultural uses. Per the 2023 CUP plans, current agricultural use includes roughly 280 vineyard vines, approximately 50 orchard trees, and garden/strawberry picking. Rockford Township has approved the request. Staff also received 10 signed statements objecting to the increase in the number of events due to concerns about noise and traffic.
- B. J. Celandar stated that the summary provided by Barry Rhineberger accurately reflects the requested amendments.
- C. Public comment.
- Greg Michalko a neighboring resident to the north, spoke on behalf of others in the area who did not wish to come forward. He referenced the signed statement with 10 signatures and summarized their concerns. The primary concern is the proposed

- increase in events and affects. The request represents a 55% increase from what is currently approved, potentially resulting in two large events every weekend during the summer, plus one weeknight event every other week. Concerns include: Increased traffic and safety risks due to excessive speed and road wear; The gravel road is not built to handle over 400 vehicles per weekend; Noise from large events often extends past 11 p.m. Neighbors to the north and northeast report hearing music and even full conversations depending on wind direction; Weeknight events are particularly problematic for families with school and work the next day, impacting sleep; Concerns about declining property values and the loss of peace and quiet that drew them to the country; Parking issues, including cars parked along Gabler Ave., which is not permitted. Many residents would prefer a reduction in summer events rather than an increase. They believe the March 2023 provisions should be upheld and expressed strong opposition to living next to an event center.
- D. J. Celander explained that weeknight events would be limited to 5 p.m.–8 p.m., would not be formal invite gatherings, and would be more casual, allowing guests to enjoy the property in a relaxed setting. He acknowledged the issue with cars parking on Gabler Ave., which was missed, and said they would consider provisions to prevent that in the future. He clarified that the 10 additional events would be weekends only. Their current policy is to stop music and alcohol service by 10:30 p.m., allowing time for guests to leave. R. Celander stated they have 35 weekend events scheduled for the year. Rhineberger asked about weekday events. J. Celander said they've held about three weekday events so far this year, with plans for one per month.
- E. Bravinder addressed the proposed weekday events, confirming they would run from 5 p.m.–8 p.m. He asked about the number of attendees, mentioning 250. J. Celander clarified that while large events are limited to 40–250 guests, weekday events are intended to be casual and non-invite based. He offered to provide more details. Bravinder said he would like to see a clear written description of what weekday events would include. R. Celander described them as open-house style gatherings with food and drinks from a caterer, live music, and open grounds for guests to explore. J. Celander confirmed that all music would be indoors. Rhineberger noted that under current conditions, weekday events are limited to ending by 6 p.m., so the proposal would require a change in operating hours.
- F. Greninger asked whether the 35 events referred to past events or the total for the year. R. Celander stated it includes both past and upcoming events, with no plans to add more. J. Celander added they want to be a seasonal operation and do not wish to host events during the winter and have included that change in their proposed amendments, as current conditions allow year-round events.
- G. Bravinder stated that he and most other Commission members are familiar with the site and do not believe a site inspection is necessary.
- H. Holland asked about the Township's position, and Bravinder confirmed that the Township approved the request.

- I. Greninger remarked that she did not feel the neighbors are in close proximity. Mol reminded the Commission that the property is on a gravel road on both sides. He asked whether the Township provided any feedback about the road. Rhineberger responded that the only input was what was included in the staff report, noting that the Township approved the request without comments. The last township CUP review statement was that there have been no complaints and to review again in 2028.
- J. Bravinder stated he supports keeping the current number of large events but wants more clarity on weekday events. He requested written details outlining what those weekday events would involve. J. Celander agreed that more detail is warranted and said they can provide that information. Greninger expressed concern about the proposed 8 p.m. end time for weekday events and suggested ending them earlier, such as at 7 p.m., to ensure guests are gone by 8 p.m. She said she was not familiar with the property and might visit the site independently if necessary.
- K. Greninger moved to continue the matter to the September 11th meeting, for site inspection. Motion seconded by Bravinder.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. **ALLEN DUBBELDEE** – Cont. 6/12 & 7/10 & 7/31

LOCATION: 11066 PITTMAN AVE NW– PRT OF SE1/4 & GOV LT1 LY S OF LK CAROLIN and PRT OF NW1/4 NE1/4 in Section 04 & 09, all in Township 122, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (Lake Caroline - Southside Twp.) Tax #217-000-044400, 217-000-091202, 217-000-091205 Property Owner: ALLEN & DEBS DUBBELDEE REVTR and ALLEN R DUBBELDEE & DEBS JM DUBBELDEE REVTR

Petitions to rezone that portion of tax parcels 217-000-044400, 217-000-091202, and 217-000-091205, north of County Road 3, as approved by the Board of Adjustment on 1/10/2025, 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), as regulated in Sections 155.028, 155.047, 155.048 & 155.057, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Allen and Debs Dubbeldee

- A. Rhineberger displayed the proposed plan and reviewed the request. The item had been continued multiple times for various reasons, but most recently to allow the applicant time to decide whether to pursue the request. The delay stemmed from the requirement to build a new driveway to serve the new house planned for what would become the easterly lot. While construction of the driveway is necessary for the subdivision to proceed, it is not required for rezoning.
- B. A. Dubbeldee stated that, at this time, they are only requesting to proceed with the rezoning. The current plan is to renovate the existing home, build the new home, and wait 1–2 years before addressing the driveway and subdivision. Rhineberger confirmed with the applicant that “fixing up the existing house” refers to converting it into a guest house, per the existing issued permit. D. Dubbeldee confirmed conversion of the existing dwelling to a guest house.
- C. Mol clarified that rezoning would not create any new property lines. Rhineberger confirmed this and explained that property lines would be addressed during the subdivision process. He noted that while a concept plan is required at the rezoning stage to show the reasoning behind the request, rezoning would not move forward if the concept plan is not acceptable. In this case, he pointed out that the Commission has not yet established the justification for rezoning and encouraged the members to discuss that provision.
- D. No comments from the public.
- E. Bravinder confirmed that even if the property is rezoned, it will continue to be treated as a single parcel until it is subdivided, at which point the driveway requirements will be addressed.
- F. Holland asked what could be done with the gutted house if the property is not subdivided. Rhineberger explained that the existing house could still be converted into a guest house, and the applicant currently holds a permit to do so.

- G. Bravinder moved to recommend approval to the County Board of Commissioners to rezone tax parcels those portions of Tax Parcels 217-000-044400, 217-000-091202, 217-000-091205, lying north of County Road 3, from AG-General Agriculture to A/R-Agricultural Residential, with S-2 Residential-Recreational Shoreland Overlay District because we find the property is aligned with the goals and policies of the Northwest Quadrant Land Use Plan and the Township approves. Motion seconded by Holland.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. **RUSSELL MALECHA** – New

LOCATION: xxxx 62nd St NW - JOHNSON PARK 2ND ADDN LT1 BLK1 in Section 32, Township 121, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (Southside Twp.) Tax #217-029-001011.
Property Owner: RUSSELL L MALECHA REVTR

Petitions for a Conditional Use Permit for a land alteration to exceed 50 cubic yards of cut/fill within the shoreland district for a 166-ft x 10 ft engineered retaining wall on a backlot, as regulated in Sections 155.029, 155.030, & 155.101, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Steve Selseth, contractor representing the applicant

- A. Rhineberger displayed the site plan, Beacon aerial imagery, and plans while reviewing the request. The applicants own two non-riparian lots, including a house lot located across a private road from the property in question. The request involves a land alteration to create an elevated pad with a retaining wall over 4 feet tall and earthwork exceeding 50 cubic yards of material for the pad. Ultimately, this request is for a parking pad with a possible future garage, which would require variances. Rhineberger used the building plans and site plan to review the grading and drainage details more thoroughly. The Township responded with a positive recommendation, noting that the request would improve erosion control in the area. No other comments were received.
- B. Selesth stated that significant runoff currently occurs from the private road toward one corner of the property. They have discussed the project with the adjacent neighbors, all of whom are aware that no grading will occur across property lines.
- C. No comments from the public.
- D. Rhineberger added comments regarding the topography and explained the land alteration area so the Commission could see the existing grade, its relationship to neighboring properties, and the current water runoff patterns.
- E. Mol asked if the proposed retaining wall would be located at the back of the property. Rhineberger confirmed and used the Beacon aerial photo to show the location, including the backfill area to match the elevation. Mol then asked how water on top of the flat portion would be managed. Selesth stated that water has traditionally drained south, but the plan is to redirect runoff more toward the west. Selesth also noted that the road currently experiences significant erosion, and they hope this project will help mitigate that problem.
- F. Fegler used the Beacon aerial with topography to confirm that water from the private road currently runs southwest into neighboring properties, and the proposed improvements will hopefully correct this situation. Selesth explained that the plan is to flatten the area to slow

the flow and redirect water more to the west. Discussion continued between Selesth and Felger about current water flow directions and the expected impact of the project. Felger asked if a building would be constructed. Selesth replied that he could not confirm but noted that existing buildings had been removed previously.

- G. Greninger expressed concern that the house to the southwest receives a significant amount of water. Rhineberger confirmed this and used Beacon to explain how the proposed plan will redirect water northwest along a tree line and to other areas. Greninger agreed that the plan should improve water flow.
- H. Felger moved to approve a Conditional Use Permit for a land alteration of approximately 300 cubic yards for a 116 ft long x 10 ft high 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, and 3) The wall must be wholly on the applicant's property. Motion seconded by Bravinder.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. **Estate of Frank G. Lushine** – New

LOCATION: 6070 PILGER AVE NW - part of Gov't Lot A in Section 33, Township 121, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (Southside Twp.) Tax #217-000-334401 Property Owner: CHERYL D LUSHINE QPERESTR and FRANK G LUSHINE QPERRESTR

Petitions for a Conditional Use Permit for a three-lot unplatted subdivision, as regulated in Sections 155.029, 155.051 & 155.057, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Tana Crowell – relator representing the applicant

- A. Rhineberger displayed the proposed survey site plan and reviewed the request. The property is located on Pilger Avenue, with frontage on East Lake Sylvia. It is zoned Suburban Residential-a (R2-a). The request before the Commission is for a three-lot unplatted subdivision, with each lot meeting the minimum requirements. There are existing buildings and structures on the site, with Parcel “B” retaining the existing home. An existing ingress/egress easement runs through proposed Parcel “A,” which serves as the only access to a neighboring house. If the request is approved, the easement will need to be addressed in the conditions. Parcel “A” also contains a bluff; while the survey does not show topography, there are likely site conditions that will require any new home to be set back more than the required 75-foot lake setback. A pond shown on the plan is actually a wetland. With this wetland area Parcel “C” does have buildable area, but it is more limited than the other parcels due to the location of the wetland boundary. A Beacon aerial image was used to assess the potential buildable area. The township provided approval, and there were no additional comments.
- B. No comments were received from Crowell or the public.
- C. Bravinder questioned the easement on Parcel “A” and its relation to the parcel it serves. Rhineberger used Beacon to explain the associated parcel and zoomed in to show the driveway in question. It is a pre-1970s private easement road and the only access to the house it serves.
- D. Felger referenced that Parcel “C” contains a large wetland area and asked if there is a requirement for both primary and alternate septic systems. Rhineberger confirmed that soil borings indicate suitable septic sites, although they were not shown on the displayed survey. There is room for both a primary and an alternate system, though they occupy a significant portion of the buildable area.
- E. Bravinder stated that, since this is a site plan for approval, he would like to see more detail, particularly the locations of septic systems, especially for Parcel “C,” given the presence of the wetland. Mol asked whether Bravinder would like to visit the site.

- F. Bravinder moved to continue the matter to the September 11th meeting, for site inspection.
Motion seconded by Greninger.

DISCUSSION: Mol requested that additional details be included, such as the locations of sewer systems, houses, and other items discussed during the meeting. Crowell agreed. Rhineberger stated that he or staff would reach out to determine what information the Commission would like included on the site plan. For Parcel "A," more detail about the bluff area is desired, and for Parcel "C," an accurate depiction of the wetland and septic system locations is needed to determine the buildable area.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. **REMLE HOLDINGS LLC** - Cont. 7/31

LOCATION: 9423 DARROW AVE SE – Part of GOVERNMENT LOT 2 in Section 22, Township 118, Range 25, Wright County, MN. (Franklin Twp.) Tax #208-200-222401. Property Owner: REMLE HOLDINGS LLC

Petitions for an Interim Use Permit for a riding academy with equine-assisted services, as regulated in Sections 155.003(121), 155.031 & 155.048, Title XV, Land Usage of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Caryn Brakenridge (Conscious Counseling Solutions, LLC & Conscious Cornerstones, LLC) and Andy Elmer (Remle Holdings LLC)

- A. Rhineberger displayed the site plan and reminded the Commission that the item was continued to allow time for the Township to respond as well as a site inspection. The site inspection was completed and the Township approved as it seems reasonable and is good use of the property, they did request a review in 1 year.
- B. No comments from applicant or public.
- C. Mol asked the Commission if there were questions or comments.
- D. Rhineberger noted that in the staff report a proposed motion was provided with key areas marked for potential further discussion. Based on the proposed business plan they could possibly have operations 7 days a week at the site. If the Commission is fine with what is proposed that is acceptable but wanted to ensure there was some discussion.
- E. Mol asked the applicant if they would be willing to limit the number of weekends in the summer. Brakenridge stated she would be happy to adjust; it is just a matter of rescheduling clients. As a therapist her maximum is about 20 clients. She also sees clients online and in her Wayzata office, so reality is she would not be seeing clients at the site back to back all day. Mol stated that for staff the details need to be on paper so that they can enforce and address complaints. Brakenridge stated she understands. Geringer asked if there would be other staff seeing clients with Brakenridge stating just herself. Elmer asked if there was proper wording that would allow clients an hour session on a Saturday or Sunday, not to exceed a particular time.
- F. Holland feels that based on the site visit she didn't see that there are neighbors and because they are living in the home, it will be low impact with limited visitors. There are only 2 horses so if the hours are included she feels that makes sense, but she really doesn't feel large groups will be visiting the site. This is a great piece of property for this plan so basic guidelines would be helpful.

- G. Mahlberg stated wedding venues are given 40 days between May and October, so put 40 on this one. This is not a high volume situation. Brakenridge stated ideally she doesn't want to work weekends but can also understand the concern.
- H. Bravinder agrees with Mahlberg that the scope and nature of this business is not a large group event. It is a few people visting the site and he is not concerned with the hours due to the nature of the business and how it will operate.
- I. Rhineberger noted the staff report motion mentions a limit on the number of animal units. He explained this property is shoreland on a Natural Environmental lake and if they were not before this Commission they would be allowed 9.99 animal units (AUs) with a registration and more if properly permitted. Staff decided to suggest a 5 AU limit based on location of the barn and environmental sensitivity. Mahlberg asked why set a limit if they would be required to permit if they want more. Rhineberger stated this parcel was created with an administrative deed restriction and at a time when adequate information wasn't submitted. If this had gone through the Board of Adjustment, as it should have, they would have likely limited to 9.99 AUs.
- J. Mahlberg moved to approve an Interim Use Permit for a riding academy with equine-assisted services, accordance with the discussion, plans, and description held on file, with the following conditions: 1) Proper building and change of use permits be obtained, inspections passed, and certificate of occupancy issued prior to clients being allowed inside any structures; 2) Days and hours of operations are limited to Monday through Thursday, 9 am to 7:00 pm, Fridays from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, and Saturday and Sunday 9:00 am to 4 pm; 3) Limited weekend hours and occasional small group events from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, not to exceed 24 weekend days per calendar year; 4) Due to being in the Shoreland District, property is limited to 9.99 animal units; 5) Any change in use or expansion requires an amended Interim Use Permit hearing; 6) This permit shall expire upon transfer of the property, termination of any lease agreement, or change in business ownership or operations. Holland seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Felger asked to include Township review in one year, with subsequent reviews at an interval established by the Township. Mahlberg and Holland agreed.

Malberg amended his motion to include condition: 7) Township to review in one year, with subsequent reviews at an interval established by the Township. Seconded by Holland.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. **CHRISTOPHER RASSET** - Cont. 7/31

LOCATION: 7254 DEMPSEY AVE NW – Part of the NW 1/4 of the SW 1/4 in Section 27, Township 121, Range 26, Wright County, MN. (Maple Lake Twp.) Tax #210-100-273202.
Property Owner: CHRISTOPHER G & VICKI L RASSET

Petitions for an Interim Use Permit for a commercial agricultural tourism use for a winery operation that includes a vineyard, bottle sales, and a tasting room, as regulated in Sections 155.003(25), 155.031, 155.048 & 155.109 of Title XV, Land Usage of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

- A. Rhineberger explained to the Commission that the applicant has made the choice to not pursue this matter any further, at this time, and has requested the matter be dismissed. The appropriate withdrawal from has been signed.
- B. Bravinder moved to dismiss the matter without prejudice at the applicant's request. Motion seconded by Holland.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. **BRUCE L SCHUT** - Cont. 7/31 (re-notice)

LOCATION: 7414 Baker Ave NW – Part of SW1/4 OF NW 1/4 & N1/2 OF SW1/4 and N1/2 OF SE1/4 & SW1/4 OF SE1/4 EX TR DES DOC 1567446 (264100) in Sections 25 & 26, Township 121, Range 26, Wright County, MN. (Maple Lake Twp.) Tax #210-100-253200 & 210-100-264200. Property Owner: BRUCE L SCHUT

Petitions for a Conditional Use Permit for a **ten-lot** unplatted residential subdivision, as regulated in Sections 155.029 & 155.047, Title XV, Land Usage of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Dan Frie

- A. Rhineberger displayed the concept plan and reviewed the request details. In May 2025, the County Board approved the rezoning of Proposed Parcel A and Proposed Parcel C from General Agriculture (AG) to Agricultural/Residential (A/R), rezoning the entire property except for the far western 80 acres, which remain zoned AG. This request is for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for an unplatted 10-lot subdivision on portions of the property that were rezoned to Agricultural/Residential (A/R). All ten proposed lots meet the minimum requirements of the A/R zoning district, which include a minimum lot size of 10 acres, 300 feet of road frontage, and a minimum depth of 300 feet from the required frontage. The lots range in size from 10 acres to 20.84 acres. Three lots are proposed west of Baker Avenue NW, and seven lots are proposed north of 72nd Street NW and east of Baker Avenue NW. Maple Lake Township has approved the request. No other comments have been received.
- B. Frie explained that Parcels “H” and “I” are proposed with a shared access point. Due to the area's topography, they believe the shared access will be more level and safer..
- C. No comments were received from the public.
- D. Mol questioned the large ditch along Proposed Parcels “B” and “C.” Frie acknowledged the area is a ravine and that building a driveway there would be difficult without a bridge. He stated that this would be addressed in the future, as the applicant intends to continue farming the area west of Baker Avenue. Bravinder asked whether there had been discussion about filling the ravine, with Mol noting that there was a comment about it during a site inspection.
- E. Felger moved to approve a Conditional Use Permit for a ten-lot unplatted subdivision, in accord with the survey completed by Bogart, Pederson & Associates, File No. 24-0056.00, dated 4/11/2024; with the following conditions: 1) Access permits, if required, must be approved by Maple Lake Township prior to any construction activity or earthmoving taking place; 2) There are wetlands on the property, which must either be avoided or proper approval for wetland disturbance is approved by the Wright County SWCD, prior to the disturbance taking place; 3) All Wright County Feedlot Ordinance requirements and standards must be followed; 4) Reciprocal easements be recorded at or prior to transfer of parcels H & I. Motion seconded by Greninger.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. **KYLE ASHWILL** – New

LOCATION: 13242 25TH ST SW & xxxx 17th St SW - SE1/4 OF SE1/4 along with THE NE 1/4 NE 1/4; ALSO GOV'T LOT 4; ALSO LOT B OF GOV'T LOT 3 in Section 11 & 14 all in Township 119, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (Cokato Twp.) Tax #205-000-114400 & 205-000-141301 Property Owner: North Fork LLC and Kyle E & Beth Ashwill

Petitions for an Interim Use Permit (IUP) for a sand and gravel mining operation, to include mining and stockpiling of aggregates, washing, crushing, and recycling of asphalt and concrete, as regulated in Section 155.031, 155.048(D) & 155.100 of Chapter 155, of Title XV Land Usage of Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Beth Ashwill

- A. Rhineberger displayed the property and reviewed the request details. The Commission approved a mining Interim Use Permit (IUP) a few months ago for North Fork LLC, located just north of this parcel and sharing the same access routes. The current request includes mining, washing, crushing, and recycling of asphalt and concrete. According to the narrative, mining would begin in the southern 10 acres and proceed northward as needed. Similar to the North Fork pit, there would be two potential access points, one to the north and one to the south, both located on Township roads. The haul route map was displayed and reviewed. The owner of the North Fork property has submitted a signed agreement allowing the applicant to use his pit for ingress and egress. The Township approved the request at their July 7 meeting. No other responses have been received.
- B. No comments were received from the public or the applicant.
- C. Mol asked the Commission if there were any questions, comments, or any need for a site inspection.
- D. Bravinder stated that Cokato Township is comfortable with the IUP as presented, noting that it is the same as the North Fork pit and that the applicant has historically worked well with the Township.
- E. Greninger moved to approve an Interim Use Permit for mining to include crushing and the recycling of asphalt and concrete, in accord with the plans presented and description provided by the applicant on the record, with the following conditions: 1) Any requirements of Cokato Township for road repair, dust control and access to township roads must be met; 2) Must obtain appropriate stormwater permits through the MPCA, and must abide by all other state and federal permitting requirements; 3) This Interim Use permit (IUP) shall expire on August 21, 2035. Any mining past that date or expansion or change in operations will need a new IUP; 4) A reclamation bond, cash escrow, or irrevocable letter of credit for \$95,000 (19 acres x \$5000) shall be provided prior to operations commencing and kept in place until such time as the pit is fully reclaimed; 5) Haul routes are 25th St. SW to County Road 4 and 17th St. SW to Oliver Ave. SW to 20th St SW to County Road 3. Felger seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION: Rhineberger questioned if the Township review should be included. Bravinder confirmed he would like to see that condition included.

Greninger and Felger agreed to amend the motion to include condition 6) Township to review in 1 year with subsequent thereafter determined by the Township.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

10. **XCEL ENERGY** – New

LOCATION: 14772 COUNTY ROAD 8 NW - S1/2OF NW1/4 & TH PRT OF NW1/4 OF NW1/4WH LIES SLY OF SLY R/W LN OF I-94 in Section 21, Township 122, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Silver Creek Twp.) Tax #216-100-212300. Property Owner: VORANDESOTO LLC

Petitions to rezone the portion of the property outside of the 1,000-foot shoreland zone of Locke Lake from General Business (B-2) and Agricultural/Residential (A/R) to General Industry (I-1), as regulated in Sections 155.028, 155.047 & 155.055, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Tim Mauseth

- A. Rhineberger displayed property maps and a proposed site plan as he reviewed the request. Over roughly the past year, the Commission has heard a rezoning request, an unplatted subdivision, and an Interim Use Permit (IUP) request for this property. In 1996, the property was split-zoned, with the General Business (B-2) zoning district covering approximately 32 acres and the Agricultural/Residential (A/R) zoning district covering approximately 60 acres. In June 2024, the County Board approved a rezoning expansion of the B-2 district, and in August 2024, the Planning Commission approved a three-lot unplatted subdivision. As a result, there are now two lots zoned B-2 and one lot zoned A/R. In December 2024, the Planning Commission approved an IUP for a truck sales business with diesel service and repair operations on one of the B-2 lots. The current request is to rezone the portions of the property outside of the shoreland district from B-2 and A/R to General Industry (I-1). If approved, the applicant plans to apply for a commercial contractor's yard. The Land Use Plan designates the property as commercial, so the existing A/R zoning is inconsistent with that designation. Silver Creek Township had a split vote regarding the rezoning request. Since the motion did not pass, the response included reasoning from both sides of the discussion. The full township response is included in the staff report packet, along with a subsequent statement submitted after the meeting minutes were finalized. That statement specifically noted that the *"Board of Supervisors motioned to not issue any driveway permits for 148th until it is realigned with County Road 8,"* which would prohibit Xcel's proposed driveway onto 148th. While this would not directly impact the IUP, it may affect the applicant's site layout and future planning. No additional public comments have been received.
- B. Mauseth stated they have been searching for a suitable site for over two years. Once operational, this would be a unique site for Xcel, offering immediate benefits to both the company and its customers. They are committed to being a good neighbor and believe the site is a strong fit. He met with the three residents immediately south of the site and reported that those conversations were productive. They plan to incorporate some design changes based on that feedback. Mol asked about screening, and Mauseth responded that there is an existing grove of trees 20–30 feet wide. While there were concerns about tree removal, they are committed to starting disturbance at the edge of the currently cultivated field, preserving the mature trees.

C. Public Comment

- Johann Massmann, a resident of Silver Creek Township, stated that he and many of his neighbors oppose the rezoning request. He referenced ongoing discussions regarding the need to realign 148th Street and emphasized that this issue should be addressed as part of the current planning process. He noted that the Township Board recently reaffirmed that no driveway permits will be issued for 148th Street until the road is realigned. Massmann recalled prior conversations about the necessary improvements to the road, stating that this has been a longstanding concern and should be incorporated into the rezoning stage. He reported that the Township Planning & Zoning Commission considered the proposal with the motion to approve not passing. On Tuesday evening, the Township Board took further action to make it explicitly clear that a driveway permit will not be granted for 148th Avenue until the realignment is complete. He noted that the Highway Department has also been involved in these conversations, which are not new, and that the general consensus is that the cost of the improvements should be the responsibility of the property owner or buyer. Massmann argued that the proposed plan is not viable without a driveway permit and reiterated that the Township does not support the proposed access. He also pointed out a discrepancy in Xcel's proposal with one bullet point indicates the site is within their service territory, a later section states otherwise. He clarified that the area is actually serviced by Wright-Hennepin Electric, though he acknowledged this may not pose a major issue. He stressed that road safety is a significant concern for the Township. If the rezoning is approved, he would like to see dust control, stormwater management, and site lines addressed in detail. Massmann also mentioned he had spoken with neighboring property owners regarding the existing tree line, and they expressed interest in purchasing a small portion of that land. While he was unsure if that option is viable, he suggested it could be considered. Finally, he expressed concern that the proposed use could negatively impact nearby lake properties. He noted that once Xcel completes its work in the area, the company may sell the property, creating uncertainty about what type of industry might move in. He emphasized that now may be the appropriate time to exercise more control over future development on the site.
- D. Mol noted that the site plan shows access off County Road 8 and asked whether that could serve as the sole access point. Mauseth confirmed it could, though they would prefer an emergency exit as well. They are open to working with relevant parties on improvements to the 148th St. intersection. Mol confirmed the project could function with only the County Road 8 access. Mauseth said they would be open to an emergency exit on 148th, possibly limited to left turn only or small vehicles, and are willing to collaborate on restrictions.
- E. Felger inquired about long-term use. Mauseth confirmed this is the long term plan with the site dedicated to Xcel's transmission line construction group and serving as a regional hub for material storage and distribution. He explained that Xcel currently uses several inefficient leased sites across the region, and this location was chosen for its central position. Felger

asked about screening, and Mauseth said they plan to build a berm around the perimeter and install a security fence inside the berm. The entire site will have either Type II granite or chloride type surface.

- F. Bravinder recalled that the County Highway Department had previously denied access off County Road 8 for another proposal, but this access is proposed slightly farther south. He asked whether the Highway Department had reviewed the current plans. Mauseth confirmed they had, and that this was the recommended location. The driveway will be as wide as possible with an automatic gate placed far enough back to prevent trucks from obstructing traffic. Bravinder asked about hours of operation. Mauseth replied that they would follow union hours, which are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, with an average of 4–6 trucks per day. Some days could have zero or as many as 12 trucks. Weekend activity would only occur during storm events. Bravinder also asked about lighting. Mauseth stated there would be motion-sensor lights around the perimeter and one light at the entrance that would remain on overnight.
- G. Felger suggested confirming with the Highway Department that 40 feet of access width is sufficient. Multiple members agreed that 40 feet is adequate. Felger also asked about the type of material being transported. Mauseth explained the poles are in segments, there will be crossarms, matting, and wire spools.
- H. Mol asked is there will be a building with staff on-site. Mauseth responded that there are no current plans for permanent staff. Trucks would arrive, be loaded, and leave. If a structure were needed in the future, they would return to amend the IUP accordingly.
- I. Felger acknowledged the need for an emergency exit but questioned who would be responsible for addressing it. Rhineberger explained that access details would be discussed more thoroughly during the IUP phase. A strong recommendation can be made during rezoning, but access decisions will be determined during IUP review. Rezoning approvals cannot be conditioned on access. He noted that in a previous IUP request, 148th St. was proposed as the sole access.
- J. Mol reminded the Commission that this discussion pertains to the rezoning phase only. Rhineberger reiterated the Township's statement: *"The Board of Supervisors motioned to not issue any driveway permits for 148th until it is realigned with County Road 8."* This does not mean they are opposed to the rezoning in general, just that they will not permit access onto 148th St. Mol confirmed there is available access via County Road 8.
- K. Bravinder commented that the neighboring truck stop is already zoned I-1. He sees no major issue with the proposed rezoning and noted that a large wetland will provide a buffer between the laydown yard and nearby residences

- L. Felger moved to recommend approval to the County Board of Commissioners to rezone that portion of tax parcel 216-100-212300 outside of the 1,000-foot shoreland zone of Locke Lake from General Business (B-2) and Agricultural/Residential (A/R) to General Industry (I-1) because we find the property is aligned with the goals and policies of the Northwest Quadrant Land Use Plan.

VOTE: Mol, Holland, Felger, Bravinder & Greninger

ABSTAINED: Mahlberg

MOTION PASSED

11 . **CYNTHIA TUSSING** – New

LOCATION: 7256 FLANDERS AVE SW - SE1/4 OF NW1/4 in Section 07, Township 118, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Woodland Twp.) Tax #220-000-072400. Property Owner: CYNTHIA L TUSSING

Petitions for a Conditional Use Permit to allow a single-family dwelling unit to be relocated to the roughly 40-acre property, as regulated in Sections 155.029, 155.048, 155.057 & 155.092, Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Cynthia Tussing

- A. Rhineberger displayed property maps and photos of the home as he reviewed the request. The property is approximately 40 acres, located along Flanders Avenue SW, zoned General Agriculture (AG), and lies entirely within the shoreland area of Yaeger Lake, a Natural Environment Lake. The property has one residential building entitlement. The request is to move a single-family dwelling unit onto the property. The proposed move-in home measures 26' by 40', totaling 1,040 square feet. Currently, a park model trailer appears to be located on the property, which is prohibited in Wright County. Regardless of whether the request is approved, the trailer must be removed. Additionally, there is another structure on the property that appears to be used for human habitation. This structure is not permitted for such use and must also be removed. The only currently permitted structure is a 30' x 48' storage building. The move-in home was inspected by Wright County's Building Official on July 30, 2025, with no major concerns noted. Woodland Township has recommended approval of the move-in home but requests that the existing dwelling be removed or converted to a shed. No other comments have been received.
- B. No comments from the public or applicant.
- C. Rhineberger noted that the proposed motion includes a completion date, which should be discussed before proceeding. He highlighted that, although this is a move-in home, the construction season is progressing, and the Commission should determine a reasonable completion date. Bravinder asked the applicant whether a completion date of December 31, 2025, would be feasible. Tussing responded that she still needs to line up contractors, as she was uncertain whether the request would be approved. She could not commit to a specific date but stated she is aiming to complete the project by December. Felger shared that he has faced delays in securing a contractor for his own project and supported extending the deadline by at least one year or allowing for a year with a possible six-month extension. Mahlberg suggested setting the completion date to the end of 2026, which the other commissioners agreed with.
- D. Bravinder 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) Any existing structure with habitable space 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 within 180 days of occupancy; 4) Existing park model trailer must be removed within 30 days, as they are prohibited outside of approved campgrounds; 5) The project completion date must be no later than December 31, 2026. Motion seconded by Holland.

DISCUSSION: Tussing questioned whether 30 days would be enough time to remove the trailer, as she is unsure how to dispose of it. Mol advised her to aim for the 30-day goal and consult with Planning & Zoning if more time is needed. Bravinder proposed extending the trailer removal timeline to 60 days.

Bravinder and Holland agreed to amend Condition 4 as follows: 4) Existing park model trailer must be removed within 60 days, as they are prohibited outside of approved campgrounds.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SITE INSPECTION

The Commission scheduled a site inspection for Monday September 8th, with the Commission to meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Government Center.

Meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Barry Rhineberger
Planning & Zoning Administrator

BR:sd

cc: Planning Commission
Twp. Clerks