

WRIGHT COUNTY BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Meeting of: September 19, 2025
MINUTES

The Wright County Board of Adjustment met on Friday, September 19, 2025 at 8:30 a.m. in the County Commissioner's Board Room at the Wright County Government Center, Buffalo, Minnesota. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Paul Aarestad. With members present being Bob Neumann & Dan Vick. Absent were Sandy Greninger & Dan Mol. Representing the Planning & Zoning Office was Aaron Ogle, Planner. Brian Wold, Assistant County Attorney, legal counsel, was also present.

ACTION ON MINUTES FOR THE AUGUST 29, 2025 MEETING

On a motion by Vick, seconded by Neumann, all voted to approve the minutes for the August 29th meeting as printed.

1. **ANTHON ELLIS** – Cont. 7/18, 8/8, and 8/29

LOCATION: 7075 Pilger Ave NW – Portion of Gov't Lot 2 in Section 28, Township 121, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (Southside Twp.) Tax : 217-000-284300. Property owners: JEFFREY HARMSSEN & STACY HARMSSEN

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026, 155.049(F)(2), 155.057(E)(1) and 155.090(Table 3) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to construct a new single-family dwelling that would be within the road and shoreland building setbacks while the septic absorption area would be within the setback from the home.

No representative present.

- A. Olge explained that the applicant is requesting continuation to the October 10th meeting so they can continue working on revised plans and the 120-day waiver has been signed. No updated plans have been submitted. The most recent plan is to construct a new single-family dwelling as presented that would be 52 ft. from the ordinary high-water of Lake Sylvia and 33 ft. from the centerline of Pilger Ave NW.
- B. Vick moved to continue the item to the October 10th meeting, at the applicants request. Motion seconded by Neumann.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. **BRAD HAGFORS** – New

LOCATION: 14932 STATE HIGHWAY 55 NW – PRT OF SW OF SW TH LIES N OF NLY R/W LN OF HWY55, Section 15, Township 121, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (Southside Twp.) Tax #217-000-153303. Property Owner: K-BUILT PROPERTIES LLC

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026 and 155.097(G) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to erect a billboard sign within the setback of an abutting property line in a district where billboards are prohibited and within the setback from a dwelling.

Present: Brad Hagfors with Franklin Outdoors

- A. Olge displayed the property location details and reviewed the request. The property is located at 14932 State Highway 55 NW in Southside Township, consists of 1.56 acres, and is zoned Highway Business (B-1). The request is to erect a billboard sign on PID 217-000-153303. The proposed location of the sign would be 20 feet from the shared property line with PID 217-000-153306, which is zoned General Agriculture (AG), and 140 feet from the dwelling located on PID 217-000-153306. It was noted that while PID 217-000-153306 is currently zoned AG, it is designated as B-1 in the Land Use Plan. A variance is required to erect a billboard sign within 100 feet of an abutting property zoned AG and within 300 feet of a dwelling. The Township has not yet responded, but it is believed that the applicant is scheduled to meet with the Township prior to the October 10th meeting. No written responses from the public have been received.
- B. Hagfors explained that the landowner owns both parcels and uses the house, located within the 100-foot distance, as his office. The property is currently being purchased under a contract for deed, with plans to rezone it to commercial once ownership is finalized. Although it is a house, it is used as an office. The applicant is on the agenda for the Township meeting on October 7th. He has spoken with Township representatives over the phone, and they indicated that they do not have specific sign ordinances but are interested in learning more about the request.
- C. No comments from the public.
- D. Aarestad stated that the Board typically prefers to hear from the townships before making a decision. He noted that the request can be discussed, but he believes holding off on a vote is the appropriate course of action.
- E. Vick expressed that he would prefer to see the property rezoned to commercial before approving the sign. He asked whether the sign would be a rental sign, and Hagfors confirmed. Based on that, Vick reiterated that he would like the property to be rezoned first.
- F. Neumann mentioned that he frequently drives by the location. The area is fairly open, and it appears the sign would be set back from the road right-of-way. He does not believe there would be any visibility issues for vehicles. He feels the proposed location and distance from the residence are acceptable. He stated he would be willing to vote in favor, contingent upon Township approval.
- G. Vick emphasized wanting to see the property being zoned commercial, especially if the sign will be lit. Hagfors clarified that the sign would not be digital, the sign is set back, and the two LED lights would not impact the house, which is used as an office.
- H. Aarestad shared similar views to Neumann. He observed that the surrounding area is largely commercial, suggesting that rezoning is inevitable. He agreed that the location is suitable for a sign and expressed

support for the request. He stated he is comfortable voting in favor but is also willing to wait for the Township's input.

- I. Ogle stated that the Zoning Administrator recommends waiting for the Township's response before taking a formal vote. However, the final decision is up to the Board.
- J. Vick moved to continue the item to the October 10th meeting, at the applicants request. Motion seconded by Neumann.

DISCUSSION: Ogle asked if any Board members had concerns the applicant should address before the next meeting. Vick requested a note from the owner of PID ending un -153306 indicating their intent to rezone the property to commercial. Hagfors stated that this would not be a problem.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. **SHELLY GILBERTSON** – New

LOCATION: 7214, 7194, 7170 and xxxx Quinn Ave NW – WULLEIINDA LOT-001, LOT-002, LOT-003 and PRT OF LT 4, Section 29, Township 121, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (Southside Twp.) Tax #217-063-000010, 217-063-000020, 217-063-000030, 217-063-000041. Property Owner: KAY N WILSON & SHELLY GILBERTSON

REQUEST: Lot line adjustment as regulated in Section 155.026 of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to adjust the existing lot of record property boundaries.

Present: Kay Wilson and Shelly Gilbertson

- A. Ogle displayed the site plan and reviewed details of the request. The property is located off Quinn Ave NW in Southside Township. The properties involved are PID 217-063-000010 which is 0.35 acres, PID 217-063-000020 which is 0.35 acres, PID 217-063-000030 which is 0.46 acres, and PID 217-063-000041 which is 0.29 acres. The request is to adjust existing lot of record property boundaries as presented once the proposed road right-of-way is vacated. The request involves the Township vacating a portion of right-of-way and dispersing PID 217-063-000041 amongst PID 217-063-000010, -000020, and -000030. The result would be three riparian properties with ownership directly to Quinn Ave NW. The Township motioned to move forward with the process which included vacating a portion of right-of-way noting that any approval would be contingent on the County approval of the Lot Line Adjustment. No written responses from the public were received.
- B. No comments from the applicants or public.
- C. Neumann feels the plan is straight forward and benefits both agreeing owners. He does not see a reason why the Township would need to retain the right-of-way. This is a good plan and will give all property owners more space. He supports the request.
- D. Vick agreed with member Neumann. Questioned if there is access for the center property with Wilson, using Beacon to explain location of an existing driveway. She went on to explain that this change will actually improve confusion when it comes which house is which. Vick likes a request when neighbors can agree, and a problem is addressed.
- E. Aarestad feels it is a well thought out plan and sees no concerns with the request.
- F. Neumann moved to approve the request to adjust existing lot of record property boundaries as presented once the proposed road right-of-way is vacated Conditioned on the following: 1) Subject to survey; 2) Subject to Administrative Order; 3) Township must vacate the portion of right-of-way designated in this request. Concept plan noted Exhibit A. Motion seconded by Vick.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. **JACK PEARSON** – Cont. 8/29

LOCATION: 11595 Clementa Ave SW – N1/2 OF SE1/4 , Section 34, Township 118, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Woodland Twp.) Tax #220-000-344100. Property Owner: JACK PEARSON & COLEEN PEARSON

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026, 155.003(B)(1), 155.048(G), and 155.090(B)(12) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to allow an entitlement division that may exceed the maximum accessory building area, maximum total acreage, and maximum acreage of prime soils. It would also be unable to support two Type I septic sites.

Present: Present: Todd Bartels (employed by Pearson)

- A. Ogle displayed the property details and updated the proposed site plan as he reviewed the request. The original request was to allow a 2.49-acre entitlement division that would include an existing 60 ft. x 80 ft. (4,800 sq. ft.) agricultural building, with two Type III or Type IV septic system locations. The request was continued from the August 29, 2025, meeting so an updated plan could be discussed. The updated request is to allow for a 10.0-acre entitlement division that would exceed 2.5 acres of prime soil and support two Type III or Type IV septic system locations. A variance is needed to exceed 2.5 acres of prime soils, as the entire property is classified as prime. A variance is also needed due to the inability to support two Type I septic system locations. The Township approves of the updated 10.0-acre plan. A public comment submitted was in favor of the request, as the commenter would be purchasing the remaining tillable acreage if the proposed division were to be approved.
- B. Bartels stated that they attended the Township meeting, and it was a unanimous vote approving the request.
- C. No comments from the public.
- D. Vick stated that he likes the 10-acre parcel and the building, confirming that he approves of the updated 10 acre plan.
- E. Neumann stated he is not in favor of the revised proposal and prefers the original plan. He feels that 10 acres is too small to farm and too large to mow and went on to note it is a common issue throughout the county, where larger parcels are not maintained. He expressed concern that this request would remove prime farmland and stated his preference to keep the land as a whole 44-acre parcel or reduce it to the originally proposed 2.5 acres. He will not support the 10-acre plan.
- F. Aarestad stated that the Board had a good discussion and noted that the 10-acre option was requested by some members. He is in favor of the updated proposal.
- G. Vick moved to approve the request to allow for a 10.0 acre entitlement division that would exceed 2.5 acres of prime soil and can support two Type III or Type IV septic system locations **CONDITIONED** if the 60 ft. x 80 ft. agricultural building is used for personal storage it would need to be permitted as such. Concept plan noted Exhibit A and septic information noted Exhibit B. Motion seconded by Aarestad.

DISCUSSION: Neumann reiterated that this Board has denied many similar requests that exceeded 2.5 acres in the past, and he feels this request should also be denied. Vick explained that the fact the building conforms is important to him, and that the tillable acreage can still be rented. These are the reasons he supports the 10-acre plan. Aarestad added that the size of the building influenced his decision to support the 10-acre proposal.

MOTION CARRIED

VOTE: Vick & Aarestad NAY: Neumann

5. **AUSTIN HARWOOD** – Continued from 8/29/2025

LOCATION: 3516 County Road 30 SW – PRT OF SW1/4OF SE1/4&PRT OF SE1/4OF SW 1/4, Section 16, Township 118, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Woodland Twp.) Tax #220-000-164301. Property Owner: AUSTIN C HARWOOD

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026 and 155.048(F)(2) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to construct a new storage building that would be within the road setback.

Present: Austin Harwood

- A. Ogle displayed the proposed site plan and reviewed the request. The property is located at 3516 County Road 30 SW in Woodland Township. It is 2.42 acres in size and zoned General Agriculture (AG). The request is to construct a new storage building 90 ft. from the centerline of County Road 30 SW. This request was continued from the August 29th meeting so the applicant could speak with the Township again, per their request. The Township has approved the request, and the Wright County Highway Department agrees to the 90 ft. setback from the centerline. A variance is required because the standard setback from a County Road is 130 ft.
- B. Harwood explained that the reason for the proposed location is due to the existing mound system and absorption area. His excavator, who also installs septic systems, indicated that if the 130 ft. setback were followed, the building would be right up against the absorption area, which would not be advisable. Harwood spoke with the Highway Department, and they indicated they would approve a building at 90 ft.
- C. No comments from the public.
- D. Neumann initially questioned why the 130 ft. setback could not be met. This was explained. He noted that moving the building to meet the 130 ft. requirement would place it 40 ft. further back than currently proposed. He asked how close the building would be to the septic system at that distance. Harwood stated that at 130 ft., the building would be approximately 8 ft. from the absorption area. He also noted that when he spoke with Adam at the Highway Department, Adam suggested a 90 ft. setback so the existing driveway could connect directly to the building. It was pointed out that a neighboring property has a building located 75 ft. from the centerline and the 90 ft. setback was determined through discussions with Highway staff. Neumann asked whether a new driveway would be created. Harwood used a Beacon aerial map to explain the existing tarred area where the new building is proposed. Neumann asked if moving the building east to avoid the septic system was an option. Harwood responded that doing so would require installing a large driveway and would bring the building closer to the east property line and the mound system.
- E. Vick expressed concerns similar to Neumann's. He questioned why the new building couldn't be located where the existing shed is, since it will be removed. Harwood explained that the septic tanks are located in that area. He had the excavator assess possible locations on-site, which led to the idea of moving the building closer to the highway. Vick expressed concern that approving the 90 ft. setback might set a precedent. Harwood acknowledged the concern but stated that the location of the mound system on a long and narrow property limits his options. Vick believed there were still opportunities to meet the 130 ft. setback by either relocating or rotating the building. The two continued to discuss possible alternatives, with Vick remaining firm in his position that meeting the 130 ft. requirement was feasible.
- F. Aarestad stated that he is comfortable with the proposed plan. The Township and Highway Department have both approved it, and the Board has approved similar or even closer setbacks in the past. He felt the plan fits well within the rural character of the neighborhood.

G. Ogle displayed the 2001 septic design and provided further review. He stated that staff evaluated the request and determined that a 10 ft. distance from the absorption area could potentially be achieved. However, if the building were located at 130 ft., he was not confident the required setbacks could be maintained, noting it would be very close. Vick reiterated that he would prefer not to grant a variance, believing it would benefit the applicant in the long run. Harwood stated that the excavator, who installs mound systems, advised against placing the building just 8 ft. from the absorption area, citing concerns over the volume of water runoff so close to the system.

H. Neumann moved to approve the request to construct a new storage building 90 ft. from the centerline of County Road 30 SW. Site plan noted Exhibit A and building plans noted Exhibit B. Motion seconded by Aarestad.

DISCUSSION: Vick questioned whether a condition should be added requiring removal of existing buildings. Ogle stated that such a condition could be added to ensure their removal, but an addendum would likely be required, stating that the existing accessory buildings must be removed within 60 days of final inspection approval of the new building. Harwood agreed. Vick suggested 90 days, but Ogle responded that 60 days is the typical requirement.

Neumann amended his motion, with Aarestad agreeing, to include the condition that the existing accessory buildings must be removed within 60 days of the new building receiving final inspection approval.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. **ROB JOHNSON** – Cont. 8/29/2025

LOCATION: xxxx & 13512 53rd St NW & 5372 NORTON AVE NW, – parts of the NW1/4 OF SE1/4 & NE1/4 OF SW1/4, Section 02, Township 120, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (French Lake Twp.) Tax #209-000-023101, 209-000-023102, 209-000-023100. Property Owner: ZACHARY RAYNOLD JOHNSON & JADE SCHRUPP & JOSHUA J ROSTEN & HEATHER OLSON

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026 & 155.048(G) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to allow the expansion of an existing entitlement division over the 10.0 acre maximum.

Present: Josh Rosten and Steve Bruggeman with Oak Realty

- A. Ogle displayed the proposed site plan as he reviewed the request. The request is located in French Lake Township. The original request included three parcels which were PID 209-000-023100, PID 209-000-023102, and PID 209-000-023101. The original request was to increase the size of PID 209-000-023100 from 10.0 acres to approximately 28 acres, and to increase the size of PID 209-000-023102 from 5.0 acres to approximately 10 acres. As a result, the remaining portion of PID 209-000-023101 would be approximately 40.5 acres. A day before the August 29th, 2025 meeting, the applicant submitted an updated plan which would only include two parcels, PID 209-000-023100 and PID 209-000-023101. The updated request is to increase the size of PID 209-000-023100 from 10.0 acres to approximately 17 acres which would leave PID 209-000-023101 with approximately 56.9 acres. Because PID 209-000-023100 is already at the 10.0 acre maximum for an entitlement division, any increase in size would require a variance. The Township is OK with the proposed request and no written responses from the public were received. That wraps up my overview.
- B. No comments were made by the applicant or members of the public.
- C. Vick inquired about what appears to be an access strip to the east. Rosten explained that there is an existing fence line that the current owner wants to continue maintaining and to keep brush-free. Vick asked about the purpose of the request. Rosten stated that he intends to use the area as grassland for running animals and possibly for hay production. Vick expressed a preference for a straight eastern property boundary rather than one with a jog.
- D. Neumann raised a concern that the added acreage might put the property over the 2.5-acre threshold of prime farmland. Ogle clarified that the additional land does not contain any prime soils. Neumann questioned why the applicant can't just rent the additional land. Rosten stated the land is currently tilled. Neumann responded that this use could easily change over time. He asked whether removing the jog and running the east property line straight would result in PID 209-000-023101 becoming landlocked. Ogle reviewed the Beacon aerial imagery and confirmed that 53rd Street access would still be available, so the parcel would not be landlocked. Neumann stated he is struggling to identify a hardship justifying the request, viewing the reasoning more as a "want" than a "need." Rosten explained that the additional land would be ideal for his planned animal operation and hay field. Neumann replied that, in his opinion, this represents a self-created hardship, and that feed can be purchased. He added that the existing 10-acre parcel has enough space for manure management, so additional land is not necessary.
- E. Aarestad also expressed difficulty identifying a hardship. While initially opposed to the request, he noted that the Land Use Plan supports agricultural use. Though small in scale, the applicant is seeking to expand his farming operation, and since the land would remain in agricultural use with the type of use to change. If the variance to exceed 10 acres is granted, Aarestad stated he would want to see a limitation placed on the number of Animal Units allowed.

- F. Vick returned to the issue of the access strip, asking for thoughts. Aarestad agreed that the boundary line should be cleaned up and straightened. Vick stated he would support the request only if the number of Animal Units is limited to the current amount. Ogle informed the board that he had contacted the Feedlot Administrator (via Microsoft Teams) to attend the meeting but had not yet received a response. He said he is unsure what the existing limits are and would like the Feedlot Administrator's input. He asked the Board if Animal Units were the primary concern, and Vick confirmed they were. Ogle suggested continuing the item to the end of the meeting to allow time for the Feedlot Administrator to attend.
- G. Vick moved to hold the item over to the end of the meeting to allow time for the Feedlot Administrator to be in attendance. Motion seconded by Neumann.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. **CAROLYN SNABB-HERRBOLDT** – New

LOCATION: 4706 REDWOOD AVE NW – SNABB'S BEACH LOT-005 & SNABB'S BEACH 2ND ADDN LOT-003, Section 07, Township 120, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (French Lake Twp.) Tax #209-026-000050, 209-028-000030. Property Owner: DONOVAN M HERRBOLDT & DANIEL A HERRBOLDT JR

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026, 155.006, and 155.049(F) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to construct an addition to the existing home that extends into the road setback and exceeds the maximum allowed impervious surface. Currently, the home and deck are already located within the shoreland, road, and side yard setbacks.

Present: Carolyn Snabb-Herrboldt and Dan Herrboldt

- A. Ogle displayed the proposed site plan and building plans as he reviewed the request. The property is 0.22 acres, zoned Urban/Rural Transition (R-1), and located on Moose Lake which is classified as Recreational Development (RD). The request is to construct a 16 ft. x 16 ft. addition to the existing home that would be 45.2 ft. from the centerline of Redwood Ave NW and the property would have a total impervious surface coverage of 25.2%. A variance is required to construct an addition to the existing home that further encroaches the 65 ft. road setback and when the property exceeds 25% impervious surface coverage. A variance is also required when an addition is added onto a home and deck that is already located within the 100 ft. shoreland, 65 ft. road, and 15 ft. side yard setbacks. Ogle stated he had spoken with the surveyor regarding the parcel area, and that the Ordinary High Water (OHW) elevation had been marked slightly higher than the true elevation due to current lake levels. As a result, the exact parcel size is uncertain but may be slightly larger, which could reduce the impervious surface percentage. While an exact figure wasn't available, he wanted the Board to be aware of the situation. The Township approves of the request, and no written responses were received.
- B. C. Snabb-Herrboldt shared the family history of the property and the surrounding area, noting that her family has been longtime residents. The home was built in 1962 for a small family of three, who routinely gathered for family dinners around a small table. She expressed her desire to maintain that tradition. She explained that the family has now grown to 10 members and that, unless they can sit outside, it is no longer possible for everyone to eat together inside the home. She emphasized that the addition is important to her family and asked the Board to consider the request.
- C. No public comments.
- D. Neumann stated that the request is reasonable in size. However, he noted that the 45 ft. setback from the centerline of the road is a concern, especially since only 12 ft. would remain outside the right-of-way. He expressed concern that if the township upgrades the road, large equipment would be just 12 ft. from the home. Regarding impervious surface coverage, Neumann acknowledged that the 25.2% may depend on fluctuating lake levels and is only slightly above the 25% limit. He stated he was willing to approve the minor overage due to the lake level variability. His primary concern remained the reduced road setback, and he asked how many homes are on the road. C. Snabb-Herrboldt responded that there are four homes. Neumann acknowledged this and noted that with so few homes, the likelihood of the township upgrading the road is relatively small. Although not a fan of the side yard setback, he recognized that it cannot be changed.
- E. Vick questioned the building plans, which show a concrete slab within the right-of-way. He expressed a preference to see impervious coverage reduced to the 25% limit. Ogle clarified that anything within the right-of-way is not included in impervious surface calculations. Only surfaces within the property

boundaries are considered. Ogle added that a portion of the driveway is being removed, with only a small part within the property boundary. He also asked the applicant whether the plan accounted for access to the addition, such as a landing or steps, which could increase impervious coverage. The proposed addition shows an entryway which would likely need a landing and then any walkway from that to the parking area could further increase the total impervious. C. Snabb-Herrboldt responded that they had considered this and can use a side door for access if necessary. She emphasized that the addition is more important for their family gatherings. Vick stated he would prefer to see the lake level certified, and the impervious coverage reduced to 25%.

- F. Aarestad stated that he shares Neumann's concerns, particularly regarding the 12 ft. road setback. However, since the Township supports the request and there are only a few homes on the road, he is comfortable with the proposal. He stated that, although he typically treats the 25% impervious surface limit as a hard line, in this case, due to the modest size of the addition, the small size of the home, and the lake level fluctuations he believes the request is reasonable and is willing to support it.
- G. Neumann asked whether pavers or other impervious surfaces near the lake could be removed to bring the coverage down to 25% if a motion were made. D. Herrboldt responded that the landscaping work had been completed just two years ago. Aarestad inquired whether retaining walls are counted as impervious surfaces. Ogle confirmed that they are included in the figures. Aarestad stated that he does not believe the walls should be removed and acknowledged that their inclusion in the impervious total is different from patios or pavers. He noted that this is a unique case, which is why the Board is considering an exception to the 25% rule. Ogle stated that the overage of 0.2% amounts to roughly 19–20 sq. ft. Vick noted that, due to lake level fluctuations and the fact that cement is being removed elsewhere, he could support the request. Neumann asked for the existing square footage, and D. Herrboldt responded that it is approximately 832 sq. ft.
- H. Vick moved to approve the request to construct a 16 ft. x 16 ft. addition to the existing home that would be 45.2 ft. from the centerline of Redwood Ave NW CONDITIONED the impervious surface coverage is not to exceed 25.2%. Site plan noted Exhibit A and building plans noted Exhibit B. Motion seconded by Neumann.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. **ALLEN & CARLA SUNDBLAD** – New

LOCATION: 3665 PLEASON AVE NW – PARTS OF THE WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 16 AND OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 17, Section 16 & 17, Township 120, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (French Lake Twp.) Tax #209-000-162300, 209-000-171100. Property Owner: ALLEN L & CARLA L SUNDBLAD

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026 & 155.048(G) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to allow a “1 per 40” entitlement division that exceeds 2.5 acres of prime soils and exceeds the total size maximum of 10.0 acres.

Present: Steve Bruggeman with Oak Realty

- A. Ogle displayed the proposed plan as well as wetland map as he reviewed the request. The property is made up of two parcels that must remain owned in common, PID 209-000-162300 which is 42.27 acres and PID 209-000-171100 which is 10.55 acres. Both parcels are zoned General Agriculture. In 2023, PID 209-000-162301/209-000-171103 were allowed to be split off from PID 209-000-162300/209-000-171100 with one building entitlement leaving PID 209-000-162300/209-000-171100 with two entitlements. One of the entitlements is being used by the existing home. This request is to allow an entitlement division of approximately 20 acres including approximately 4.5 acres of prime soil. A variance is required for an entitlement division that exceeds 10.0 acres and/or exceeds 2.5 acres of prime soils. The Township approves of the request to divide off 20 acres with a building entitlement. No written responses from the public have been received. Ogle explained the wetland delineation map as well as area of incidental ditch that need to be crossed for the access point.
- B. Bruggeman explained that, to his understanding, at a previous meeting the Board had requested a wetland delineation, which has since been completed. Originally, Sundblad had intended to split the parcel into two 10-acre parcels. However, they discovered that the wetland runs parallel to the road and prevents access, making it more practical to sell the 20 acres as a single parcel. Ogle clarified that the previous meeting occurred in 2023. At that meeting, there was discussion about a possible division along the northern area. At the time, the Board indicated that additional information regarding potential wetlands was desired.
- C. No public comments.
- D. Vick questioned whether there were two entitlements for the parcel in question. Ogle explained that only one entitlement is available for use, while the other is tied to the existing home and therefore not available. Vick stated that he is not in favor of using prime land and exceeding the requested maximums for parcel size and prime soils.
- E. Neumann stated that he opposed the last split (2023) and continues to oppose this one. He views it as a financial move. If the intention were truly to build a home, a 2.5-acre split could be done administratively. If the applicant wants 20 acres for a hobby farm or similar purpose, they should purchase the entire 40 acres. Requesting a variance simply to facilitate a sale is a financial motive, which is not something this Board considers a valid justification.
- F. Aarestad expressed similar concerns and questioned what aligns best with the long-range plan, noting that preserving agricultural land is a key part of that plan. He stated the current request goes against that objective and appears to be solely for the purpose of creating a building site. He indicated he could not support the request. He then addressed the applicant with the options of proceeding with a vote, continuing the item for a full board, or withdrawing the request. Bruggeman indicated he would like to withdraw. Ogle explained the difference between a withdraw, continuation, and a vote. Bruggeman requested continuation.
- G. Vick moved to continue the item to the October 10, 2025 meeting. Motion was seconded by Aarestad.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. **JEFFREY GORMAN** – New

LOCATION: 5355 130TH ST NW, – 30.83 AC LOT 3 EXC 7 A TO LE HOCKEY, Section 31, Township 122, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Silver Creek Twp.) Tax #216-100-311200. Property Owner: DOUGLAS L & SHELLY M WATTERS

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026 and 155.057(E)(1) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to replace an existing storage building with a larger one that would be located within the shoreland building setback.

Present: Jeff Gorman

- A. Ogle displayed the property map and proposed site plan as he reviewed the request. The property is 30.83 acres; he went on to explain that the property has area that appears as wetland, but part is below the Ordinary High Water (OHW). The property is currently zoned General Agriculture (AG) and located on Limestone Lake which is classified as Recreational Development (RD). This request is to replace an existing 20 ft. x 41 ft. storage building with a new 36 ft. x 72 ft. storage building located 60 ft. from the ordinary high water of the lake. Ogle used the survey and Beacon aerial photo to provide more details related to the OHW line with what appears to be the wetland, which included area of approximate land meeting OHW setback requirements. A variance is required to replace an existing storage building with one that is larger in size and located within 100 ft. of a RD lake. The Township approves of the request as presented. No written responses from the public were received.
- B. Gorman stated that his plan is to maintain the same use as before. The shed is intended purely for the storage of vehicles and miscellaneous items. The property is heavily wooded, and there should be no noticeable impact or visibility of the shed.
- C. No comments were received from the public.
- D. Neumann asked if there will be fill added. Gorman stated no fill will be added. Neumann stated this property is very unique and on 30 acres there shouldn't be a problem with building a shed, but the topography plays a role. Due to uniqueness of the property this is a request he can support.
- E. Vick questioned how far from the lake the proposed building would be. Ogle asked for clarification, and Vick confirmed he was referring to the "lake proper." Ogle stated that the building would meet the setback from the "lake proper," but the survey indicated that it would not meet the OHW boundary line. He added that determining the exact OHW line can be difficult due to the nature of wetlands. Vick stated that he would like to see the building set back as far as possible from the drainfield. The applicant confirmed that the setback would be at least the required 20 ft., if not more. Vick also questioned what the hardship was, suggesting that it could be the presence of wetland.
- F. Aarestad feels the OHW is open for interpretation, but the building would be far enough away from the lake proper OHW line. He added that the building would not impact the view from the lake or other neighbors. He expressed support for the proposal as presented.
- G. Neumann moved to approve the request to replace an existing 20 ft. x 41 ft. storage building with a new 36 ft. x 72 ft. storage building located 60 ft. from the ordinary high-water of the lake. Site plan noted Exhibit A and building plans noted Exhibit B. Motion seconded by Vick.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Item carried over from earlier in the meeting

8. **ROB JOHNSON** – Cont. 8/29/2025

LOCATION: xxxx & 13512 53rd St NW & 5372 NORTON AVE NW, – parts of the NW1/4 OF SE1/4 & NE1/4 OF SW1/4, Section 02, Township 120, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (French Lake Twp.) Tax #209-000-023101, 209-000-023102, 209-000-023100. Property Owner: ZACHARY RAYNOLD JOHNSON & JADE SCHRUPP & JOSHUA J ROSTEN & HEATHER OLSON

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026 & 155.048(G) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to allow the expansion of an existing entitlement division over the 10.0 acre maximum.

Present: Josh Rosten and Steve Bruggeman with Oak Realty

- A. Janikula, Tracy – Feedlot Administrator stepped forward. Ogle provided Janikula with a brief description of the request and question from the Board on the Animal Units (AUs) if acreage is over 10 acres. Aarestad said the Board is possibly considering AU limits. Janikula explained that once over 10 acres, unless the Board places a restriction, they are not limited to the 0.5 animal unit per acre. It is up to the Board if they wanted to condition the 0.5 animal unit per acre restriction. She questioned where the pasture area would be located versus winter area or dirt lot. Ogle displayed the 500 ft. buffer area from the residence on -23102 and Janikula stated setbacks are not a concern if they want 10 or more animal units and they are not restricted. She noted there is a 100 ft. setback to property lines. It would be more of a matter if the AU's can be managed without impacting the small wetland. She felt 1 animal unit per acre would balance well on the proposed property. Rosten stated he was looking to add 2 steers to his existing animals and has no desire for a feedlot. Janikula stated at 10 AUs or more there is an automatic trigger to register every 4 years.
- B. Ogle brought up the proposed gap between property lines that was mentioned previously. Rosten stated they would be fine doing away with the gap and running the line straight. Vick stated he would like to see the line straight as well because you don't know if the next owner will continue to maintain the strip. He would like to see the 0.5 animal unit per acre limitation. Rosten stated he was okay with that limit.
- C. Neumann stated he would be okay with the 0.5 animal unit per acre limit. He prefers to see 40 acres or larger or very small parcels. The ones in-between might work for the applicant but when sold the next person might use the property in the same manner. It is a concern as he has seen too many larger parcels unkept. Vick stated limiting the AU's helps his decision and the additional land will help the applicant with his horses. Neumann feels that if there is a willing seller for 7 acres maybe there is a willing seller for more and can get to the 40 acres.
- D. Aarestad feels the intent of the long range plan is being kept with preserving agriculture land. Shares Neumann concerns but there are plenty of people who want property this size to continue farming. He can go along with the plan and willing to go with the 0.5 animal unit per acre.
- E. Vick moved to approve the request to increase the size of PID 209-000-023100 from 10.0 acres to approximately 17 acres, subject to discussion of running the property line down the shared boundary with 209-000-02310. CONDITIONED on the following: 1) Subject to survey; 2) Subject to Deed Restriction/Administrative Order; 3) 0.5 animal unit per acre maximum. Concept plan noted Exhibit A. Motion seconded by Aarestad.

MOTION CARRIED

VOTE: Vick & Aarestad NAY: Neumann

10. **TERRY & ROSEMARY SWANSON** – New

LOCATION: 5103 106TH ST SE – EAST RIVER 2ND ADDN LOT-003 BLOCK-002, Section 25, Township 118, Range 25, Wright County, Minnesota. (Franklin Twp.) Tax #208-212-002030. Property Owner: TERRY L SWANSON & ROSEMARY L SWANSON

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026 and 155.049(C)(5) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to construct a storage building on a property zoned Urban/Rural Transition (R-1). The proposed building would exceed the maximum allowed square footage for a single accessory structure on a lot between 20,000 and 80,000 sq. ft.

Present: Terry and Rosemary Swanson

- A. Ogle displayed proposed site plan and reviewed the request. The property is located at 5103 106th St. SE in Franklin Township, is 1.09 acres and zoned Urban/Rural Transition (R-1). The request is to construct a 2,400 sq. ft. storage building that exceeds the 1,400 sq. ft. maximum size for a single accessory structure on an R-1 zoned property that is between 20,000 sq. ft. but less than 80,000 sq. ft. A variance is required to construct a storage building that exceeds 1,400 sq. ft. on an R-1 zoned property that is between 20,000 and 80,000 sq. ft. The Township approves of the request as it fits with other residences in the area. Ogle noted that, prior to stepping to the podium, the applicant provided three (3) written comments in support of the request. These documents were read, handed to the Board members, and included in the request file.
- B. R. Swanson stated that the new building will allow them to clean up the yard. T. Swanson added that having a single building will look better than two separate ones and will allow for better management of water runoff. A single building is more ideal for this purpose. R. Swanson stated that all items currently in the yard will be stored inside the shed.
- C. No comments from the public.
- D. Vick stated he prefers the idea of a single building rather than two structures placed close together. He further stated that if the two existing buildings are removed and the yard is cleaned up, he would be in favor of the request. The hardship cited is that two buildings create more of a watershed concern. R. Swanson noted that their excavator has indicated he can direct water away from the house and commented that the neighbor's water already runs onto their property. Vick questioned whether a stormwater management plan is necessary. Ogle explained that if a variance were not required, no stormwater or grading plan would be needed. However, the ordinance includes language on land alterations, drainage, etc. which applies by default. If gutters or downspouts are installed, they must not redirect water onto neighboring land. Ogle mentioned that a condition addressing this could be added to the motion if the Board chooses. R. Swanson reiterated that their property sits at the low point in the area, with water naturally draining toward it.
- E. Neumann confirmed that a 14 ft. sidewall is planned for the building and asked whether there is a maximum sidewall height allowed. Ogle responded that the ordinance allows a maximum sidewall height of 14 ft., with an overall height not to exceed 35 ft. Neumann expressed his support for the request.
- F. Aarestad noted that the Township observed other similar sized buildings in the area and believes the proposed structure will fit in well. He expressed some concern about the 14 ft. height but stated that, since neither the neighbors nor the Township have objected, he is comfortable with the proposal.

G. Vick motioned to approve the request to construct a 2,400 sq. ft. storage building that exceeds the 1,400 sq. ft. maximum size for a single accessory structure on an Urban/Rural (R-1) zoned property that is between 20,000 and 80,000 sq. ft. CONDITIONED on the following: 1) Stormwater management plan at time of permit application showing run-off will not negatively affect neighbors. 2) No plumbing is allowed in the building. Site plan noted Exhibit A and building plans noted Exhibit B. Motion seconded by Neumann.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Meeting adjourned at 10:17 am.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Ogle', with a stylized, flowing script.

Aaron Ogle
Planning & Zoning Planner

AO: sld

CC: Board of Adjustment
Applicants/Owners
Twp. Clerks