

WRIGHT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting of: March 5, 2026

MINUTES

The Wright County Planning Commission met on Thursday, March 5, 2026, in the County Commissioners Board Room at the Wright County Government Center, Buffalo, Minnesota. Dan Mol, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with members present: Dan Bravinder, Charlie Borrell, Troy Beise and Pat Mahlberg. Absent was Jeanne Holland & Randy Wilson. Brian Wold, Assistant County Attorney, was the legal counsel and Scott Deckert, Planning & Zoning Assistant Administrator were present.

ACTION ON FEBRUARY 12, 2026, MINUTES

On a motion by Bravinder, seconded the Beise, all voted to adopt the minutes for the February 12, 2026 meeting as printed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. **LEONARD E LUEDKE** – Cont. 11/20, 12/18, 1/15 & 2/12

LOCATION: 11093 COUNTY ROAD 17 SE – THE NORTH 447.15 FEET OF THE EAST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 36, TOWNSHIP 118, RANGE 25, Wright County, Minnesota. (Franklin Twp.) Tax #208-200-362105. Property Owner: LEONARD E LUEDKE

Petitions to rezone from Agricultural/Residential (A/R) to Suburban Residential-a (R-2a), as regulated in Sections 155.028, 155.047 & 155.051, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: None

- A. Deckert noted the item had been discussed several times and at the last hearing, the Commission continued the item for Staff to draft findings consistent with denial. The findings had been presented to the Commission.
- B. Mahlberg moved to accept the Notice and Order for Denial of Application for Rezoning with Findings and forward the order and findings to the Wright County Board of Commissioners. Motion seconded by Beise.

DISCUSSION: Borrell noted that he was in favor of the rezoning request.

VOTE:

Aye: Mol, Mahlberg & Beise

Nay: Borrell & Bravinder

MOTION CARRIED 3 to 2

2. **KNIFE RIVER CORP. – NORTH CENTRAL** – Cont. 2/12

LOCATION: Portions of the SE & NE 1/4 west of the right of way of State Highway 25 in Section 5, and small parcel west of road right of way that is in Section 4, all in Township 120, Range 25, Wright County, Minnesota. (Buffalo Twp.) Tax #202-000-051102, -042200, -043200, -054101, -054401, -043300. Property Owners: WILLIAM J & CYNTHIA L HOLTHAUS

Petitions for an Interim Use Permit for an expansion of an existing mining operation in accord with the EAW prepared and approved in 2025 AND a renewal & conversion of the current 2021 Conditional Use Permit to an IUP, to include mining and stockpiling of aggregates, along with the stockpiling and crushing of recycled concrete and asphalt 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: Steff Basgaard and a Mason Gadacz with Knife River

- A. Deckert displayed various maps related to the request while reviewing the proposal details. He explained that the original approval was granted approximately 20 years ago, at which time an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) was completed. A renewal was approved in 2021 for a five-year term. The current request is to renew the permit and expand the mining area, with a new EAW completed within the past year.
- B. Basgaard indicated he had no additional comments.
- C. Public Comment
 - Joe Schroeder, with Woods Edge Apples, located across from the far southeastern corner of the proposed mining area, addressed the Commission. Schroeder stated his concern relates to screening and berms between his property and the mining area. He noted the applicant did not clearly define berm or screening details in the application and requested the Commission consider the screening and his site view when reviewing the request. Schroeder explained that, based on the proposal and existing topography, they would potentially be looking directly into the mining pit. He stated it would be difficult to determine the exact sightline from his location without proper equipment and analysis. Schroeder suggested setting the mining operation a few hundred feet back from the road, which he felt would help with the view and potentially reduce the need for a large berm. Mahlberg noted a sizeable berm would be required to block the view and questioned Schroeder whether the existing mining operation is currently visible from his home. Schroeder responded that the site is presently well screened by aggregate and topsoil piles as well as trees. Mahlberg noted that a controversial mining proposal near his home had recently come before the Commission and did not receive the same level of response or testimony. He acknowledged that it had been stated at those meetings that apple growing can be sensitive to environmental conditions. Schroeder stated that under certain conditions, such as excessive dust during the growing season, there could be impacts. He added that he had spoken with Luci Snowden of Knife River regarding general concerns, although no resolution was reached. Mahlberg stated he was glad to hear that dialogue between the parties had begun.
- D. Basgaard invited Mason Gadacz, Aggregate Supervisor for Knife River at this location, to the podium. Gadacz explained that the goal when constructing berms is generally to make them high enough to screen the operation from public view and that when berms are constructed along property lines, they attempt to use as much available topsoil as possible. He noted berms can sometimes reach heights of approximately 10–12 feet. Mol asked what was anticipated for the southern “finger” portion of the expansion area. Gadacz responded that the timeline for mining that portion of the site is currently uncertain. Mol asked about the height of the berm since Knife River had not provided a specified berm height or distance from the road. Gadacz explained that it is difficult to determine the appropriate height without knowing the amount of available topsoil on site. Mol stated that, based on the concerns raised by the neighboring property owner, he estimated an 18–20 foot berm might be necessary, though that may not be realistic. Gadacz

agreed, noting that on a parcel of that size an 18-foot berm would significantly reduce the area available for mining. Mol indicated he would like the berm height specified and asked whether an 8-foot berm would be reasonable. Basgaard stated he believed an 8-foot berm would be reasonable, and Gadacz agreed. Mol then asked whether the eastern boundary area would be reclaimed in the near future. Gadacz explained that reclaiming that area would remove existing berms that currently block visibility from the highway, which is not ideal. Borrell agreed that reclaiming the area at this time could create more of an eyesore.

- E. Borrell asked whether constructing the berm closer to the road (Cty Rd 113) would provide better visual screening than placing it farther back. Mol stated that, based on his understanding of the topography, setting the berm slightly back from the road may be more effective. Borrell commented that trees planted in the area could have time to grow and provide screening by the time mining reaches that portion of the site. Gadacz noted that trees planted on berms are typically difficult to maintain but also are removed during reclamation. Mol stated that at other locations berms have been required to include tree plantings, but in his opinion it may be more practical to increase the berm height slightly and plant native grasses or similar vegetation.
- F. Mol asked the Commission what type of setback they'd like to see along County Road 113, noting that the applicant proposed a 200-foot setback. Gadacz stated the proposal was likely a 200-foot setback from the road centerline. Mol indicated that the setback had been discussed at the past meeting but was not clearly indicated on the plans. He stated that a 200-foot setback from the centerline of the road would be acceptable. Bravinder and Borrell agreed with the 200-foot setback. Mahlberg noted that the "center of the road" and the "centerline of the road" can be interpreted differently and asked for clarification on which measurement should be used. He also asked whether the road centerline was the same as the centerline of the road right-of-way. Deckert used the Beacon aerial imagery and measuring tools to review the road right-of-way, centerline details and property lines. Discussion continued among the applicant and Commission members regarding whether the setback should be measured from the right-of-way, centerline, or property boundary. It was ultimately agreed that the existing southerly property boundary line would be used as the setback reference line in the approval motion. Additional discussion occurred regarding where the 200-foot setback would end within the mining area, and the Commission agreed that measuring to the edge of the pit was appropriate.
- G. Mahlberg noted the Commission had agreed to require an 8-foot berm along the southern boundary, specifically within the "finger" area, while the plans indicated 4-foot berms in other areas of the site. He asked whether the Commission was comfortable with that height or wished to discuss it further. Mol pointed out that at the prior meeting two neighbors to the west had voiced concerns and asked whether the Commission should consider requiring a 6-foot berm in those areas or had other ideas. Following discussion regarding screening along the western boundary, the Commission determined that due to topography and the proposed mining boundary the berm height would remain 4 feet throughout the site, except for the 8-foot berm required along the southeastern boundary bordering County Road 113. The Commission further determined that berms must be constructed once mining operations reach within 300 feet of the berm location shown on the plans. The Commission did not believe constructing berms well in advance of mining activity was beneficial or reasonable if the area may not be mined for many years.
- H. Mahlberg asked about the financial assurance amount included in the proposed motion prepared by staff. Deckert explained that the ordinance includes a formula for calculating financial assurance, although the Commission has the discretion to adjust the amount if they feel it is warranted. Borrell asked whether the proposed amount accounted for the entire area to be mined, even if portions may not be mined for many years. Deckert confirmed that the proposed amount covers the entire mining area. Mahlberg stated that because the applicant has the ability to mine any approved portion of the site at any time, he did not believe there was justification to deviate from the formula. Basgaard noted that he does not typically handle bonding requirements and was unsure of the financial burden associated with maintaining a nearly one-million-dollar bond. Mahlberg acknowledged the concern and noted that further discussion with other parties could occur if needed, though that could require continuing the matter. Basgaard stated he preferred to move forward rather than delay the request.

- I. Mahlberg confirmed that the Commission agreed to require 4-foot berms throughout the site, except for the 8-foot berm along the southern boundary bordering County Road 113. Borrell confirmed agreement.
- J. Mahlberg moved to approve the conversion of the existing Conditional Use Permit, file number PR20210000206, to an Interim Use Permit (IUP) for the mining of aggregate materials, including stockpiling and crushing of recycled concrete and asphalt, and to include the expansion as outlined in the plans submitted with the application, with the following conditions: 1) All requirements of MnDot for access to State Hwy 25 must be met at all times, and this shall be the only access to the operation; 2) Berms as shown on the plan must be at least 4' in height and must be built once mining gets to within 300 feet of the berm location shown on the plan, with the exception of the southerly boundary of the property; 3) The access to Co Rd 113 or 60th St. must not be used for mining purposes; 4) The elevation of the depth of the mine shall be no deeper than 960' elevation; 5) The permit shall be reviewed by the Township every 3 years for compliance and to determine if any new conditions are necessary; 6) The applicant shall provide a financial guarantee of \$985,000 for the purpose of assuring that restoration of the land takes places as shown on the reclamation map; 7) The outer limits of the mining area shall be not less than 200 feet from the southerly property boundary as measured from the existing southern property boundary and the berm on the southernmost side of the pit shall be not less than 8 feet tall; 8) All other requirements of the Wright County Code of ordinances shall be met. This IUP and its conditions shall replace all previous approvals; 9) This IUP shall expire March 5, 2036, or upon termination of any lease agreement, or change in business operations or ownership. Motion seconded by Borrell.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. **KNIFE RIVER CORP. – NORTH CENTRAL** – Cont. 2/12

LOCATION: 4301 County Road 39 NW – S ½ of NW ¼ of SE ¼ and S ½ of NE ¼ of SE ¼ and S ½ of SE ¼ and N ½ of NW ¼ of SE ¼, except tract described in Book 321 of Deeds, page 439, at the Office of the Wright County Recorder; all Section 8, Township 121, Range 26, Wright County, (Silver Creek Twp.) Tax #216-000 084300 Property Owner: FAY A NAAKTGEBOREN REVTR & CLARK & LOY JAEGER TR

Petitions for an IUP to allow the operation of a seasonal asphalt plant for the 2026-2027 seasons, with associated truck hauling, storage/stockpiling of recycled materials and mining/processing/washing. Hours of operation requested to be Monday - Saturday 7am - 7pm with 6:30am generator warm up, as regulated in Section 155.031, 155.048(D) & 155.100 of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Steff Basgaard with Knife River

- A. Deckert displayed the property details as well as the proposed site plan as he reviewed the request. The item was previously on the agenda on February 12th; however, the applicant had not yet met with the township, and the item was continued. The request has since been approved by the Township. The request before the Commission tonight is for the renewal of the hot mix plant for the 2026–2027 construction season. Deckert noted that everything associated with this request is the same as the previous approval, and the Commission should be very familiar with the operation and site.
- B. Basgaard stated that concerns raised at a previous meeting included the need to ensure trucks are cleaned before leaving the site and concerns related to odor. He explained that a chemical additive had been introduced to reduce odor. Basgaard also stated that the issue of trucks being cleaned before leaving the site had been addressed.
- C. No public comments were received.
- D. Mahlberg questioned whether the efforts to address the odor were going above and beyond what is required for compliance. Basgaard confirmed that this was the case and stated that there are no direct regulations specifically related to odor. The plan is to continue minimizing and reducing odor by determining which chemical additive works best for the situation. Deckert noted that the mining ordinance requires all hot mix plants to utilize odor control technology or additives to reduce odors emitted from hot mix plants. Borrell questioned whether the proposed condition addressing the restriction of loud trucks was already covered in the mining ordinance. Deckert confirmed that there are requirements within the ordinance and often times things might be reiterated in proposed motions for clarification and clear documentation.
- E. Mol noted that over the years there has been considerable discussion regarding previous permits, along with several site inspections. He stated that he feels Knife River has worked cooperatively with the Commission, addressed concerns when they have been raised, and made efforts to comply with County rules and Commission conditions.
- F. Bravinder moved to approve an Interim Use Permit for the temporary placement of a bituminous plant for the 2026-2027 construction seasons, according to the applicant's site plan and descriptions and with the following conditions:
 - 1) Operation of the plant shall be limited to five working days in a calendar week, no plant operations on Sundays or legal Holidays, weeks with weekday holidays shall be four day work weeks, and no more than a total of five Saturdays over the course of the season for plant operations and plant operation is not allowed on the following

Saturdays, May 24th, July 4th & September 5th; 2) All adequate measures must be taken to restrict loud trucks from operating without mufflers and other required sound equipment; 3) The plant must be kept in proper working condition and meet all State and Federal regulations; 4) Operation of the wash plant to comply with all applicable State Regulations; 5) Generator may start no earlier than 6:30 a.m. to warm up the plant with no trucks leaving the pit before 7:00 a.m.; 5) All other standards of Chapter 155.100 of the Wright County Code of Ordinances be met; 6) This IUP shall expire December 31, 2027, or upon transfer, termination of any lease agreement, or change in business operations or ownership. Motion seconded by Mahlberg.

DISCUSSION: Basgaard questioned whether the motion stating five days per week conflicted with the application, which noted six days per week. Mol explained that the motion specifies five days per week along with up to five Saturdays, which is consistent with how past permits have been approved. Basgaard confirmed that he understood.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. **ESMERALDA HUERTA** – NEW

LOCATION: 12986 COUNTY ROAD 8 NW - PARTS OF LOT B OF THE SW 1/4 OF THE SW 1/4 OF SECTION 28 AND OF LOT D OF THE NW 1/4 along with THOSE PARTS OF LOT D OF THE NW 1/4 OF THE NW 1/4 OF SECTION 33, AND OF LOT B OF THE SW 1/4, Township 122, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Silver Creek Twp.) Tax #216-100-332201, 216-283306, -332206, & -283301. Property Owner: ESMERALDA YUSURI HUERTA TAPIA

Petitions for an Interim Use Permit (IUP) for a personal four-dog kennel used to protect and herd sheep on a farm, as regulated in Sections 155.003, 155.031, 155.048, & 155.057, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Esmeralda Huerta

- A. Deckert displayed the property details along with the site plan while reviewing the request. The property is located on County Road 8 and is comprised of four tax parcels, with the request being for an Interim Use Permit (IUP) to allow for a personal kennel consisting of four dogs that will be kept on the property for the purpose of herding and protecting livestock. The ordinance states that four dogs or more requires an IUP, regardless of their use.
- B. Huerta explained she has three Great Pyrenees and one Border Collie that she uses to herd and protect her livestock. She noted that she has all veterinary records and a letter from the veterinarian regarding the dogs' behavior. Huerta stated that the dogs are kept in an enclosed area when outside, with both a treated wood privacy fence and a galvanized wire fence. She acknowledged that there can be noise concerns related to dogs barking and explained that she keeps the two youngest and noisiest dogs in the barn during the evening. She has also installed a metal sheet along a section of the fence to help reduce noise for neighboring properties. She further noted there are outdoor cameras that notify her of movement and sound, allowing her to monitor the property and the dogs.
- C. No public comments were received.
- D. Mol questioned when the dogs were acquired. Huerta explained that the initial dog was obtained in August 2024 when she moved to the property, with another dog obtained shortly thereafter. The final two dogs were acquired after an incident involving a coyote. Mol noted that no one was present at the meeting to complain about barking or noise. In previous kennel situations, neighbors had attended meetings to raise concerns; however, in this case, that is not the case, and the Township had approved the request.
- E. Bravinder noted there was a comment from the Township indicating they would like to review the permit in one year, or sooner if a neighbor concern arises. He questioned the meaning behind this comment. Huerta stated that the neighbor to the south had previously expressed concerns regarding barking dogs.
- F. Mahlberg moved to approve an interim use permit for a personal kennel in accord with the narrative and plans held on file with the following conditions: 1) There are no more than 4 adult dogs on site at any given time; 2) The dogs are kept in the fenced area noted on the plan or otherwise properly supervised; 3) Township to review in one year, or sooner if issues arise, with subsequent reviews at an interval established by the Township; 4) This IUP shall expire upon transfer, termination of any lease agreement, or the number of dogs is reduced for more than 1 year. Motion seconded by Borrell.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. **RANDY REINERT** – NEW

LOCATION: 3531 Cty Road 3 NW – PART OF THE SE 1/4 OF THE NW 1/4 AND THE W 30 ACRES OF THE NE 1/4 OF THE SW 1/4 ALONG WITH PART OF THE N 1/2 OF THE NW 1/4 OF THE SW 1/4 ALSO WITH E 20 RDS OF N 48 RDS OF NE1/4 OF SW1/4 IN Section 15, Township 120, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (French Lake Twp.)
Tax #209-000-152400 & 209-000-153103 & 209-000-152400. Property Owner: R2T2 Properties LLC

Petitions to amend an existing Interim Use Permit to include a 50' x 80' commercial building to an 8-acre outdoor storage space that includes a laydown yard, shipping containers, semi-trailers, for the purpose of storing cooling towers from commercial buildings and other like electrical equipment, as regulated in Sections 155.031 & 155.055, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Randy Reinert with R2T2 Properties LLC

- A. Deckert displayed the site plan and reviewed the request. The applicant was previously approved for an 8-acre outdoor storage area Interim Use Permit (IUP) in October 2025. This request is to amend that IUP to include the construction of a 50' x 80' commercial building that will include a restroom on a holding tank and be used for the storage of equipment associated with the operations previously approved. Deckert noted the Township approved the request.
- B. No comments were received from Reinert or the public.
- C. Bravinder stated he drives by the location once a week and feels the building would be an improvement to the site. Reinert noted the existing berm will remain and additional vegetation will be added, as referenced in the initial approval.
- D. Mol noted he also drives by the location and feels the building will fit in with what is already occurring at the site. Overall, he stated the building will be an improvement to the property.
- E. Mahlberg questioned whether there are conditions from the initial IUP that need to be restated with this amendment. Deckert reviewed the October approval motion and confirmed that all proposed conditions in the staff report address the conditions from the original approval.
- F. Bravinder moved to approve amending an existing Interim Use Permit to add a 50' x 80' commercial building to an 8-acre outdoor storage space that includes a laydown yard, shipping containers, semi-trailers, for the purpose of storing cooling towers from commercial buildings and other like electrical equipment, based on the plans, narrative, and the discussion at this hearing, with the following conditions: 1) Shrub-like vegetation on the south berm, along County Road 37, must be established and maintained; 2) The use is limited to the area defined in the submittal; 3) Any additional lighting must be directed downward and toward the interior of the property, away from neighboring residences, and pose no impact to traffic on County Road 3 or 37; 4) Dismantling of equipment associated with this use is prohibited on-site, including within the building; 5) Township review shall be combined with the 2025 IUP approval and be conducted in October 2026, with subsequent reviews at an interval established by the Township; 6) This permit shall immediately and automatically expire upon transfer, termination of any lease agreement, or change in business operations or ownership. Motion seconded by Borrell.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. **G&M OUTDOOR SERVICES LLC.** – New

LOCATION: 2890 DONNELLY DR NW - PRT OF GOV LT2 in Section 03, Township 120, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Maple Lake Twp.) Tax #210-000-032203. Property Owners: TIMOTHY DANIEL BOMGREN & LINDSEY MARIE BOMGREN

Petitions for a Conditional Use Permit for a land alteration to exceed 50 cubic yards of cut/fill within a shore impact zone for a 7'x40' (bottom tier) and 3'x40' (top tier) boulder wall to replace the existing retaining walls for a safer slope for lake access, with a 16'x32' sand blanket between the existing rip rap and bottom wall. Total amount of earth and boulders to be about 86 cubic yards.

Present: None

- A. Deckert let the Commission know that the applicant requested the item be continued to the March 26th meeting to allow time to meet with the Township.
- B. Borrell moved to continue the meeting to March 26th with Mahlberg seconding.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott Deckert
Planning & Zoning Assistant Administrator
SD:sld
cc: Planning Commission, Twp. Clerks