

WRIGHT COUNTY BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Meeting of: March 13, 2026

MINUTES

The Wright County Board of Adjustment met on Friday, March 13, 2026 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 Dan Mol, Bob Neumann, Dan Vick & Bruce Maue. Representing the Planning & Zoning Office was Aaron Ogle, Planner. Brian Wold, Assistant County Attorney, legal counsel, was also present.

ACTION ON MINUTES FOR THE FEBURARY 6, 2026 MEETING

Maue noted a correction to the second motion for Item #3 (Horsch). He had voted in approval of the motion, but the minutes stated that he voted nay. On a motion by Vick, seconded by Mol, the minutes for February 6, with the noted correction, were unanimously approved.

1. JOSEPH DESMARAIS – New

LOCATION: xxxx 40TH ST SW – N1/2 OF NE1/4 OF NE1/4 of SECTION 27, TOWNSHIP 119, RANGE 26, WRIGHT COUNTY, MINNESOTA (Marysville Twp.) Tax # 211-000-271100. Property Owners: JOSEPH M DESMARAIS

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 for an entitlement division from a lot of record that exceeds the 5.0 acre maximum size.

A. Ogle noted the applicant was in the audience and noted the public hearing portion had been closed. The request was continued from the February 6th meeting so that staff could prepare findings consistent with the Board's discussion and direction to draft an order consistent with a denial.

B. Mol moved to accept the findings for denial with Maue seconding the motion.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The findings were signed by the Chairman and presented to the applicant, who was seated in the audience.

2. **CAP CUSTOM HOMES** – Continued from 12/5/2025 & 1/9/2026 & 2/6/2026

LOCATION: 6356 PILGER AVE NW – COATES P BULL ADDN LOT-020, Section 33, Township 121, Range 28, Wright County, MN (Southside Twp.) Tax # 217-022-000200. Property Owners: LANSE C & LIVIA D LANG

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026 & 155.049(F) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to construct a new home and water-oriented accessory structure that would be located within the road setback.

Present: Bernie Miller of MSTs & Al Evavold with CAP Custom Homes

- A. Ogle stated the request was most recently continued from the February 6th meeting for possible revisions. The updated request is to construct a new home 42 ft. from the centerline of Pilger Ave NW and a water-oriented accessory structure 33 ft. from the centerline of Pilger Ave NW. A variance is required to construct a new home or water-oriented accessory structure within the 65 ft. road setback. The Township recommended approval of their original request, which was for the home to be 26.9 ft. and the water-oriented accessory structure to be 33 ft. from the centerline of the road at their closest point. No other written responses from the public have been received. The document camera was used to display the updated site plan.
- B. Evavold stated a tree survey had been completed, and the plans were modified so the closest point of the home is now 42 ft. from the road centerline. The internal home layout remains largely unchanged, and the boathouse location remains the same as previously proposed.
- C. Miller addressed questions regarding the uniqueness of the property and whether the circumstances were created by the owner. He explained the development was established prior to zoning regulations. Lots in the area average 30,000 sq. ft., with approximately 15,000 sq. ft. of buildable area, and average 90 ft. in width and 330 ft. in depth. He stated this lot is unique due to road frontage on two sides and a reduced buildable area of 5,563 sq. ft., significantly smaller than neighboring lots. Because of the road along one side, the effective building width is approximately 30 ft., compared to roughly 90 ft. for surrounding properties. Miller also discussed the character of the locality, noting it may be viewed from both the lake and the road. He felt the home would have minimal visibility from the lake due to its location within a bay. From the road perspective, he noted the road is a dead end serving peninsula residents and the proposed home would not be out of character with existing area.
- D. Evavold stated the proposal would eliminate existing nonconformities and improve the property. He referenced the tree analysis, noting 792 inches of tree on site, with 76 inches proposed for removal, and explained plans for directional boring of the sewer line while working with a local arborist.
- E. No public comments.
- F. Mol acknowledged the uniqueness of the property that had been pointed out and that there is likely a need for some type of variance, but he stressed that from the very beginning, and pointed out even the prior minutes call it out, the Board asked to see the home setback 45–50 ft. from the road. He noted there are two road variances nearby, with one at 42.8 ft. and the other at 50 ft. Mol noted that he does not design homes and went on to point out areas he felt could be adjusted in the building plan that would allow for the home to be moved 3 ft. further back, placing it at the 45 ft. mark, which is what was asked for in the last three meetings. He noted the existing home is 50 ft., so it can be done. He reiterated that he feels there is room to redesign the home and get the road setback to 45 ft., and that is where he would like to see the home. Evavold explained some of the reasons why the house is designed the way it is, with Mol responding that other members are asking for more. He understands the need for a variance but does not want to see anything less than 45 ft.

- G. Vick acknowledged Mol's concerns but noted the road has shifted from its original alignment, which may justify some flexibility. After visiting the site, he stated he no longer had safety concerns and supported the proposal, noting the home would be further from the lake.
- H. Maue stated the applicant had worked around several site constraints but questioned whether the proposed home size was appropriate for the lot and agreed with Mol's comments.
- I. Neumann noted the applicant had previously asked the Board what setback would be acceptable and the response was 45–50 ft. from the road centerline. He went on to note his relative lives next door with a 70 ft. wide property and meets all setbacks. He stated the Board had repeatedly asked the applicant to consider reducing the home size to achieve this setback and did not feel that had been adequately addressed. He also noted the property's location at the entrance to the peninsula means all traffic will pass the site. He stated 42 ft. from the centerline was too close for his support and indicated he would vote against the request as presented.
- J. Aarestad stated he appreciated the comparison to neighboring properties and the thorough tree study. However, he reiterated the Board had clearly requested a 45–50 ft. setback and stated he would like to see at least a 45 ft. setback. He asked the applicant whether they wished to continue the item, withdraw, or allow the Board to vote.
- K. Miller asked whether the Board could approve the request with a 45 ft. setback requirement, allowing minor plan adjustments as long as no additional variances were required and all coverage requirements were met.
- L. Mol moved to approve the request to construct a new home 45 ft. from the centerline of Pilger Ave NW and a water-oriented accessory structure 33 ft. from the centerline of Pilger Ave NW. Site plan was noted Exhibit A, building plans noted Exhibit B, and septic plan noted Exhibit C. (The Board would allow for variation in the plans so long as no additional variances were needed.) Motion seconded by Vick.

DISCUSSION: Ogle noted that if the Board is approving Exhibits A, B, and C, he would like clarification regarding flexibility. Meaning, no other variances would be allowed, but is the Board okay with 1,000 sq. ft. more footprint? Does the Board care if the home is larger as long as it meets all setbacks? Mol stated that with his motion his intent is that he does not want the home any closer than 45 ft. from the centerline of the road. His view is that the size of the house is not here for a variance and the variance before the Board is for the road setback.

Vick asked for clarification on whether the road setback is to the centerline of the road and not the road as traveled. He went on to ask Board members if they would be willing to allow a 12 ft. setback to the side yard. Mol stated his motion references the centerline of the road and that Vick has the ability to make an amendment motion that would be voted on.

- M. Vick moved to amend the motion and allow for a 12 ft. setback on the side lot line. Aarestad called for a second three times and heard none.

MOTION FAILED for lack of a 2nd.

- N. Aarestad called for a vote on the original motion.

MOTION CARRIED

VOTE: AYE: Mol, Vick, Aarestad & Maue NAY: Neumann

3. **KEVIN SMITH** – New

LOCATION: 1805 KNOWLES AVE NW – GRANITE LAKE BEACH LOT-004 ALSO LOT 3 in SECTION 29, TOWNSHIP 120, RANGE 27, WRIGHT COUNTY, MINNESOTA (Albion Twp.) Tax # 201-013-000040.
Property Owners: KEVIN J & DENISE L SMITH

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026, 155.049(F)(2), & 155.057(E)(1) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to construct a new single-family dwelling located within the shoreland and road building setbacks.

Present: Kevin Smith and Bernie Miller of MSTs

- A. Ogle displayed property details and the site plan as we reviewed the request. The property is 0.83 acres, zoned Urban/Rural Transition, and located on Granite Lake which is classified as Recreational Development (RD). The request is to construct a new single-family dwelling 79.2 ft. from the ordinary high-water (OHW) of Granite Lake and 60 ft. from the centerline of Knowles Ave NW. A variance is required to construct a new single-family dwelling within 100 ft. of the ordinary high-water of Granite Lake and within 65 ft. of the centerline of Knowles Ave NW. The Township approves of the request because the lowest part of the house will be above the OHW, the house is in line with other homes in the neighborhood, and other houses are closer to the lake. No other written responses had been received.
- B. Miller explained the previous walkout home on the property was removed approximately two years ago and the intent had been to replace it with a similar design. After reviewing the elevations and OHW, it was determined a walkout home would extend roughly five feet above grade, prompting consideration of other designs. Miller pointed out a ditch or creek along the property that rarely contains water and was likely excavated by a neighboring farmer 50–70 years ago. Although not listed on the DNR ditch inventory, the lake extends into the mouth of the ditch, causing the OHW to extend into the property and impacting the setback measurement. If the ditch were not present, the home would be approximately 97.9 ft. from the OHW. Miller stated multiple home plans and locations were evaluated and the proposed location best fits the property while preserving several mature trees and maintaining lake views. The Township had no concerns with the 60 ft. road setback and appreciated that the proposal preserves trees and places the home farther from the lake than some nearby structures. A full grading plan has been prepared and the applicant, an excavator, is familiar with working around trees and installing septic systems consistent with grading plans. Smith noted the creek line jogs into the property and that if the OHW followed the lake shoreline the home would be approximately 97.9 ft. from the OHW. Using the document camera, Miller displayed a diagram indicating roughly 81% of the home meets all setbacks. He noted a detached garage option had been discussed but would impact more trees, and the applicant preferred a single structure. Miller stated the proposal represents minimal variances and improves upon the previous development on the property. Beacon aerial imagery showed the former detached garage, removed between 2018 and 2021, was located approximately 56 ft. from the road centerline.
- C. Public Comment.
- Dawn Slimmer, who lives on the lake and just down the road, stated that when they purchased their home in 2018 the lake level was consistently 4–5 ft. higher. She noted the lake level dropped significantly after Wright County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) opened the egress on the far side of the lake. Because of the change in water levels, she questioned the accuracy of the OHW measurements currently being used and noted long-time residents have identified a ledge about 20 ft. into the lake that they believe represents the historic water level. Ogle displayed and reviewed DNR water level data on the DNR LakeFinder tool showing water level fluctuations.
- D. Vick questioned when the 100 ft. lake setback was established. Ogle did not have an exact date but noted ordinances in Wright County began in the mid to late 1960's. Vick stated requiring the full 100 ft. setback could be a hardship given nearby homes are located closer to the lake. Smith noted neighboring homes built

in the 1980s are located approximately 44–53 ft. from the lake. Vick stated he would prefer a 75 ft. lake setback while eliminating the road variance, noting the ditch extending into the property creates a hardship. Smith explained that relocating the home in that manner would require removal of trees the applicant wishes to preserve and would change the orientation of the home toward the neighboring yard. Miller noted the proposed location represents the most practical placement on the property.

- E. Maue suggested portions of the home could potentially be shifted back approximately four feet, bringing the structure within about one foot of the required road setback without significantly altering the design. Smith stated this would require another revision of the plans, which would be the third set prepared. Maue acknowledged the additional plan review but noted it could reduce the request to a single variance.
- F. Neumann stated he reviewed the proposal at the Township level and noted the road curves in the area and serves only two additional homes, resulting in minimal traffic. The Township determined that a 60 ft. setback from the road would be acceptable. He noted that, as Mr. Vick explained a lot of the lakes, especially the recreational lakes, have the 75 ft. setback so if they can meet the 100 ft. setback they are good in his eyes. He noted in the past this Board has addressed similar ditches in the past and variances have been approved. He felt this ditch only has water when there is a lot of rain so for him he is okay with the plans as presented.
- G. Mol stated the practical difficulty results from the creek entering the lake along the property line, which impacts only a corner of the home and results in the 79–80 ft. setback. He noted the applicant attempted to maintain the 100 ft. setback where possible and that the requested 60 ft. road setback is consistent with variances previously granted by the Board. The Township supports the request, and the setback is similar to what previously existed on the property.
- H. Aarestad stated that Neumann and Mol shared many of his thoughts. He noted the road is a dead end and traffic is minimal, making the road setback less of a concern. He also noted the Township supports the request and stated he is comfortable with the proposal as presented.
- I. Mol moved to approve the request to construct a new single-family dwelling 79.2 ft. from the ordinary high-water of Granite Lake and 60 ft. from the centerline of Knowles Ave NW. Site plan noted Exhibit A, building plans Exhibit B, and septic plan Exhibit C. Motion seconded by Neumann.

MOTION CARRIED

VOTE: AYE: Mol, Vick, Neumann, & Aarestad NAY: Maue

4. **LAURA WEBER** – New

LOCATION: 2981 62ND ST NW MAPLE LAKE – MAPLE SHORES LOT-002 BLOCK-001 in Section 34, Township 121, Range 26, Wright County, Minnesota. (Maple Lake Twp.) Tax #210-117-001020. Property Owner: JOHN M & LAURA S WEBER

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026, 155.003(B), & 155.049(F) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to construct a new storage building that exceeds the maximum sidewall height and would be located within the road setback.

Present: John and Laura Weber

- A. Ogle displayed the proposed site plan and building plans as he reviewed the request. The property is 0.38 acres, zoned Urban/Rural Transition, and located on Maple Lake which is classified as General Development. The request is to construct a 24 ft. x 33 ft. (792 sq. ft.) storage building with a sidewall height of 17 ft. that would be located 21.5 ft. from the road right-of-way (storage building would be approximately 38 ft. from the centerline of the road). The steepest part of the roof would be an 8/12/pitch. A variance is required to construct a storage building with a sidewall height that exceeds 12 ft. on an Urban/Rural Transition (R-1) zoned property less than 20,000 sq. ft. in area and does not follow the accessory building standards for sidewall height, roof pitch, rafter storage area, and number of stories per Section 155.003 of the zoning ordinance. A variance is also required to construct a storage building within 65 ft. of the centerline of a local road. The Township approves of the request so long as it does not go any closer to the Township road. A written response says the request would not directly affect them but if it hinders any of the neighbors view of the lake they would object. They also questioned where the snow would be plowed.
- B. L. Weber stated the home is their permanent residence and they intend to replace the existing garage in the same location to improve accessibility, safety, and storage. The plan is to keep impervious surface coverage under the allowed 25%, which is one reason why they are going with the proposed location. They have avoided impacting side setbacks or obstructing lake views. J. Weber added the existing structure is only a one story garage and what is proposed has the same effect of dimensions from the driveway as the new garage will. Their plan is to flatten the driveway, which they hope will help with accessibility. There will be an increase in size to add an extra stall, currently the garage is 24 ft. x 24 ft.
- C. Public Comment.
- Darren Marrow, who lives across the street, voiced several concerns. He questioned the overall height of the proposed building and its impact on the surrounding area. He also raised concerns regarding the existing impervious coverage and the amount being proposed. In addition, he noted existing runoff issues along the road and expressed concern about runoff from the proposed building. He also noted concerns regarding additional driveway and retaining wall may affect those drainage conditions.
 - Tammy Lawton, who lives three homes down the road, expressed concern about the road conditions, particularly the sharp corner near the applicants' home. She noted that during winter and rain events, water accumulates at this location, creating a hazardous situation. She questioned why the Township approved the project given the road conditions. Lawton also mentioned that in the past, the Township had to drill in the corner to improve drainage. She emphasized that her primary concern is visibility at the corner and ongoing drainage problems.
- D. L. Weber acknowledged that a previous attempt to pave the driveway failed to improve drainage or accessibility. The proposed plan includes reducing the size of the driveway in specific areas and removing additional concrete. She used the site plan to review areas that will lose hard coverage and described the access from the garage to the front door. L. Weber noted the recently updated survey reflects both existing and proposed conditions. She went on to note that the only variance previously required for the home was on

the one side, at 7.7 ft. She also emphasized that they have invested time and money to improve the property's drainage. J. Weber added that the proposed garage will not be built higher than the road. They plan is to work with the excavator to ensure proper grading, so water will drain appropriately. Snow removal will be directed to the west or east sides of the property, not onto the road. He clarified that while the retaining wall on the proposed plan appears to extend toward the road, the intention is for it to stop at the edge of the garage.

- E. Maue asked about the upper-level storage trusses. J. Weber stated that the intent is to use the trusses for storage, such as a portable fish house, and that was a design provided by the builder. He noted that the height will remain under 6 ft. Maue suggested that removing the trusses or using a 5:12 roof pitch could reduce the perceived height and improve the overall appearance, particularly on the side elevation, which appears taller due to the trusses.
- F. Neumann confirmed with the applicants that cars will be parked on the 2nd level and that the lower level will be excavated to match the upper level's dimensions. He suggested that a site inspection may be helpful.
- G. Mol expressed concerns about the visual impact of the increased garage height on the neighborhood and the lake. While he acknowledged the need for an additional stall and the absence of a side yard setback variance request, he emphasized concerns about appearance and community character. He asked the applicants to provide a practical difficulty explanation for why a 17 ft. height is necessary and noted that purchasers of small lots should understand property limitations.
- H. Vick agreed with prior comments and requested elevation drawings and a drainage plan. He also agreed that a site inspection would be beneficial.
- I. Aarestad noted the neighbor had some valid concerns. He would like to ensure the retaining wall will not interfere with the utility easement area. He also requested a stormwater management plan and emphasized that the property improvements should not negatively impact road drainage. He expressed concern about the visual impact of the garage height and agreed that a site inspection would be helpful.
- J. Mol moved to continue the meeting to April 3rd for a site inspection. Motion seconded by Vick.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. **GREGG SARKINEN** – New

LOCATION: 1768 DONNELLY DR NW – LOTS 2 AND 3, SURFLAND, WRIGHT COUNTY, MINNESOTA, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF AND PART OF GOVERNMENT LOT 2, SECTION 35, TOWNSHIP 121, RANGE 26, WRIGHT COUNTY, MINNESOTA. (Maple Lake Twp.) Tax # 210-137-000020. Property Owners: GREGG SARKINEN & HELEN SARKINEN

REQUEST: Variance as regulated in Section 155.026 and 155.003(B) of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances to construct an accessory building (guest house/storage) on a property under 1.0 acre that exceeds the one story and 6/12 roof pitch maximum.

Present: Gregg Sarkinen and Kyran Sarkinen

- A. Ogle displayed property and plan details as he reviewed the request. The request is located at 1768 Donnelly Drive NW in Maple Lake Township, is 0.96 acres, zoned Urban/Rural Transition, and located on Maple Lake which is classified as General Development. The request is to construct a 28 ft. x 40 ft. two story accessory building (guest house/storage) with a 10:12 roof pitch. A variance is required to construct an accessory building (guest house/storage) with two stories and a 10:12 roof pitch as accessory buildings on properties under 1.0 acre shall not have a second story or exceed a maximum 6:12 roof pitch. The Township approves of the proposed request for the roof pitch and second floor. No written responses have been received.
- B. G. Sarkinen explained that the property was purchased in July 2025 and was identified as a teardown home. The first step in improving the property is to construct a shop with a guest house component, with plans to eventually build a new residence. A concept plan for the entire property was displayed. G. Sarkinen noted the proposed shop/guest house meets all setback requirements and is intended to match the future home to maintain uniformity among the buildings on the property. G. Sarkinen stated the request includes two variances. The first variance is for a 10:12 roof pitch. Using the document camera, he reviewed a diagram comparing a building with a 14-ft. sidewall and 6:12 roof pitch, which is permitted, to the proposed building with a 10-ft. sidewall and 10:12 roof pitch. He noted the proposed design would result in a smaller overall profile than what is allowed under the ordinance. G. Sarkinen then reviewed the second requested variance regarding the upper level. He described the design as more of a 1½-story structure rather than a true two-story building. He stated the design would allow them to maximize square footage within a single building rather than constructing an additional guest house.
- C. No comments from the public.
- D. Neumann confirmed with the applicant that there are plans to construct a new residence on the property. Neumann asked whether the proposed shop/guest house had been considered as being part of the future home. G. Sarkinen responded that this option was considered; however, attaching the structure to the home would block the view of the lake from the road and create an unattractive visual impact. He acknowledged that attaching the building would eliminate the need for variances but that would limit lake access and views. He noted that concerns with two-story accessory structures often relate to visibility for neighbors and views from the lake. However, when incorporated into the primary residence, the appearance tends to be more cohesive and does not require variances. He observed that the proposed 10:12 roof pitch appears intended to provide headroom on the upper level. G. Sarkinen stated that there are two distinct variance requests, and the primary objective is for the building to match the future home. He added that the garage attached to the future home is intended to be handicap accessible, with the shop function located in the proposed accessory building. Neumann asked whether there are other two-story accessory structures with peaks around 20 feet in the neighborhood, calling out specifically not homes. G. Sarkinen responded that several dwellings in the area have roof pitches of 10:12 or steeper, and feels the garage to the north is significantly taller than the proposed structure. He added that some shops in the area have 12- to 14-ft. sidewalls, which in his opinion create a more noticeable view from the lake. Neumann reiterated that the Board must determine a practical difficulty

preventing compliance with the ordinance. He stated that the justification presented so far appears to be primarily a preference for the building to match a future home design. He asked the applicant to explain why the variance is necessary. G. Sarkinen responded that attaching the building to the existing home would block both the visual sightline and physical access to the lake from the road. He also reiterated the desire for uniformity in appearance to match other structures.

- E. Mol stated he is struggling with the request, noting that the primary reasoning appears to be the desire to match a house that has not yet been built. He explained that he is viewing the property as essentially a blank slate and that the request is to construct an accessory building with roof rafters that do not meet ordinance requirements solely for design preference. He noted the property is nearly one acre with no significant physical constraints and questioned whether the future house would require additional variances. Mol added that access to the lake could potentially be maintained along the 17-ft. side yard, though some trees may need to be removed. He reiterated that the request is for new construction and that the justification presented is primarily aesthetic.
- F. Vick stated he is also struggling with the request. He asked about the proposed impervious surface and building coverage for the full concept plan. G. Sarkinen responded that the plan shows approximately 17.6% impervious coverage, which is well below the maximum allowed, and that building coverage is significantly below the 15% maximum. G. Sarkinen went on to note that the ordinance allows 1,600 sq. ft. of accessory structures, while the proposed building is approximately 1,100 sq. ft. He added that providing accessible pathways around the building could increase impervious surface if wheelchair or walker access is required. Vick asked whether a driveway would extend to the proposed building, which G. Sarkinen confirmed is shown on the plan. Vick also questioned what differentiates a guest house from a rental unit and if there is a concern with the septic system for a guest house. Ogle explained that, under the ordinance, a guest house cannot be rented. Ogle further noted that the property is 0.04 acres short of one acre, and once a parcel exceeds one acre, the ordinance allows an accessory structure up to 35 ft. in height but not to exceed 2½ stories. There are also no roof pitch maximums. G. Sarkinen stated the guest space is intended for visiting family members, particularly their children. He also noted the proposed plan identifies the septic location. Vick stated he still has concerns.
- G. Maue asked about the need for the proposed height. Referring to the floor plan, he suggested there may be ways to adjust the layout to reduce the overall building height, which appears to be a concern among Board members. He asked whether the second level is necessary, noting that removing it could allow the roof pitch to be reduced to 8:12, lowering the overall height. Ogle clarified that any roof pitch greater than 6:12 requires a variance, and headroom height for habitable space may vary between zoning and building code standards. Zoning standards allow up to 6 ft. of headroom space before considering it habitable area. G. Sarkinen stated that height concerns are valid and that part of the design goal is to keep the building profile below what would otherwise be permitted. He reiterated that a building with a 14-ft. sidewall and 6:12 roof pitch would be larger than the proposed design. He added that the peak of the proposed building could potentially be reduced by about one foot. Maue stated that if height is a sticking point for the Board, adjusting the roof pitch could help move the project forward. While he understands the design concept, he noted that a steep pitch can make the structure appear taller. G. Sarkinen stated that if the roof pitch were allowed but the guest house component were not, there is room to construct a second building closer to the lake. However, they would prefer to avoid adding another structure to maintain. He added that an 8:12 pitch would likely keep the building well below the maximum allowable height. Maue also noted that if this accessory building is built with a 10:12 pitch, it could create height concerns for the home. G. Sarkinen explained they have attempted to account for those considerations in the home design process. However, final home plans and elevations have not yet been completed, as they intend to proceed with home permits only after the shop building is constructed.
- H. Aarestad stated his concerns differ somewhat from other Board members. He does not believe the building would alter the character of the area and feels that matching roof pitches between buildings is reasonable. He also noted that the proposed building location would have minimal visual impact from the lake. He observed that if the property were slightly larger, just 0.04 acres more, the discussion would likely not be necessary.

because the ordinance would permit the structure. He stated that he believes the Board may have some flexibility in this situation and that the request appears reasonable, though he recognizes that other members have concerns regarding roof pitch and overall height. Aarestad noted that the property is essentially a clean slate and an opportunity to reconsider the design if needed. He asked the applicant whether they preferred to proceed with a vote, withdraw the application without prejudice, or return with revised plans.

- I. G. Sarkinen asked whether the Board would consider an 8:12 roof pitch. He reiterated that they do not want to attach the building to the house because it would limit access from the road to the lake. He also stated that significant time has already been spent reviewing 40–50 floor plan options to address setback requirements. Aarestad asked the applicant how they would like to proceed. Sarkinen again asked whether the Board would be open to an 8:12 roof pitch. Vick suggested the applicant submit revised plans for consideration at the next meeting. Mol asked whether the Board would like to conduct a site inspection. He also asked the applicant whether this would be the only variance request for the property and whether the future home or septic system would require any variances. G. Sarkinen stated the proposal was designed specifically to avoid needing additional variances. Mol noted that most variance requests involve existing homes where owners wish to add a shop or addition. In this case, the property is undeveloped. He questioned how the Board might evaluate the request if the house were already built and the applicant later requested this accessory structure, noting that he is trying to consider how the Board would approach such a scenario.
- J. Vick stated his primary concern relates to the 7-ft. ceiling height on the upper level. He expressed concern about the potential for the space to be used as a rental unit and noted that spaces under 6 ft. of headroom are not considered habitable.
- K. Aarestad stated that a site visit would be beneficial. Addressing the applicant's earlier question, he suggested that a rendering showing an 8:12 roof pitch could be provided either during the site visit or at the next meeting for the Board to review.
- L. Ogle explained that if the upper level were limited to 6 ft. or less, it would not technically be considered an upper level. However, he is uncertain whether the Building Official would allow the space to be used as habitable or livable space if it remained at 6 ft. or less. He reminded the Board that the two variances currently requested are for a roof pitch greater than 6:12, and an upper level exceeding 6 ft. in height.
- M. Mol moved to continue the item to April 3rd for a site inspection. Seconded my Maue.

VOTE: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SITE INSPECTION

The Board scheduled a site inspection for Friday, March 27, 2026 with the Commission to meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Government Center.

Meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aaron Ogle', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Aaron Ogle
Planning & Zoning Planner

AO: sld

CC: Board of Adjustment
Applicants/Owners
Twp. Clerks