

WRIGHT COUNTY BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Meeting of: April 3, 2026

MINUTES

The Wright County Board of Adjustment met on Friday, April 3, 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 MARCH 13, 2026 MEETING

On a motion by Mol, seconded by Maue the minutes for the March 13th meeting were unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. LAURA WEBER – Continued from 3/13/26

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: Laura and John Weber

- A. Ogle reviewed the request and property details. The request 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, the storage building would be approximately 38 ft. from the centerline of the road, with the steepest part of the roof being an 8:12 pitch. The item was continued from the March 13th meeting so that a site inspection could be conducted, which it was. A variance is required to construct a storage building if the building exceeds the 12 ft. sidewall height maximum or 6:12 roof pitch maximum. A variance is also required if the proposed building is closer than 65 ft. from 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. At the previous meeting on March 13th there was one written comment and a couple oral comments made. No new responses from the public received.
- B. L. Weber stated they are requesting to replace the existing garage with a three-stall tuck-under garage in the same location and feel the practical difficulty lies in the current location of the garage. They are not able to move the garage further back from the road without exceeding the 25% impervious surface coverage. L. Weber noted that a concern was previously mentioned regarding raising the garage and creating drainage issues. She explained their intention is to continue efforts to grade the property, address drainage, and utilize the natural drainage on either side of the property. She went on to note that at the prior meeting they heard the concerns regarding the roof pitch and adapted their plans. They are now proposing a roof pitch under 6:12. The revised plans were handed to members and displayed on the document camera as she reviewed the proposed plans. It was noted that the proposed roof pitch is now 4¾:12, lowering the proposed height by roughly 4 ft. from what was originally proposed. L. Weber explained they purchased the property in 2020 and have since been making repairs and improvements to the buildings and property. The garage is the final structure that needs to be addressed.
- C. Public comments.
 - Darren Marrow stated his concerns are the burden of the height, raising the driveway, and the 17 ft. height so they can have a second level below. He does not feel a burden has been proven as to why the structure needs to be that high. His concern is that the proposed building, with the tuck-under

design, is going to raise things up, and he feels a burden needs to be demonstrated, which he is not seeing.

- D. Mol stated the new design has components he was going to suggest. He went on to review how much the proposed garage will be raised in relation to the road and what currently exists with Brett Bluedorn, Bluedorn Builders, stepping forward and stating the structure would be raised just under 7 ft. from the original elevation. Mol stated he sees the burden being that the existing garage already has a variance. He agrees that, with how the existing garage sits, winter months would cause issues getting in and out. He does see the need to raise the structure so the garage would be more level with the road. Mol confirmed with Ogle that, with the redesign of the roof pitch, a variance would no longer be needed for that part of the project. Ogle reminded the Board that even without the roof pitch variance, a variance would still be required for the sidewall height and road setback. Mol stated that while a taller building could alter the area, there is also an opportunity to address the water flow concerns. Overall, he feels he can support the new proposal.
- E. Vick stated he has some of the same thoughts mentioned by Mol. He likes the 4¾:12 roof pitch but still has a concern with the building being higher than the existing road. He would like to see the driveway no higher than level with the road, as he feels water could be more easily controlled within the driveway. Other than that, he is satisfied with the revised roof pitch.
- F. Maue felt lowering the roof pitch helped immensely and that the existing driveway is an issue. He agrees that raising the driveway to at least level with the road would be acceptable. He feels the sidewall height is related to the slope of the yard rather than the height of the garage itself. Maue was okay with the updated proposal.
- G. Neumann stated that what he saw at the site made him feel that the proposed building would alter the character of the locality and block the neighbor's view of the lake. He reiterated that he believes the proposed garage will alter the character of the community and that he will not support the request. Mol stated he had the same concern until the roof pitch was lowered. He explained that he reviewed the ordinance and there is nothing regarding the position of the garage. Since the revised plan meets the roof pitch requirements, he is now primarily considering the sidewall height of the building. Neumann noted that one of the questions the Board considers is, "*How will the variance alter the essential character of the locality?*" In his opinion, the garage could be turned or replaced in kind, but what is being proposed will block the neighbor's view and change the appearance of the community.
- H. Aarstad noted he shares the feelings of others and believes the changes are reasonable.
- I. Vick stated his reason for supporting the request is that the Township approved the original version of the request. He expressed his desire for the driveway to remain level with the road and stated he would ideally like to see a swale installed to keep water properly directed. Bluedorn agreed that the water would be properly directed and maintained.
- J. Vick moved to approve the construction of a 24 ft. x 33 ft. (792 sq. ft.) storage building with a sidewall height of 17 ft. 7 in. that would be located 21.5 ft. from the road right-of-way. The steepest part of the roof would be a 4¾:12 pitch. Conditions: 1) Stormwater management plan; 2) 6 ft. maximum headroom in rafter storage; 3) as-built survey within 1 year of building final that shows impervious surface does not exceed 25%; Site plan noted as Exhibit A, with elevation of the building even with the road or under and Building plan Exhibit B. Motion seconded by Maue.

DISCUSSION: Ogle asked for specifics on what the Board is looking for regarding the stormwater plan. He questioned whether the Board wants water diverted away from neighboring properties as well as kept off the road, whether a swale should be maintained along their driveway, and whether guttering should direct water toward a drain. Vick clarified that his goal is for water to be guttered to the existing drain currently present.

MOTION CARRIED VOTE: AYE: Mol, Vick, Aarstad & Maue NAY: Neumann

2. **GREGG SARKINEN** – Cont. 3/13

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

- A. Ogle displayed the proposal details and reminded the Board that the item was continued from the March 13th meeting so a site inspection could be conducted. A site inspection was conducted on March 27th. The updated request for the April 3rd meeting is for a 28 ft. x 40 ft. one-story storage building with a 10/12 roof pitch. Based on the updated plan, the only variance would be for the proposed roof pitch as it would exceed the 6/12 maximum for an accessory building on a property under 1.0 acre in size. He noted that the Township approved of the proposed request for the roof pitch and second floor. No written responses have been received.
- B. Sarkinen stated he heard the comments from the Board and reminded the Board that their plan is to redevelop the property and bring it more into compliance. He noted the revised plans no longer include a second story and that the building will not be used as a guest house, which will allow them to move the building to the 10 ft. setback from the side property line. Sarkinen noted the proposed building is smaller than what is allowed by ordinance and that the only requirement not being met is the roof pitch. He stated that if they had an additional 0.04 acres, they would not be before the Board at all. He explained that the properties on either side are currently much higher than their property, and he feels they are meeting the spirit of the ordinance.
- C. No comments from the public.
- D. Vick stated that many of his concerns were alleviated and questioned whether the rafters would be common rafters or vaulted. Sarkinen confirmed that scissor trusses would be used, but there would not be a true second-floor height, only a small storage area with less than 6 ft. of headroom. Vick stated he does not feel this building would block the view of neighbors and, overall, he is comfortable with what is being proposed.
- E. Maue felt the site visit was valuable and does not believe the height will be an issue, even with the steeper pitch. He noted he is okay with the request.
- F. Neumann stated he has a problem with what is being proposed and has not found a practical difficulty. He questioned what prevents the applicant from building within the ordinance requirements and feels the roof pitch is a want rather than a need. He noted a comment was made that the plan is to match the roof pitch to a future home, meaning this is not a situation of matching something that already exists. He feels this request may be putting the cart before the horse and that there is nothing physical on the property that shows a uniqueness warranting a variance. Neumann went on to explain there are other options, such as connecting the building to the future home, which would allow for the steeper pitch. He reiterated that he does not see anything that would warrant a variance.
- G. Mol noted he somewhat agrees with member Neumann, as this is new construction requesting a variance. He explained that, on the other hand, the property is only 0.04 acres away from having requirements that would allow what is being proposed, which to him could be considered a practical difficulty. He noted that in this case the property line runs up to the right-of-way, and he has seen other properties in the county extend to the middle of the road. If that were the case in this situation there would be enough acreage where the variance

may not be needed. Mol reiterated that he also agrees with member Neumann that this is new construction and the ordinance could be met.

- H. Aarestad stated the property is very close to not needing a variance to meet the standards and that he can support what is being requested.
- I. Vick moved to approve the construction of a 28 ft. x 40 ft. storage building with a 10:12 roof pitch. Condition: 1) the building must meet any applicable floodplain standards. Site plan Exhibit A and Building plan Exhibit B. Motion seconded by Maue.

DISCUSSION: Ogle noted the initial plan was for a 15 ft. side yard setback to meet the standards required for a guest house. The revised proposal is for a storage building, which has a 10 ft. setback requirement. He asked for confirmation that the Board is comfortable with a 10 ft. setback, even if the site plan notes 15 ft., and questioned whether the Board would allow the building to be located elsewhere on the property as long as it meets the required setbacks. Vick noted that he is comfortable with the building being moved, as long as it meets the required setbacks.

MOTION CARRIED

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

3. **JAMES MALESKA** – New

LOCATION: 6735-6787 ORTH AV NW and 14059 67TH ST NW ANNANDALE – PEBBLE BEACH LOTS - 003 through LOT 6, BLOCK-001 and OUTLT 1 in Section 34, Township 121, Range 28, Wright County, Minnesota. (Southside Twp.) Tax #217-038-001030, 217-038-001040, 217-038-001050, 217-038-001060, 217-038-001061, 217-038-000010. Property Owner: EHLE, FOBBE, MALESKA

REQUEST: Lot Line Adjustment and replatting a portion of the Pebble Beach Plat to re-establish the public right-of-way of Orth Ave. and extend lots to the new platted right-of-way as regulated in Section 155.026 of Chapter 155, Title XV, Land Usage & Zoning of the Wright County Code of Ordinances.

Present: Scott Marlin with KLJ Engineering

- A. Ogle displayed property and request details as he reviewed the request. The properties involved are PID 217-038-001061 which is ± 0.28 acres, 217-038-001060 which is ± 0.20 acres, 217-038-001050 which is ± 0.25 acres, 217-038-001040 which is ± 0.67 acres, 217-038-001030 which is ± 0.45 acres, and 217-038-000010 which is ± 4.41 acres. All referenced parcels are zoned Urban/Rural Transition. He noted a previous Board of Adjustment (BOA) action included a 1996 approval allowing what is now PID 217-038-001061 to add land from 217-038-000010 which was intended to provide a potential site for backup sewer placement. BOA action from 2019 allowed re-alignment of existing property lines between what are now PID 217-038-001030 and 217-038-001040. He explained that this request is to replat a portion of the Pebble Beach Plat which would establish new property boundaries for six existing lots and establish a newly platted road. The Township noted they would vacate the portion of road indicated on the plans if the replat were to be approved as well as that they would not maintain the proposed new road nor maintain 67th St. No written responses from the public had been received.
- B. Marlin explained they had been to the Township several times and noted that several portions of Orth Ave. have already been vacated. For whatever reason, the portion in question was never vacated and actually does not extend all the way to the County Road; what is seen on Beacon is actually a driveway. The idea is to build a new road with an appropriate turnaround for emergency vehicles. All the parcels along the lake will be extended, which will add additional square footage to help with impervious coverage and provide additional room for septic systems. Marlin noted the road will be gravel and constructed in a way that will allow two cars to pass each other and allow emergency vehicles to turn around within the cul-de-sac.
- C. Public Comment
- Terry Fobbe stated he is a neighbor and that this is something they have been advocating for since he purchased his property. He stated they are very happy that Mr. Maleska is willing to make this change and feels it would be beneficial for everyone in the neighborhood.
- D. Maue asked if Mr. Maleska is the only one losing land and if he is the one dedicating the road to the public so there will not be legal issues in the future. Marlin explained the plan is to replat the area as proposed and the road will become a public road. The Township will have authority over the road but will not maintain it. The local property owners will be responsible for maintaining the road. Maue questioned whether there would be a written agreement regarding maintenance. Marlin stated that had not been discussed but did not believe an agreement would be an issue. Maue noted that, short of an established maintenance agreement, he is comfortable with what is presented. Marlin stated he feels it would be within the purview of the Township to work out such an agreement. Ogle noted that even though the Township stated it would not maintain the right-of-way, it would still remain under Township authority.
- E. Neumann noted the same concern as member Maue. He stated that he is a Township supervisor and they frequently experience issues within their township with roads that are dedicated to the public but not maintained by the township. He noted the township cannot force neighbors to purchase gravel or trim brush.

Neumann felt that the agreement mentioned by member Maue is very important and stated that if the Township is not willing to take over maintenance of the road, he would want to see a formal agreement.

- F. Mol stated he shares some of the same views. He questioned whether the driveway will be vacated or if the road approach will at least be closed off to County Road 3. Marlin stated that had not specifically been discussed with the Highway Department, but the intention is to obliterate the existing driveway and utilize the gravel for the new road. Marlin added that he did not believe Mr. Maleska would oppose discussing the matter with the Highway Department and closing that access completely. Marlin noted the Township does not currently maintain 67th St. NW, which is currently plowed and maintained by the landowners. Mol stated he likes the overall plan and the benefits associated with expanding the lakeshore lots. However, he would like to see clarity regarding Orth Ave., or the driveway, and access to County Road 3. Nate Fobbe stepped to the podium and stated he has been in contact with Mr. Maleska regarding the dirt work and that it was requested to look into the process and cost to completely remove that access. Mol stated he likes the idea of having one less approach along County Road 3.
- G. Barry Rhinberger, Planning & Zoning Administrator, stepped to the podium. He explained that this request is correcting a nonconforming issue that was created when the Township vacated portions of the road, which caused the lakeshore lots to lose publicly dedicated road frontage. He explained that with a new development road, the Township is typically required to take over the road right-of-way. However, this situation is different because they are trying to improve a nonconforming situation. It would be no different than what existed prior to the previous road vacations. Rhineberger noted that, from a zoning perspective, what is being requested would provide each property with dedicated road right-of-way. Staff did not feel it was necessary to require the Township to take over maintenance since the road would be built to Township standards and it is not currently maintained by the Township. He reiterated that the situation will be no different than when Pebble Beach was originally platted. Rhineberger stated the proposal benefits all involved by providing required public road frontage, even though the road will not be publicly maintained. He noted that many townships have older plats where public road rights-of-way are not maintained by the township.
- H. Vick stated he agrees with the rest of the Board and verified that the Township does not currently maintain 67th St. Ogle confirmed they do not and will not. Vick stated he would like to see more information regarding a maintenance agreement. Aarestad agreed that he would also like to see a solid maintenance agreement submitted.
- I. Neumann asked the applicant if the proposed road touches the southern property line and whether the road could continue if that parcel were to be developed in the future. Marlin confirmed the cul-de-sac will extend to the property line.
- J. Mol stated that in situations like this, where the township does not maintain the road, he has also seen township-created cartways that were not maintained and the property owners understood the situation. He acknowledged there could be complaints but noted that the property owners are already living on an unmaintained road and what is being proposed is an improvement. He stated that with the agreement to close off access to County Road 3, the plan before the Board appears to be a positive improvement. He noted the Zoning Administrator also explained that the lakeside properties will become more compliant as well. In the end, he stated he is comfortable with the request. Vick asked Mol if he was comfortable approving the request without a maintenance contract. Mol stated the neighbors need to work that out as a group and that creating a covenant is not something this Board or the County is typically involved in. Terry Fobbe stated that currently all residents contribute money for gravel and snow removal. He acknowledged that if someone moves in the future that could change, but at this time everyone is comfortable with how things are handled.
- K. Neumann stated that based on his experiences with situations where people do not step up to do the right thing in his township, things may be working well now but could change in 30 years. For that reason, he feels a maintenance agreement is important.

- L. Ogle noted that any established road maintenance agreement would not be enforced by the Planning & Zoning Office.
- M. Maue felt that if everyone is currently contributing, there should be no reason an agreement cannot be established. He believes an agreement created now will help future property owners who may not be aware of the situation or willing to cooperate with the group. Mol agreed but countered that many times property is purchased and the new owner is unaware of existing covenants as they are frequently not discovered or disclosed at the time of purchase. He feels that requiring an agreement may be the Board overstepping, as this falls under the responsibility of the Township. Ultimately, the Township is the road authority, not the Board of Adjustment. Vick agreed that everyone along the road will benefit and stated he believes property owners would be willing to sign an agreement.
- N. Ogle suggested that if a motion were made to include a condition related to road maintenance, it could state that a road maintenance agreement must be recorded prior to the signing of the final plat.
- O. Neumann moved to approve the request to replat a portion of the Pebble Beach Plat which would establish new property boundaries for six existing lots and establish a newly platted road in accord with the preliminary plat of Maleska Shores (Pebble Beach Second Addition) completed by KLJ Engineering LLC dated 2-25-2026; Project No. 2023.103 with the following CONDITIONS: 1) Prior to recording the final plat the checklist must be completed including but not limited to the following: a) all applicable fees as noted on the plat check list shall be paid; and b) a title opinion is submitted and accepted by the County Attorney; 2) Access permits, if required, must be obtained from the Township; 3) Road maintenance agreement recorded prior to signing of final plat. Motion seconded by Maue.

MOTION CARRIED

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Aaron Ogle
Planning & Zoning Planner

AO: sld
CC: Board of Adjustment
Applicants/Owners
Twp. Clerks