

**Town of Gnesen Planning Commission
August 16, 2023 Minutes**

Members Present: Carter Williams, Pete Bergman, Sherri Underthun, Carol Jacobson, Dick DeLano, and Hannah Jurek; Planning and Zoning Secretary.

Members Absent: Joe Ferguson, Matt Thibodeau, Kevin Middleton, and Kathy Buran.

Others Present: Supervisor Nancy Poppenberg, Becky Nordskog, and Eric Swanson

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: A motion was made by Carol to approve the agenda; seconded by Dick. All vote in favor.

APPROVAL OF THE Johnson Variance Public Hearing MINUTES: A motion was made by Carter to approve the Johnson Variance Public Hearing minutes, second by Carol. All vote in favor

APPROVAL OF THE Wicks Variance Public Hearing MINUTES: A motion was made by Pete to approve the Wicks Variance Public Hearing minutes, second by Dick. All vote in favor

APPROVAL OF THE July 19, 2023 MINUTES: A motion was made by Sherri to approve the July 19, 2023 minutes, second by Carol. All vote in favor

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

MN Power Hidden Falls at Island Lake Plat: Becky Nordskog from MN Power was in attendance to discuss and answer questions on the latest plat that is in the preliminary stage. The questions asked last month were all corrected by MN Power. There was a question regarding Outlot D, which is low/swamp land. MN Power will be retaining that. The property doesn't present an opportunity for it to be developable. Sherri made the motion to accept the plat as presented, second by Dick. All vote in favor. A public hearing will be set for Wednesday, September 20, 2023 at 6:30 pm.

Application for Home Business, Special Events, IUP's: Hannah followed up in the office to find applications for Home Business, Special Events, and IUP's. After some digging, the Home Business application is the only application that hasn't been present to the Town Board for approval. Sherri made the motion to present the Home Business application as presented to the Town Board for approval, second by Dick. All vote in favor.

Gravel Pit Inspections: After some feedback via email, the Commission agreed on a list of questions to take with to their gravel pit inspections. Gravel Pit Inspections will be held on Wednesday August 23, 2023.

Road Setback on Rice Lake Road: The Town Board looked to the Planning Commission for some guidance on how to correct an error in permitting at 7055 Rice Lake Road. There was a correspondence found between St. Louis County and the former Zoning Officer, suggesting that to correct the error a variance would be needed. Since this is an error at the hands of the Township, there will be no cost to the property owners. The public hearing will be scheduled for Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 6:30 pm.

Oscar Pit Findings: The Planning Commission was given a copy of the findings from the hot oil spill in the Oscar pit.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resident to discuss Ordinance: Landowner Eric Swanson had some question regarding the ordinance pertaining to accessory buildings. Ideally Mr. Swanson would like to find some land to place a pole building on for storage, as well as a garden, apple trees, and possible hunting land that is near his home here in Gnesen Township, but the ordinance doesn't allow it. He was looking for guidance from the Commission. The Commission answered his question and helped brainstorm solutions.

Discuss backlog of building permits from 2021-2022: Carter wanted to bring it to the Commission’s attention that there is a significant backlog of building permits from 2021-2022 that a second site visit wasn’t done. The next Zoning Officers will share the duty to visit each site and document what had been done not make corrections, given how much time has passed.

ZONING OFFICERS REPORT: There is no Zoning Officer’s report.

BOARD MEMBERS REPORT: The Board followed through with the recommendation from the Commission in regards to septic systems in a STR. There was some discussion regarding a STR on Boulder Lake Road that has been operating as a STR for years, and looking for grandfathering status, but they are on MN Power leaseland, and in turn have been operating the STR illegally so the grandfathering status would be null. People looking to apply for grandfathering status for STR’s have until September. The vest for the Planning Commission have been ordered. At the next Town Board meeting, Monday August 28, 2023 at 7:00 pm, Gordon Ramsey will be there to discuss the issue with the squatters on Normanna Road. The Town Board also extended to the Commission the opportunity to receive the employee discount for fuel through Como Oil, and if that was something they were interested in, to contact Sarah in the office.

Carol wanted to mention to the commission before closing the meeting, that if they are planning on not attending a meeting to email the group, this is the second time that we’ve had to hold off on a variance because there was no quorum at meeting time and phone calls, reminding had to be made. It was also mentioned before closing the meeting that Fiber in Gnesen Township is being bided out in August of this year, they are looking at having the project completed by end of 2024 beginning of 2025

MN Power Public hearing will be held on Wednesday September 20, 2023 at 6:30 pm.
Next P&Z Meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 20, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

A motion was made by Sherri to adjourn, with a second by Dick. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hannah Jurek, Planning and Zoning Secretary

Carter Williams, Acting Planning Commission Chair

Date

Date