

**Town of Gnesen Planning Commission
March 20, 2024 Minutes**

Members Present: Carter Williams, Pete Bergman, Sherri Underthun, Kathy Buran, Kevin Middleton, Carol Jacobson, Joe Ferguson, and Dick DeLano and; Rick Hogenson, Zoning Officer, Mike Polzin, Zoning Officer and Hannah Jurek, Planning and Zoning Secretary.

Members Absent: Matt Thibodeau

Others Present: AJ Jensen, Marcia and Jay Haller, Randy and Pat Pfingsten

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Carter asked to add process of election and roads on the agenda under new business. A motion was made by Kevin to approve the Agenda with the changes, seconded by Carol. All voted in favor.

APPROVAL OF THE February 21, 2024 MINUTES: A motion was made by Carol to approve the February 21, 2024 minutes, seconded by Carter. All voted in favor.

Randall and Patricia Pfingsten: Variance V-24-02; The Pfingsten are asking for a variance to build a 30X40 ft garage on their property. The current garage has a compromise roof and it within 10 feet of the lake. They would like to build a new garage further away from the lake and take down the old one. The reason the variance is needed is because they would not meet the setback from lake or the road given their lot size and shape. The public hearing was set for Wednesday April, 17 2024, at 6:30 pm.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

Cartway Committee: The cartway committee got together and Carter presented some notes from that meeting. The suggestion was made that the road definition verbiage be changed. *Road: Right of way, or strip of land providing access or egress to parcels of land that abut the right of way. Public Road: Road way or strip of land providing access of egress to parcels abutting the right of way and maintained by the Township, County, State or, Feds. Private Road: Established by the platting process, not maintained by Township, County, State, or Feds. But by a road association. Private Roads: Not established by the platting process that serve more than one parcel, not maintained by Township, County, State, or Feds.* Another proposition was that with private roads that are not platted parcels, must have a 33 ft wide right of way. They must have a year around maintain 20 ft wide road surface. The person or persons responsible for the maintenance of that road must be on file with the Township office. When two or more served, the landowners must follow the County naming process for establishing a name for the road. All parcels with driveways and/or structures must have a fire numbers at the entrance of the driveways.

Storage Containers: Kathy started the conversation stating that herself, Sherri, Joe, and Rick all met prior to the meeting. The Committee tried to create a definition of storage container, shipping container, the group did get a good definition for it. But the further Kathy dug into it, which is stated that it was her opinion, it was hard to make any decisions on anything because as she looked further into other Townships within St. Louis County it was stated that there were permits, setback requirements, time limits, but St. Louis County itself doesn't mention them (storage containers) to the best of her knowledge. Kathy mentioned that we could update our definitions of accessory dwelling, accessory structure or use. In Kathy's opinion, she hesitates starting something or creating something that isn't talking about in the St. Louis County Ordinance. She did further research through the Minnesota Association of Township and found that it's a lengthy, difficult, and costly process to create and ordinance that's not talked about in our local St. Louis County ordinance. Carol asked the question if they committee was looking to create its own standalone ordinance or adding it to our existing. Kathy answered by saying she's not sure, she believes there's a lot more work that needs to be done, that its not that simple. Sherri spoke mentioning, in her opinion, she would like to see the word storage containers removed from the ordinance. She stated that there is a conflict within the ordinance with the definition and performance standard use. She also believes parameters would be good, suggesting that landowners should get a temporary or permeant zoning permit. Rick made the suggestion that maybe we should find out if the shipping containers are

really that big of an issue. Carter asked if Rick was suggesting that instead of eliminating them, allowing with some rules and regulations in their use, since they are currently not allowed. Rick would just like to see if they (shipping containers) are really a problem with the public and if they (the public) want us to do anything about them. Carter suggested the discussion be tabled until next month’s meeting.

Planning Commission Bylaws: The Commission was given a copy of the bylaws after minor edits were made. Sherri made the motion to accept the Bylaws as presented, seconded by Kathy, all voted in favor. Sherri offered to have a copy of the bylaws and the supporting documents with it ready for the next meeting for the commission members to have.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mining: The Town Board received some media information regarding mining in the northern part of our Township. The Town Board was looking for recommendation or guidance from the Commission, it could be as simple as no copper nickel mining is allowed in the Township. Currently there is nothing in the ordinance that prohibits mining. It was suggest that the Town Board find out more information on the matter, maybe a meet up with a representative to find out more. Nancy will take that to the Board.

ZONING OFFICERS REPORT: Mike gave an update on Hemlock Drive. He stated that a letter was sent with a 60 day deadline, not sure if the letter was received or not. Mike met up with Jack Singler regarding the Stewart Camp. Jack was the member that handled the Stewart Camp and had the “gentleman’s agreement” with the family. He gave Mike suggestion on how to handle this 20+ year debacle. Mike plans to meet up with the family, and work with the family to try to get something in writing moving forward, since neither party has any documentation from back when Jack handle the issues. Rick is still working with Cory and the County on Normanna Road. There has been great progress. He thanked the Commission for the help with Salyards Variance.

BOARD MEMBERS REPORT: Nancy Poppenberg had nothing to add, stating everything she wanted to discuss was already talked about. Carter did take this time to mention that we will be voting for Chair and Vice-Chair at next months meeting. He suggested that we have two ballots, one for Chair, one for Vice-Chair, with everyone’s name on them, before voting, go around the table and ask each member if they would like to be on the ballot or not. From there we vote. Everyone seemed to agree with the process moving forward.

Variance Public Hearing for Randall and Patricia Pflingsten will be held on Wednesday April 17, 2024 at 6:30 pm.

Next P&Z Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at 7:00 pm.

A motion was made by Kathy to adjourn, with a second by Carter. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hannah Jurek, Planning and Zoning Secretary

Carter Williams, Acting Planning Commission Chair

Date

Date