

**Town of Gnesen Planning Commission
September 18, 2024 Minutes**

Members Present: Carter Williams, Matt Thibodeau (arrived late), Sherri Underthun, Kathy Buran, Carol Jacobson, Joe Ferguson, and Dick DeLano, Rick Hogenson, Zoning Officer, Mike Polzin, Zoning Officer and; Hannah Jurek, Planning and Zoning Secretary.

Members Absent: Pete Bergman and Kevin Middleton

Others Present: Gary Juten, acting Town Board Liaison; Jay and Marcia Haller, AJ Jensen, David Stewart, David Shaw

Approval of agenda: A motion was made by Sherri to approve the agenda, seconded by Kathy. All voted in favor.

Approval of the August 21, 2024 minutes: A motion was made by Sherri to approve the August 21, 2024 minutes, seconded by Joe. All voted in favor.

CUP REVIEWS: Every September meeting the Planning Commission reviews the Conditional Use Permits that are up for review that year. This year we have 8 gravel pits, 2 salvage yards, 1 home business, and a communication tower. Starting with the gravel pits, all received a positive review after members of the Commission took time in August to do site visits, it was noted that KGM and Cedar Drive have been more active this year than years past but still keep operations clean and respectful of the ordinance. Ulland Brothers has only received 3 complaints this season through their hotline which is an improvement from last year. The new equipment being used with the hot mix has been a great addition and the residents around haven't been noticing the smell, which is the complaint heard most often. St. Louis County pit wasn't seeing a lot of activity but the Commission was told at the meeting that will change and it will pick up a little bit here in the fall. Viele, also a steady running pit. It was addressed that there may be a potential issue of dust on the access road, and was some concerns on a pile of logs and stumps, it was clarified at the meeting that Viele is using that material for personal use and that the pile is dwindling down. Next the Commission talk to salvage yard owners, Ted Raymond was unable to attend, so his review was postponed until next month, but Steve Larson was present and mentioned to the Commission that he is moving stuff and had cleared a big area to which the front stuff will fill it in. The Commission asked if there have been any complaints regarding the salvage yards, it was stated then that the office has not received any complaints regarding any of the salvage yards to which the Commission view positive and gave the yards positive reviews. Kathy Watters was present for her at home business Countyside Rides, again it was asked if the office has received any complaints, it was reported no, there were none. Finally, American Towers for the communication tower conditional use permit, it was brought at the end of the meeting that there are burnt out bulbs on the tower, the Commission will do their best to address it, but at the end of the day FAA has requirements, and they will have to abide by those.

Agenter Variance V-24-03: Brandon and Megan Agenter presented to the Commission their application for a variance, they are looking to put an addition on their garage for extra storage but due to topography the only place they can put the addition on would be lakeside, encroaching on the OHWL setback. Their public hearing is set for Wednesday October 16, 2024 at 6:30 pm.

Shaw Variance V-24-04: David and Mary Shaw presented to the Commission their application for a variance, they own a piece of property north of Island Lake they would like to build a 18x24 cabin. The reason they need a variance is because their lot size doesn't meet the requirements to build in that zone district the lot is in. Their public hearing is set for Wednesday October 16, 2024 at 6:45 pm.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

Humes: Rick wanted to give the Commission an update regarding his interactions and conversations with Humes. Stating that the container that was suggested for his oil collection has been purchased and is in

compliance with the PCA. Positive steps! As far as the other non-compliant issues, Rick will continue working with Humes.

CUP recording: The Town Board has approved up to two hours with attorney to discuss the steps on recording original use permits. Carol has been helping the office out with getting folders organized and with the help of Kathy and Matt, will finish working on that and start thinking up questions for the attorney, the more leg work that is done on our end as far as paperwork, the more time we can work on getting questions answered. The subject has been tabled until November to allow time to get this done before reaching out to the attorney.

Shipping Containers: Kathy stated that her and Rick went back to square one! Adding the words “modular constructed” to definitions of Accessory structure or use and storage structure. They also created a new definition for Tool Shed, since the ordinance lacks a definition. They also made addition under Performance Standards. One of the questions that was asked was, does one still have to come is for a permit of any structure 150 sq ft, even if it would be free. Short answer was yes, if someone were wanting to build a structure 150 sq ft, they would fill out a permit, and be told at that time, if it’s their first 150 sq ft structure that is would be free, because at the present time, Gnesen has no way to track how many 150 sq ft structures are on a person’s property. Sherri spoke out against the definition of tool shed, stating that she herself has a 12x16 shed that she uses for supplies, and by definition it wouldn’t be considered a tool shed because its bigger than 150 sq ft like the definitions reads. Rick clarified that it would still be considered a tool shed, just not a “no fee” permit like it’s allowed in the ordinance. It was suggested at that time to add that verbiage in the definition, even though it is stated in the performance standards, it should be in the definition as well. There was no objection to that change, however it was mentioned it would just be best to remove the definition all together. Carter then made the comment that it’s nowhere ready to have on the list of ordinance changes. Joe spoke up by saying that this is a vase improvement to what has been presented in the past, and with that said, made the motion to adopt the verbiage as presented given that when ordinance changes come up the verbiage can change. Sherri made an amendment that they remove the definition for tool shed, and Matt added that they change the height from 12ft to 15ft. with those amendments, Sherri seconded the motion. All voted, 6 yays, 1 nay. Voted passed 6-1.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

ZONING OFFICERS REPORT: Mike gave an update on Stewart Camp, letting the Commission know that he had met with John Otterbine of St. Louis County to discuss the way the non-compliant septic issue, as directed from the Town Board. The county will get a letter out to the folks at Stewart Camp end of month. Mike continued with an update on Hemlock Drive, telling the Commission he had acquired a water sample to be tested due to former dug pits in the yard. He mention slow attempts of clean up has been made. Rick also had a Hemlock Drive update, at the last Town Board meeting, Rick was asked to look into the complaint from a near by neighbor, stating that they have poor water quality and haven’t been drinking their water for years in fear that whatever was buried in the for mentioned pits could’ve contaminated the drinking water in the area. Rick told the Commission that a duty officer has been assigned, the MPCA emergency management team and the DNR have also been assigned to help look into this further and will be helping Rick in this investigation.

BOARD MEMBERS REPORT: Gary told the Commission he will look into drones. He will start with the sheriff’s department and go from there.

Next P&Z Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2024

Agneter Variance public hearing will be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2024 at 6:30 pm

Shaw Variance public hearing will be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2024 at 6:45 pm

A motion was made by Sherri to adjourn, with a second by Dick. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hannah Jurek Planning and Zoning Secretary

Carter Williams, Planning Commission Chair

Date

Date