Town of Gnesen Planning Commission
July 15, 2026

Members Present: Carter Williams, Sherri Underthun, Dick Delano, Kathy Buran, Carol Jacobson, Zoning Officer Mike Polzin, Zoning Officer Rick Hogenson, P&Z Secretary Sarah Blix

Members Absent: Joe Ferguson, Matt Thibodeau, Pete Bergman, Nancy Poppenberg

Others Present: Jay Haller, Eli Mullenbach

Approval of the agenda: Carter made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Sherri. All vote in favor.

Approval of June 17, 2026, minutes: Carol made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Dick. All vote in favor.

Discussion: Sarah mentioned that P&Z training has been scheduled for Friday, October 9, 2026 at 1pm.

Old Business:
Hemlock Drive – Mike reported that he is working on correlating manpower and the Sheriff's Department for the last week in July. Carol questioned overall costs and said that it was discussed at the last P&Z meeting that costs would be brought to the July Town Board meeting for approval. Carol said that at the July Town Board meeting the only cost that was discussed was People Ready and Trailer Trash. Mike said he had sent a spreadsheet to the supervisors. Sarah informed Mike that those costs would have to be brought to a meeting for approval, not through an email. There was discussion about whether the abatement can move forward without having costs approved. Sarah said at this time nobody knows what this abatement will cost taxpayers and although several members of the P&Z have asked for a plan on what the abatement will look like, they have not received that yet either. Carter said he did not believe that having a couple of dumpsters on site for one day will even scratch the surface and that it may be more like five days with multiple dumpsters. Mike said the St. Louis County Sheriffs Department is advising to do as much clean up that can possibly be done in one day. Carol questioned the documentation and stressed the importance of inventorying everything that is removed from the property. Sherri said if the board has not approved costs yet then they need to be approved at the August meeting which means the abatement is more likely not going to happen until late August/early September. Rick said he supports the advice of the St. Louis County Sheriffs Department about limiting the number of days for clean-up. Rick also said he believes there has been a huge lack of communication and that the P&Z Commission needs to be more involved and kept notified as to what is going on. Rick said he would rather see multiple dumpsters and 16 workers instead of 6 and just pump out as much work as possible in one day. Carter said the longer we push off doing this abatement, more and more vehicles are showing up on the property. Carter motioned to recommend to the Town Board that before any action be taken at Hemlock Drive the Board approve expenditures and a procedural plan, seconded by Sherri. All vote in favor.
Data Centers – Feedback from Town Board – The subcommittee group recommended to the P&Z Commission that they would like to see a moratorium put into place rather then just accept Andrew Tiede's verbiage. This would provide time for the subcommittee to research data centers and to see what St. Louis County comes up with for ordinance verbiage then recommend something that is best for our community. Sherri made a motion to recommend to the Town Board to place a moratorium on data centers and like businesses for 1 year, seconded by Carol. All vote in favor.
Cease & Desist – There was no update on this issue at this time.
Staubs STR Renewal – Rick asked the P&Z Commission for their guidance on this issue. Rick gave a brief summary of the problem he is having and the feedback he received from the Town Board at their July meeting. Kathy said she believes the only way to move forward would be to abide by the ordinance. Rick reminded the commission that he had proposed ordinance amendments to section 4 and section 8 number 4 but that the Town Board was not in favor of the amendments rather they were more interested in looking into governing STR's with an IUP.
Feedback from Town Board about Proposed STR Amendments – There is no additional information on this issue. Carter said he believed the Town Board is looking into governing STR's with an IUP.

New Business:
V-26-01 Mullenbach Variance – Eli Mullenbach was in attendance at tonight's meeting. Eli said he is requesting a variance for setback from lake and setback from road in order to construct an addition to an existing garage that would then become a mother-in-law suite. The addition would extend an additional 10ft parallel to the lake and road, not encroach any closer. Eli said he investigated other options like adding a second level, however an engineer said that the foundation would not support that plan. Rich said he didn't think that Eli needed a variance because although the garage is within the OHWL, it is 50ft from the lake which is 50% of shoreline setback and it will be running parallel to the lake. As for the road setback, Bay View Lane is a private road so that makes road setbacks not an issue. Sherri asked Eli if he could reach out to the DNR and ask them if they would have an issue with the addition and then bring that back to the public hearing. Eli questioned if he could get some help with wording his questions to the DNR so he is making sure he is asking the right questions. Rick said he would assist Eli. There was discussion about verbiage in the ordinance regarding non-conforming structures and accessory dwellings on less than 1 acre. Eli also verified if the DNR was ok with his plan and if he didn't need a variance from road setbacks then would the only thing he needed a variance from would be square footage for an accessory dwelling, to which Carter said yes, he believed that to be true. Sherri made a motion to schedule the public hearing for August 19, 2026 at 6:30pm, seconded by Carter. All vote in favor.

Zoning Officer's Report: Mike had nothing new to add. Rick gave a quick summary of all the permits he has been working on since the last meeting. Rick also discussed the Bolf property on Abbott Road. Miller Creek Landscaping has been working on revising the concept in an attempt to lower the total percent of lot coverage, which is now down to 21.5%. Rick is waiting on a call back from DNR to see if they would approve this improved plan. Rick said he has also reached out to RC Boeheim from the South St. Louis County Soil and Water, and he thought the Bolf's plan was wonderful and liked that they were going to be utilizing permeable pavers and rocks/boulders to assist with water flowage.

Correspondence: A letter from Ulland Brothers, Jeff Carlson letting the township know that the hot mix plant that was in the Oscar Pit has been removed from the pit. Jeff said one of the reasons they wanted to inform Gnesen of this is to resolve any lingering misconceptions on whether the plant is permanent or portable.

Motion to Adjourn: Sherri made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 pm, seconded by Carol. All vote in favor.

Upcoming Meeting:
Mullenbach Variance V-26-01 Public Hearing – August 19, 2026 – 6:30pm
P&Z Meeting – August 19, 2026 - 7:00pm

Respectfully submitted,

_____ _____
Sarah Blix, Planning and Zoning Secretary Kathy Buran, Planning Commission Chair

_____
Date