

OAK GROVE PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
February 20, 2025

Chairperson Johnson called the Regular Meeting of the Oak Grove Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 20, 2025. Roll call was taken.

Present: Brad Johnson Joel Tjepkes
Guy Farah
Alan Hall

Absent: Marshal Anson

Also Present: Angie Bray Johnson, City Council Member
Loren Wickham, City Administrator
Chuck Schwartz, City Engineer (via Zoom)
Claire Stickler, Planner – MSA Professional Services

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 16, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Farah moved to approve the January 16, 2025, minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tjepkes. Motion carried 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Johnson requested to add sketch plans to the end of the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 1. Conditional Use Permit (CUP) – for reconstructing Viking Blvd NW in the Scenic River District. Rum River Bridge to Orchid Street NW. Anoka County. A variance from side yard and front yard setbacks for a detached garage.**

Chair Johnson read the public hearing notice to consider a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for reconstructing Viking Blvd in the Scenic River District.

The following exhibits were reviewed and are on file:

- Exhibit 1 – Public Hearing Notice
- Exhibit 2 – Application
- Exhibit 3 – Staff Memo

Administrator Wickham read the staff memo stating that the applicant is applying for a Conditional Use Permit for reconstructing Viking Boulevard in the Scenic River District.

Chair Johnson asked if the new Comprehensive Plan guidance would be considered during the preparation for the extension of the regional trail. Engineer Schwartz replied that the County is working on updating the trail plan and the City should receive a copy of it. He explained that the road would be up for bid as a two-way roadway for traffic control.

Public Comment:

Chair Johnson opened the meeting for public comment at 6:42 p.m.

Tom Dailey, 562 229th Avenue NW

Mr. Dailey stated he is a civil engineer for MnDOT and noted that a lot of the tree clearing for the project could be to make the roadway safer for departures.

After calling for public comment and hearing none, Chair Johnson closed the public hearing at 6:44 p.m.

Chair Johnson asked if the eight-foot shoulders and curb and gutter between the bridge project and Blackfoot would create a need for more water impoundment. Engineer Schwartz replied that it would fall below the one-acre impervious.

MOTION: Commissioner Farah moved that the Planning Commission recommends to the City Council approval of the application for the Conditional Use Permit, with the following conditions:

1. All required permits from state and local agencies must be obtained prior to the commencement of construction activities. This includes permits for stormwater discharge, wetland impacts, and other environmental considerations.
2. The project must conform to the city's stormwater management ordinance.
3. During construction, the applicant must implement erosion and sediment control measures to prevent soil erosion and sedimentation of nearby water bodies.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hall. Motion carried 4-0. This will go to the City Council meeting on March 10, 2025.

2. Variance – for an additional accessory building than allowed on a lot 10 acres or larger. 2001 Rum River Blvd NW. Lisa and Michael Hovan.

Chair Johnson read the public hearing notice for a Variance for an additional accessory structure than allowed on a lot 10 acres or larger.

The following exhibits were reviewed and are on file:

- Exhibit 1 – Public Hearing Notice
- Exhibit 2 – Application and Variance Narrative
- Exhibit 3 – Staff Memo
- Exhibit 4 – Site Plan

Administrator Wickham read the staff memo stating that the applicant is applying for a variance for an additional accessory structure than allowed on a lot 10 acres or larger.

Applicants Lisa and Michael Hovan were present and their attorney Aaron D. Quinby attended via Zoom.

Lisa Hovan, 20001 Rum River Boulevard NW

Ms. Hovan explained that she has wanted horses since she was a child and now has the opportunity to take in horses through the organization This Old Horse. She noted her goal is to give horses that are elderly, abused, or those that people no longer want a forever home and be taken care of. The front section of the property is farmed. They have been working with prairie restoration for the back section of the property. She noted that the river surrounds the property and has brought in animals that could be concerning for horses. She stated since she would like to take in horses that are vulnerable, she would like to build a barn

for the horses. The barn would be next to a section where the neighboring land is farmed and not housed on. The barn would not be seen from the road.

Commissioner Hall pointed out that the proposed structure says 36x60 but the graphic says 60x50. Chair Johnson explained that the City Code is written that overhands and eaves count towards total square footage. He mentioned that the Code could be evaluated in the future. Chair Johnson requested to include that as a finding and that it needs to be disambiguated in the final process.

Commissioner Tjepkes left the meeting at 6:58 p.m. due to an emergency.

Public Comment:

Chair Johnson opened the public hearing at 7:00 p.m. After calling for public comment and hearing none, Chair Johnson closed the public hearing at 7:01 p.m.

The following findings were reviewed:

1. The property is currently zoned Single Family Residential.
2. All existing structures meet zoning code requirements.
3. Oak Grove’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan does not directly address the applicant’s situation, but it appears that the accessory structure will not interrupt the rural residential character of the area, which is supported by the Comprehensive Plan.
4. Section 109-48 (a) of the Oak Grove City Code allows for the granting of variances in cases where the “property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by a zoning requirement; the plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property and not created by the landowner; and the variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood.”
5. The property owners propose to use the property in a reasonable manner.
6. The plight of the landowner appears to be due to a circumstance created by the landowner.
7. The variance if granted will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood.

Chair Johnson suggested assessing the agricultural zoning so that a property with 40 acres or more would not have to request a variance.

Chair Johnson stated that he is comfortable approving the variance as long as there is a stipulation that includes if the property were subdivided there would be a removal of one of the structures so that it would conform with the requirements for smaller lots. Administrator Wickham replied that the City Code addresses the concern by stating if a property is subdivided, it must come into compliance with the Code.

The Commission discussed allowing variances on properties with more acreage versus not allowing variances on properties with fewer acreage. City Planner Stickler explained that variances do not set precedence.

MOTION: Commissioner Farah moved that the Planning Commission recommends to the City Council approval of the variance application for an additional accessory building than allowed on a lot 10 acres or larger. 20001 Rum River Blvd NW. Lisa and Michael Hovan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hall. Motion carried 3-0. This will go to the City Council meeting on March 10, 2025.

Chair Johnson suggested looking at the requirements for accessory buildings for lots that are 40 acres or more since there seem to be many

SKETCH PLANS

1. Second House – 562 229th Avenue NW. Tom and Jennifer Dailey

Tom and Jennifer Dailey, 562 229th Avenue NW

Administrator Wickham stated Mr. and Ms. Bailey are interested in adding another house to their parent's property at 562 229th Avenue NW, but they do not have enough road frontage to meet the minimum requirements for a minor subdivision. The property has plenty of acreage but not enough road frontage.

Mr. Bailey explained the house is an old farmhouse. He added that his father is having health issues and does not want to move from his home. Mr. Bailey would like to build a home on the property in order to care for his father. He asked the Commission for suggestions.

Chair Johnson mentioned that there have been discussions about situations like Mr. and Ms. Bailey's where people would be able to care for elderly family members.

Commissioner Farah asked what the road frontage is. Mr. Bailey replied about 440 feet. He added that there is a double driveway and two wells.

Chair Johnson asked if they were planning on splitting the lot. Ms. Bailey explained that the parents desire to split the property so that there would not be a burden on the property when the parents pass away.

Chair Johnson and Administrator Wickham provided additional options such as having a home attached to the existing home, having a requirement to tear down the existing home, or having a development agreement to remove the existing home after the new home is built.

Commissioner Farah mentioned that it could be an option to add a 66-foot road easement going in for the second lot. Commissioner Hall mentioned that the property could be subdivided into two lots.

2. Smith Grove Third Addition – University Avenue and Viking Boulevard. John and Dory Lovelette

Administrator Wickham explained that Mr. and Ms. Lovelette have sold the model home and have more lots to sell. They are looking to install a temporary structure for an office space. He mentioned there is no Code for the situation and suggested an interim use permit. He added that it could be included in the Code in the future.

The Commission discussed options for a temporary use in lieu of building a model home. Chair Johnson mentioned that he could see the Planning Commission approving a temporary use while they were building a model. Commissioner Hall expressed his concern about allowing a temporary structure that stays until the last home is built. He added his concern about the temporary use of a trailer becoming a billboard.

Chair Johnson stated that the Planning Commission would allow an interim use in conjunction with a building permit for a model home to be used.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Hall made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Farah. Motion carried 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Loren Wickham, City Administrator