

BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Bridgewater Township Government Center
Thursday, April 26, 2018
Official Minutes

- ❖ John Klockeman called the meeting to order at 7:00
- ❖ Members present were John Klockeman, Bruce Morlan, Larry Alderks, Kurt Schrader, Jeff Johnson, Frances Boehning, John Holden, and Jim Braun. In addition, Gary Ebling was present as Bridgewater Supervisor.
- ❖ Jeff Johnson made a motion to approve the agenda, Larry Alderks seconded, all approved.
- ❖ Larry Alderks made a motion to approve the minutes of March 29, 2018, Bruce Morlan seconded, all approved.

- ❖ Open Forum: None.

- ❖ Public Hearings
 - Tony Haan – Variance for front yard setback.
 - The public hearing was opened at 7:03pm
 - The variance is for a 96 foot setback from the centerline of Albers Ave and a 147 foot setback from the centerline of 100th Street.
 - Jim Braun reviewed the staff report regarding the request for variance.
 - While not part of the variance request, Jim Braun noted that a separate request to add a stop sign at the corner of Albers Trail and 100th Street may be put before the Board of Supervisors.
 - Jim Gill (township resident) noted that these roads are not heavily used and the addition of the added building should not impede traffic sight lines.
 - Tony Haan reviewed the history of the current garage building and the limitations of the site. The limitations include the existence of a swale next to the garage and the septic mound.
 - The public hearing was closed at 7:14pm
 - John Klockeman noted that the garage is currently non-conforming.
 - Jim Braun explained that it was discovered when measurements for the garage addition were made, that the currently garage is over the set back. A past builder placed the structure too close to the road without a variance.
 - Carolyn Braun was consulted and she advised that the issue can be resolved in the findings for the current variance request. The current owner cannot be held accountable for the building mistakes of the previous owner. She also advised

that this may need to be covered by an after the fact variance in addition to the new variance.

- Larry Alderks stated that he will abstain from voting as he is a neighbor to Tony Haan.
 - Bruce Morlan made a motion to approve the front yard setback variance for Tony Haan, Kurt Schrader seconded the motion, all approved with the exception of Larry Alderks, who abstained.
- Ronald Thompson – After the fact Variance for a front yard setback
- The hearing was opened at 7:28pm.
 - Jim Braun reviewed the staff report regarding the history of the request.
 - The applicant is building a garage on the lot. Jim Braun noticed that the building did not have a permit or variance. A stop work order was sent by Jim Braun in March 22, 2018, until such time as the permit and variance went before the Planning Commission.
 - The request for the variance is to place the garage 100 feet from the centerline of Falk instead of the current setback of 133 feet from the centerline of Falk.
 - Ronald Thompson reviewed the topography of the lot and why he did not complete a permit or variance before starting construction. He stated that he did not complete a permit or variance application because it was his understanding that Jim Braun had sole authority to grant these. His reasoning for beginning construction was to provide employment for masonry workers over the winter and because it is difficult to get workers in the summer. Mr. Thompson also noted that he did not understand the variance process. In describing the new garage, Mr. Thompson noted that the building will cost about \$250,000 to build.
 - Jim Gill, a neighbor, did not feel that a variance should be issued after the fact for this property as the homeowner should have known that the variance and permit were needed prior to construction.
 - The neighbor to the south of the property, Donald Price, expressed concern that if the new garage structure is placed further into the lot, it will impede the flow of water resulting in potential flooding to the Price property.
 - Jim Braun reviewed the history regarding Rice County setbacks on Falk Trail.
 - Jim Braun also noted that as the permit application was not submitted prior to construction; state statute allows the cost of the permit to be doubled as penalty.
 - The Public Hearing was closed at 7:51pm.
 - Following a question from the Commission regarding why Mr. Thompson did not apply for a permit or variance, he responded with:
 - He was not aware that there was a Planning Commission in Bridgewater Township.
 - He thought that Jim Braun had sole authority.

- He reviewed again the topography of the lot, the existence of mature trees, and the water that crosses the property from the lot to the south.
- A discussion was held by the Planning Commission regarding the current setbacks on Falk Trail and possible repercussions from Rice County.
- Jim Braun will request additional information from Rice County regarding setbacks on Falk Trail.
- Larry Alderks made a motion to deny the variance request, Jeff Johnson seconded, discussion followed.
- Gary Ebling made the suggestion that further information be requested from Rice County prior to a final decision being made.
- Bruce Morlan made a motion to table the item to a time certain of June 7th, 2018, at 7pm in the Bridgewater Town Hall, Kurt Schrader seconded, a roll call vote was requested:
 - John Klockeman – Yes
 - Jeff Johnson – Yes
 - Kurt Schrader – Yes
 - Frances Boehning – Yes
 - Bruce Morlan – Yes
 - Larry Alderks – No
- Motion to table the item to a time certain of June 7th, 2018, at 7pm was approved.

❖ Old Business

- Update discussions with under-ground communication companies.
 - There is concern regarding instability of the current utilities pedestals/terminals.
 - There is a need for better visibility of the pedestals in the ditch to avoid mowing them over.
 - Additional steel posts are needed to prevent the pedestals falling over.
 - Jim Braun will ask the utility companies to come before the Board to answer questions.

❖ New Business.

- Agricultural Structure Requirements – MN State Building Code
 - Ag Buildings are currently exempt from the state building code.
 - Inspections will be required for the footings and the trusses will need to meet snow and wind loads. These truss specs come with the trusses when they are delivered.
 - Agricultural buildings are not to be used for personal use items (i.e. boat storage).
- Personal Use Pole Buildings (Non-Ag Accessory Structures)
 - Jim Braun was received requests from residents that pole buildings for personal use have increased footing requirements and higher design standards.

- Jim and Carolyn Braun will present ideas at a later meeting regarding new standards.
- John Klockeman suggested asking local citizens about the need for design standards on non-ag accessory structures.

❖ Miscellaneous

- Code Compliance items and updates.
 - Jim Braun reviewed the current six properties out of compliance.
 - Two of the four are working on bringing the properties into compliance.
 - The remaining two properties may need an order by the courts to be brought into compliance.
- Little Prairie Church
 - A question was raised about the ability to park along Cty Rd 8 at the Little Prairie Church.
 - Jim Braun spoke with Trent McCorkle regarding any conditions with a C.U.P. Per Trent, there is no C.U.P as the church is so old and the only variance granted was for some repairs to the exterior of the church. Jim Braun will continue to look to see if there are any restrictions to parking on Cty Rd 8.
- Next Meeting
 - The May 31, 2018, meeting of the Bridgewater Planning Commission has been cancelled due to scheduling conflicts. The next Bridgewater Planning Commission meeting will take place on Thursday, June 7, 2018, at 7pm in the Bridgewater Town Hall.

- ❖ Adjournment – Jeff Johnson made a motion to adjourn, Larry Alderks seconded, all approved.