



**ITASCA COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION/BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**

123 NE 4th St
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
(218) 327-2857

Wednesday, 6/11/2025

9:00 A.M.

Itasca County Boardroom

The regular meeting of the Itasca County Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment (PC/BoA) was held on Wednesday, 6/11/2025, at 9:00 a.m. in the County Board Room of the Courthouse with the following in attendance:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Bellomy, Dan Butterfield, Mike Oja, Conley Janssen;

ABSENT: Lisa Maasch;

EXOFFICIO: Environmental Services Director Katie Benes,

GUESTS: Jeff Fortune, Alex Orlov, Peggy Clayton, Steve Rindahl, Tom Nelson, William & Michelle Greer, Michael Erickson

Chair Bellomy called the Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment meeting to order, opening with the Pledge of Allegiance. Copies of the agenda and opening statement were available for the audience.

Agenda. Upon the motion of Janssen/Butterfield, which carried unanimously, the agenda was approved as distributed.

Minutes. Upon the motion of Butterfield/Janssen, which carried unanimously, the minutes of the 5/14/2025 hearing were approved as distributed.

Mad Bear Alpine Area LLC/Jeff Fortune/CUP— (SW NW LYG SLY of Co Rd 449 Less E 660', Section 28, Unorganized Township 54-26, Parcel #63-028-2300)— submitted a conditional use permit (CUP) application to establish a multi-use alpine ski and snowboard area. An administrative interpretation was added to the record (PCBA 09). The parcel was viewed on the overhead screen. Jeff Fortune was present and discussed his proposed plan noting there is existing Nordic skiing, hiking and mountain biking on other parcels in the area and they will be adding downhill skiing, snowboarding and other possible year-round activities (including ski jumping/free style training). The applicant accepts the maintenance responsibility referred to in Karin Grandia's letter. Oja/Janssen motioned to close the public portion of the meeting which carried unanimously.

Motion: Butterfield/Oja motioned to recommend (to the County Board) approval of the CUP application submitted by Mad Bear Alpine Area LLC/Jeff Fortune to establish a multi-use alpine ski & snowboard area as set forth in the 6/6/2025 staff report. Motion carried unanimously.

Condition: Comply with Best Management Practices

As per Section 2.5 of the Zoning Ordinance, since this CUP is of a commercial nature and proposed for a residential zoning district, the Planning Commission will make their recommendation to the County Board who will act on the application after holding a public hearing scheduled for 6/17/2025.

Butterfield/Janssen motioned to adjourn the Planning Commission and open the Board of Adjustment meeting and motion carried unanimously.

Alex Orlov/Variance—(SE NE LYG N of LINE DRAWN PARA WITH & 50 ft N of Cole Creek, Harris Township 54-25, Parcel #19-002-1402)—submitted a variance application for variance from Section 3.8.1C of the Zoning Ordinance for construction of a 2600 SF dwelling/attached garage to be located 33' from the centerline of Pennala Rd. An aerial photo of the parcel was viewed on the overhead screen. Mr. Orlov was present and discussed his proposed plan. Peggy Clayton, Harris Township, was present and commented that Harris Township has recommended approval. Butterfield/Oja motioned to close the public portion of the meeting which carried unanimously.

Motion: Butterfield/Janssen motioned to approve the variance application submitted by Alex Orlov for construction of a 2600 SF dwelling/attached garage to be located 33' from the centerline of Pennala Rd. as set forth in the 6/6/2025 staff report. Motion carried unanimously.

Condition: Comply with Best Management Practices

At 9:58 a.m., the meeting was recessed for a 10-minute break and at 10:08 a.m. the meeting was called back to order.

CR Real Estate LLC/Steve Rindahl/Variance—(Lots 61 & 62 First Addition to Sherwood Forest, Lots 61-62 Third Addition to Sherwood Forest, Section 23, Unorganized Township 57-26, Parcel #65-510-0611, 65-520-0611)—submitted a variance application for variance from Sections 3.8.1C.3 for construction of a 30'x40' garage to be located 57' from the centerline of the platted road and 15' from the RROW. An aerial photo of the parcels was viewed on the overhead screen. Steve Rindahl was present and discussed his proposed plan for a garage needed for storage. The parcel topography and snowmobile trail limit options for garage placement. A mitigation plan was discussed and applicant will check with SWCD regarding this before a permit is issued/before construction and address erosion as needed. Tom Nelson was present and commented the buffer and screening need improvement but is in favor of the garage. The applicant confirmed the garage will be used for storage only. Butterfield/Oja motioned to close the public portion of the meeting which carried unanimously.

Motion: Bellomy/Butterfield motioned to approve the variance application submitted by CR Real Estate LLC for construction of a 30'x40' garage to be located 57' from the centerline of the platted road and 15' from RROW as set forth in the 6/6/2025 staff report. Motion carried unanimously

Condition/s: Mitigation plan approved by SWCD submitted before construction

William & Michelle Greer/Variance—(S of Creek, Lot 1, All Lots 2-3, Sunrise, Section 1, Deer River Township 56-27, Parcel #11-440-0012)—submitted a variance application for construction of a 22'x24' attached garage to be located 51' from the centerline of West Deer Lake Rd. An aerial photo of the parcel was viewed on the overhead screen. A letter from Karin Grandia dated 6/9/2025 was added to the record (PCBA 08). At the site inspection, the applicants had located their side property line and indicated the proposed would not meet the required 10' side property line setback. Applicants requested their variance be amended to include it and tabled until the July meeting to do so (to allow proper notification) and waived the MS.15.99 time limit requirement.

Motion: Butterfield/Oja motioned to table the variance application submitted by William & Michelle Greer for construction of a 22'x24' attached garage to be located 51' from the centerline of W Deer Lake Rd. until the July meeting and motion carried unanimously.

Michael Erickson/After-the-Fact Variance—(Lot 42, 1st Addition to Plat of Sunrise, Section 6, Unorganized Township 56-26, Parcel #64-520-0036)—submitted an after-the-fact variance application for a 16'x24' deck and 24'x24' dwelling addition constructed 3' from the bluff and 87' from the Ordinary High Water Level (OHWL). An aerial photo of the parcel was viewed on the overhead screen. After reviewing the 2' contour lines on the aerial photo, there was discussion about whether the top of bluff was 3' in front of the structure, as noted in the staff report, or further upslope. It was noted that no zoning permit had been obtained for this deck/dwelling addition. Michael Erickson was present and discussed his application. His discussion included that he was wrongfully under the impression that if an addition would not be closer than the existing structure and less than 1000 SF it would be allowed (noting the structure addition was constructed 8' further back). Butterfield/Janssen motioned to close the public portion of the meeting which carried unanimously. Members commented they thought that if the applicant had applied for a permit/variance before construction that it would not have been approved. Member Butterfield discussed concerns with the bluff stability/erosion.

Motion: Janssen/Butterfield motioned to deny the after-the-fact variance application submitted by Michael Erickson for a 16'x24' deck and 24'x24' dwelling addition which was constructed 87' from the OHWL and does not meet the bluff setback as set forth in the 6/6/2025 staff report. Motion to deny was unanimously approved (by roll call vote; Oja, Janssen, Butterfield and Bellomy voting Aye), Member Bellomy added that if a permit had been applied for it would not been approved as constructed.

Other:

Water Plan Implementation Committee (WPIC) Report. Member Butterfield reported there was discussion including forest stewardship plans, Upper Mississippi Headwaters, 1W1P, Mississippi River Grand Rapids, Bigfork/Little Fork watershed plans, and he included information on a "Our Future Forests" workshop scheduled for Oct 4th at MN North College in Grand Rapids. Member Janssen also mentioned there will be a U of M Woodlands Stewards Program starting at the end of July (\$60.00 cost per applicant).

At 11:39 a.m., Chair Bellomy adjourned the meeting.

By: _____
Diane Nelson, Recording Secretary