
Chisago County Government Center | 313 N. Main Street | Board Room 160A | Center City, MN 55012

**With no land use applications to consider or act on,
the Planning Commission's Wednesday, April 2, 2025 tour has been CANCELED.**

- 1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2. Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum**
- 3. Approval of Agenda**
- 4. Approval of Minutes**
 - a. February 20, 2025 Special Work Session
 - b. March 6, 2025 Regular Meeting
- 5. Receive all Materials and Submittals into Record**

Previously Distributed:

 - a. Complete meeting packet including attachments for agenda items 8a, 8b, and 8c.
- 6. Public Hearings**

None
- 7. Public Hearings – Continued Hearings**

None
- 8. Old Business**
 - a. County Board requested Rural Retail Tourism / wedding venue discussion
 - b. Commissioner requested Major Home Occupation vs. horse / equine permitted use discussion
 - c. Review of Ordinance Issue Identification Tracking Matrix
- 9. New Business**
 - a. Commissioner requested Official Zoning Map Amendment work plan discussion
- 10. Communications and Reports**
 - a. County Board Liaison Reports – Commissioners Greene and Dahlberg
- 11. Miscellaneous**
- 12. Adjourn Meeting**
 - The next special work session is scheduled for Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 6:00 pm.
 - The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 1, 2025 at 7:00 pm.

**CHISAGO COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION
Special Work Session
February 20, 2025**

The Chisago County Planning Commission met for a special work session at 6:00 pm on Thursday, February 20, 2025 at the Chisago County Government Center.

Vice Chair DuBose called the special work session to order. Commissioners Present: Chris DuBose, John Sutcliffe, Dave Whitney, Jolene Wille, and Chip Yeager. Commissioners Absent: Eric Leivian and Jim McCarthy.

Staff Present: Environmental Services Director Kurt Schneider and Land Services Coordinator Beth Gervais.

Others Present: Ex Officio County Commissioners Dan Dahlberg and Rick Greene, Owen Kuhnly, Erika Huffman, Rochelle Ganley, and Deah Szymanski.

County Board Requested Rural Retail Tourism / Wedding Venue Discussion – Yeager began the discussion by referencing materials submitted by McCarthy in advance of the work session and included in the Planning Commission's special work session packet, including an excerpt from the Mn/DOT Access Management Manual. There was a brief conversation about road sight distance, and it was generally agreed that the Road Authority would determine this issue. The group then discussed the Rural Retail Tourism Matrix, which was developed earlier in 2025, and the ideal number of "classes" for Rural Retail Tourism venues / activities, ultimately deciding that only three classes would be necessary.

Yeager then introduced the topic of screening, noting that the Zoning Ordinance did not specify where screening should be placed. Yeager suggested adding language requiring that screening be placed along neighboring property boundaries, along the roadway, and along the back or rear property boundary. Sutcliffe contributed to the discussion, pointing out that screening should be considered on a case-by-case basis, as every property was unique. DuBose proposed adding screening as a future discussion topic. Whitney added to the discussion by sharing that Zoning Ordinance Section 4.17 Rural Retail Tourism Businesses, B. Standards, 8. Screening Required provided specific screening requirements applicable to all Rural Retail Tourism businesses and he disagreed with this approach. He noted that some Rural Retail Tourism uses may not need screening and that the decision should be based on the impact to the neighborhood. DuBose suggested changing the verbiage to "Screening as required for Rural Retail Tourism Businesses." Whitney agreed that this was an improvement. County Commissioner Dahlberg proposed the wording of "as deemed required by the Planning Commission." Yeager supported this change, as it would allow the Commission to consider each request individually. Whitney asked if staff could provide draft language with improved wording. Director Schneider summarized the discussion and suggested that screening should be considered but "as deemed required" in specific cases. Schneider then offered two possible scenarios to consider: one where an applicant provided a screening design that the Planning Commission could review, and another where an applicant provided a plan with little to no screening, but the Commission might determine additional screening was necessary. Schneider concluded by suggesting that staff could prepare draft language without using the word "shall" for the Commission's future consideration. Yeager proposed the phrase "when deemed required by the Planning Commission..." as a potential solution.

The discussion then transitioned back to the Rural Retail Tourism Matrix. DuBose suggested that screening requirements may change based on the class for which applicants were applying. The Planning Commission discussed how screening was not initially listed as a variable in the matrix; however, through discussion, the

general consensus of the Commission was that it should be added. Sutcliffe noted that adding screening to the matrix would address some of the concerns related to the required screening standard, as Class 3 could potentially require it while Classes 1 and 2 could be handled on a case-by-case basis. Schneider proposed adding a "Screening Required" variable to the matrix, with screening required for Classes 2 and 3, and Class 1 to be handled on a case-by-case basis. Whitney, noting that the matrix initially included a "Class 4" option, expressed interest in further reviewing the matrix before the Commission decided on removing Class 4 entirely, with particular interest in occupancy levels and how the different variables would apply to each class. Whitney mentioned that he would be in favor of a maximum event attendance / occupancy of 200 people. There was a lengthy discussion about the maximum occupancy level for an event. The Planning Commission ultimately reached consensus on a maximum occupancy of 200 people and continued the discussion about occupancy levels for Classes 1 and 2, as well as the acreage minimums for each class. DuBose suggested that anything less than 20 acres would correspond to Class 1, low-impact uses, while Class 2 would be for seasonal events such as corn mazes, pottery tours, and other less frequent activities, and Class 3 would include wedding / event gathering venues. The Planning Commission had a lengthy discussion about land area and reached consensus that the acreage requirements should be as follows: anything less than 20 acres would be Class 1, a 20-acre minimum would be required for Class 2, and a 40-acre minimum would be required for Class 3.

The Planning Commission further discussed the matrix and the different variables that would be considered for each class. Whitney suggested adding soundproof buildings and set hours of operation as variables (7:00 am to 7:00 pm, 7:00 am to 9:00 pm, and 7:00 am to 11:00 pm). DuBose and Whitney suggested that activities such as quilting or pottery shops, with staggered traffic, should be considered low-impact activities regardless of property size. Schneider noted that the common element between those two types of uses was that they took place indoors, as opposed to outdoors. DuBose further noted that the number of event attendees mattered, explaining that for larger events with 200 people or outdoor music, there should be a cutoff time. Whitney shared how he had broken things out on his draft matrix, noting that Class 1 would have boxes checked for 7:00 pm, 9:00 pm, and 11:00 pm, allowing them to open at any time. Whitney liked the idea of the matrix because it indicated to applicants what would be expected for the use they were applying for.

DuBose questioned whether the County should require asphalt parking surfaces for Rural Retail Tourism uses. Schneider noted that there were known issues with grading and drainage at some previously approved venues, and a few related variables had been added to the matrix to prompt further discussion (i.e., General Turf Designated Parking Area, Gravel Parking / Drive Aisle Surface, Asphalt / Impervious Surface Drive Aisle and Parking Surface, and Engineered Pre/Post Development Stormwater Drainage Plan). Whitney stated that it was an important issue because he was personally aware of neighborhood friction caused by water runoff related to a Rural Retail Tourism parking lot expansion, and believed the County was obligated to address water flow. Sutcliffe added that, if the Rural Retail Tourism business was going to have an asphalt driveway, it would normally require an evaporation area or settling pond. Sutcliffe further explained that he believed the variable was added to the matrix to ensure that applicants reached out to the County if they planned to expand a parking lot. There was further discussion about parking lot expansions and how it could indicate an increase in occupancy levels / an expansion of the use. Schneider suggested adding language that would note that any expansion within these classes or expansion into a higher class may require a Conditional Use Permit Amendment. There was also lengthy discussion about requiring applicants to apply for their driveway permit through the Township / Road Authority prior to applying for the Conditional Use Permit through the County, allowing additional time for Township / Road Authority to review the proposed use.

Deah Szymanski, a Sunrise Township Planning Commissioner, was present and shared that when Sunrise Township received applications, she would like to know the percentage of impervious surface coverage as it

would allow the Township to better understand how the project would impact neighbors. DuBose asked staff if Rural Retail Tourism applicants were required to provide information pertaining to impervious surface coverage. Gervais explained that an impervious surface calculation worksheet was required when the property was located within the Shoreland Management District to ensure that impervious surface coverage did not exceed 25%; however, worksheets were not required for non-Shoreland Management District properties. Gervais added that properties located outside of the Shoreland Management District were limited to 50% impervious surface coverage.

There was lengthy discussion about ideal minimum required setbacks for each of the classes and, ultimately, the Commission requested that staff prepare visual representations of typical lot sizes with varying setbacks in an effort to prevent over restrictive setback requirements.

Whitney introduced discussion about the matrix variable which prohibited "Amplified Outdoor Music / Activity". DuBose suggested that the matrix included a typo and that it should be listed as permitted. There was additional discussion about the verbiage for the variable, and the Commission reached consensus to reword the variable as "Limited Amplified Outdoor Music." The group also discussed limiting the number of days on which amplified music would be allowed.

The discussion then transitioned to the idea of requiring / allowing soundproof buildings as a means of mitigating noise impacts. Whitney shared that indoor amplified music could be just as disruptive to nearby residents if the building was not adequately soundproofed, and suggested having better control over how buildings were soundproofed. There was discussion about potentially requiring soundproof buildings for venues where amplified music would be played; however, after further discussion, it was determined that this would not be a fair requirement, as some of the requests involved existing buildings.

Chair Wille redirected the conversation to the various "Maximum Event Days Per..." categories within the Rural Retail Tourism Matrix. The Planning Commission discussed and reached consensus that it wasn't necessary to limit the number of events within Class 1. However, for Class 3, they agreed that the maximum number of events per week should be capped at three. The Planning Commission then discussed the potential for Class 3 uses to host additional smaller / low-impact events during the week, and this led to the idea of creating a hybrid class which would allow Class 3 uses to have Class 1 / low-impact events Sunday through Thursday.

Whitney asked fellow Commissioners if they generally supported the inclusion of wedding / gathering venues under the Rural Retail Tourism Business category or if they preferred this use to be a separate category. The Planning Commission briefly discussed the matter and reached consensus that they preferred to keep it under Rural Retail Tourism. However, they also agreed that it should be highlighted in the category description, as it was considered a popular application.

Returning to the topic of parking lots and drainage, Chair Wille inquired if the stormwater drainage plan, which was currently shown as being required for Class 3 uses, would address the parking lot requirements. The Planning Commission discussed removing some of the variables from the matrix and ultimately reached consensus on the following changes:

- Remove "General Turf Designated Parking Area".
- Remove "Gravel Parking / Drive Aisle Surface".
- Remove "Asphalt / Impervious Surface Drive Aisle and Parking Surface".
- Create a variable for "General Designated Parking Area with Drainage Plan" for Classes 1 and 2.

- And, if the Planning Commission believed that a particular proposed use should have a drainage plan due to topography, the Commission could address its concern with a recommended condition of approval.

There was general discussion about how to prepare and present the proposed changes to the County Board for consideration. Schneider suggested preparing a draft version of Zoning Ordinance Section 4.17, which included tracked changes, and presenting it along with the edited Rural Retail Tourism Matrix to the Planning Commission for final review before presenting it to the County Board.

Whitney proposed an amendment to Zoning Ordinance, Section 4.17, B. 11., such that the term "cattle" would be replaced with the term "farm animals" as the Ordinance provided a definition for farm animals and the proposed term would encompass more than just cattle. The Commission generally agreed to the suggested amendment.

Noting that there were audience members present, Chair Wille invited audience members to address the Planning Commission. There were three unidentified audience members present, sharing the following concerns:

- Concerns were expressed regarding parking for Class 1 uses. An example was provided where a Rural Retail Tourism use was approved on a one-acre lot. The audience member questioned where parking would be provided to accommodate the maximum occupancy level of 50 people, and suggested that event attendees may resort to parking on the street which would be unpleasant for surrounding neighbors.
- Concerns were expressed with the suggested setbacks for Class 3 uses, sharing that they believed a 250' setback was too small for a 40-acre property and, instead, suggested a 500' setback. They also suggested using previously approved Rural Retail Tourism uses to "test" the matrix.
- Additional concerns related to minimum setback requirements were expressed and the audience member suggested implementing situational-based setbacks and requiring that the Conditional Use Permit holder assume liability if and when the setback was encroached.

Hearing concerns related to setbacks and impacts to neighboring properties, DuBose suggested requiring boundary fencing for Class 3 uses. Whitney suggested that any fencing requirement be worded in such a way that it could be evaluated and determined on a case-by-case basis. Schneider offered that the Planning Commission could consider implementing performance-related criteria, providing an example of applicants who chose to install fencing along the property boundary could benefit from a reduced setback.

County Commissioner Dahlberg posed a question regarding Class 3 uses. He asked if, with investments in land, the venue, and other improvements, a 200-person maximum occupancy level was too restrictive and if it could essentially eliminate the use, as some event holders desired to have more than 200 people in attendance. Yeager agreed, suggesting that the Commission review recent applications, test the matrix, and re-evaluate if necessary.

Commissioner Requested Major Home Occupation vs. Horse / Equine Permitted Use Discussion – Whitney, referencing materials he had submitted in advance of the work session and which were included in the Planning Commission's special work session packet, explained that the document he had prepared included his and Yeager's suggestions for cleaning up the language used in the Zoning Ordinance. Yeager expressed concern about Whitney's suggested use of the terms "amateur" and "professional" in place of the County's

more standard terms of "non-commercial" and "commercial", questioning if there would be any legal implications from not using the terms "non-commercial" and "commercial". Whitney stated that he would prefer to use and define the terms in a way that aligned with language more commonly used by the horse community. He also noted that using the existing terms of "non-commercial" and "commercial" would require many citizens to apply for a Conditional Use Permit, which he generally disagreed with. Whitney provided an example of a recent Major Home Occupation applicant who rented one acre of land from a neighbor for purposes of a horse pasture, explaining that the current Zoning Ordinance would technically also require that the property owner making his / her land available for rent request and obtain a Conditional Use Permit for the use. Whitney also noted that he wanted the Zoning Ordinance to define non-commercial use of horses, as it was not currently defined. Whitney concluded by stating that he would like the use to be treated as an agricultural business. The Planning Commission generally agreed that this was an area of the Ordinance that could be improved, and improved in such a way that would provide a clear distinction between commercial and non-commercial equine uses.

DuBose asked audience member Deah Szymanski, who had previously mentioned her equine business / experiences, what her initial thoughts were on this topic. Szymanski shared that there would need to be flexibility as circumstances changed frequently, such as number of horses being boarded, number of people taking lessons, etc.

Commissioner Requested Official Zoning Map Amendment Work Plan – Because the request to discuss a zoning map amendment work plan was presented by Commissioner McCarthy, who was absent from the meeting, the consensus of the group was to hold the discussion for a future work session.

Review of Zoning Ordinance Issue Identification Tracking Matrix – The Planning Commission received an updated issue identification tracking matrix as part of the work session packet, but there was no review or discussion.

With no further business to discuss, the work session adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Jolene Wille
Chair

ATTEST:

Beth Gervais
Land Services Coordinator

**CHISAGO COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
March 6, 2025**

The Chisago County Planning Commission met in regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 6, 2025, at the Chisago County Government Center.

Staff Present: Beth Gervais, Land Services Coordinator; Kurt Schneider, Environmental Services Director; and Sarah Scheunemann, Office Support Specialist – Land Services.

Chair Wille called the meeting to order and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. A roll call of Commission members was taken. Commission members present: Dave Whitney, Jim McCarthy, Eric Leivian, Chip Yeager, John Sutcliffe, Chris DuBose, and Jolene Wille. Absent: None. A quorum was established. Also present: Ex Officio County Commissioners Rick Greene and Dan Dahlberg.

Approval of Agenda – Motion by Sutcliffe to approve the agenda as presented; second by Yeager. The **motion passed** 7-0.

Approval of Minutes – Motion by McCarthy to approve the February 6, 2025 regular meeting minutes as presented; second by Whitney. The **motion passed** 7-0.

Receive all Materials and Submittals into Record – Motion by Sutcliffe to accept all materials and submittals into the record; second Yeager. The **motion passed** 7-0. Materials distributed to the Planning Commission in advance of the meeting for their review included the full meeting packet with staff reports. Copies of all meeting materials were made available for the public.

Public Hearings – New Applications

Larry Hanson – Coordinator Gervais provided background information on Larry Hansen's request for an Interim Use Permit allowing for an accessory structure with sanitary facilities without the presence of a principal use structure, such as a dwelling, on a 12.57± acre property in the Agricultural (AG) District. The subject site was generally located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Rush Lake Trail / CSAH 1 and 527th Street / CR 94 in Nessel Township, S11, T37, R22 (PID 06.00235.11).

Coordinator Gervais shared that the subject site was generally located east of Rush Lake Trail / CSAH 1 and south of 527th Street / CR 94 and was platted as Lot 1, Block 1, Ponytail Addition in 2024. Topography of the subject site consisted of elevations ranging from 929' to 941', and featured areas of heavy forestation and wetlands. The subject site was located within the AG District and was surrounded by the AG District to the north, east, and south. Land directly west was located within the RR District. Surrounding properties ranged in size from two acres to 40 acres, with smaller properties being lakeshore properties and larger properties generally located north of Belle Isle Drive and east of Rush Lake Trail / CSAH 1.

Coordinator Gervais reviewed details of the proposal sharing that the proposed accessory structure would be 30' x 46' (1,680 sf) in size and used for residential purposes only and the property owner had included in the request allowance for sanitary facilities (i.e., toilet and sink). Gervais noted that the application materials did not provide any indication of further development of the site; however, during the February 12, 2025 Technical Review Committee meeting, Hansen shared that he intended to further develop the site with a dwelling and the septic system would be designed with a future dwelling in mind. The site plan indicated that the structure would be at least 600' from all property boundaries; however, utilizing the County's GIS Viewer, Gervais noted that the proposed structure would likely have the following setbacks:

- West – roughly 135' from the west property boundary / 200' from the centerline of Rush Lake Trail / CSAH 1;
- East – roughly 280' from the east property boundary;
- North – roughly 660' from the north property boundary / 720' from the centerline of CR 94; and
- South – roughly 530' from the south property boundary.

The Technical Review Committee met with Larry Hansen on February 12, 2025. Hansen provided details for possible future development of the site with a dwelling and shared that the sidewalls of the proposed accessory structure would be 12' in height. The Committee did not identify any immediate concerns with the request. The Nessel Town Board considered the request on February 11, 2025 and recommended approval with no comments or recommended conditions. The initial 60-day review period was scheduled to expire on March 18, 2025 and, because this timeframe did not accommodate all necessary meetings, the review period was extended by an additional 60 days. The extended review period was scheduled to expire on May 17, 2025.

Coordinator Gervais concluded by offering a recommendation of approval with draft Findings of Fact and conditions, and reviewed options available to the Planning Commission.

Chair Wille invited the property owner to address the Commission. Larry Hansen was present and approached the Commission. Hansen had no additional information to add to the presentation. McCarthy asked Hansen if the proposed structure would be insulated and heated. Hansen replied that the proposed structure would not be insulated or heated.

Chair Wille opened the public hearing and sought comment. With no members of the audience wishing to speak, **motion** by Sutcliffe to close the public hearing; second by Yeager. The **motion passed 7-0**.

Whitney, noting that the request included approval for sanitary facilities, inquired if a condition of approval should be added which would require a septic system. Gervais explained that, if the property owner was going to install a bathroom in the structure, he would need to apply for a septic permit at the time of building permit application. Gervais further responded that the Planning Commission could add a condition, however the concern would be handled at time of building permit application whether a condition was added or not. McCarthy inquired if the septic system was going to be a holding tank. Gervais stated that the system, being that it was intended to also serve the future dwelling, would need to be a full septic system. McCarthy followed up by asking if it was known whether the subject site could support a full septic system. Gervais noted that, through the 2024 platting process, the developer demonstrated suitable soils to support both a primary and alternate septic site.

Motion by Sutcliffe to adopt Resolution No. PC2025-0301, a resolution of the Planning Commission of Chisago County, Minnesota, recommending approval of an Interim Use Permit allowing an accessory structure with sanitary facilities without the presence of a principal use structure on property identified as PID 06.00235.11 in Nessel Township, with Findings of Fact and conditions as presented; second by DuBose. The **motion passed 7-0**.

Recommended conditions:

1. This approval allows for a singular 1,680-sf accessory structure for personal use and storage without the presence of a principal use structure, subject to the conditions below. Further, this approval allows for sanitary facilities (toilet and sink only) within the accessory structure. The accessory structure shall be constructed in general conformance with the application materials dated received January 13, 2025, in terms of size and location, and kept on file with the Chisago County Department of Environmental Services. Any significant deviation from the approved request, as determined by the Department of Environmental Services, shall require further consideration by the Planning Commission and determination by the County Board of Commissioners.

2. The structure shall not be used for overnight accommodations or include residential living quarters, unless the structure meets all building and architectural requirements of the Chisago County Zoning Ordinance and other applicable ordinances / codes. Further, the structure shall not be used for commercial purposes, until and unless this specific use is allowed by or pursuant to the Chisago County Zoning Ordinance.
3. Any change to the approved accessory structure involving enlargements, intensification or expansion of use, or change not specifically permitted by this Interim Use Permit, shall require an Amendment to this Interim Use Permit.
4. Annual certification of the Interim Use Permit is required. The permit holder shall notify the County annually that the activity permitted by the Interim Use Permit is ongoing and the activities being conducted continue to adhere to the conditions of approval. Failure to maintain certification may be a basis to revoke the Interim Use Permit. The property shall be made open and available for regular inspection at any time during reasonable hours by the Chisago County Department of Environmental Services and/or any duly authorized law enforcement agency.
5. This Interim Use Permit shall expire at such time that the current or future property owner(s) construct(s) a principal use structure.
6. Violations of the conditions contained herein shall be cause for the revocation of the Interim Use Permit upon action of the County Board.

Nancy L. Jamieson Revocable Trust – Coordinator Gervais provided background on the request for approval of the Preliminary Plat of Anam Cara Acres involving the creation of three buildable lots from the 10.42± acre tract of land. The subject site was zoned Agricultural (AG) District / Shoreland Management District and located at 3780 Stark Road / CSAH 10 in Fish Lake Township, S25, T36, R22 (PID 03.00339.00).

Gervais reviewed details of the subject site, sharing that it was generally located one-half mile west of Elmcrest Avenue and approximately one-quarter mile east of Deerwood Trail / CR 60 on the north side of Stark Road / CSAH 10. Stark Road / CSAH 10 ran through the far southern portion of the property, yet it was considered to be a riparian property given that it was situated immediately adjacent to Fish Lake. The subject site had been developed with a dwelling and two detached accessory structures, with all structures situated in the southeast corner of the site. Topography of the land located north of Stark Road / CSAH 10, where development would occur, included fairly level elevations and a wetland area in the northwest corner. The subject site and all surrounding properties were located within the AG District. Additionally, properties to the west and east were located within the Shoreland Management District, with the district boundary extending approximately 250' north of the subject site. Surrounding properties ranged significantly in size from five acres to 104 acres; however, immediate neighboring lakeshore properties ranged more closely in size from five acres to 14 acres. The two neighboring properties to the east were platted as Gestson Shores in 2009.

Gervais reviewed details of the proposal sharing that the property owner wished to create three buildable lots from the 10.42± acre subject site, with the lots ranging in size from 2.23± acres to 3.95± acres. Because Fish Lake was classified as a General Development lake, the minimum lot size required was 30,000 sf and the minimum width / frontage required was 125'. Gervais noted that the Preliminary Plat drawing showed an access easement running through the northwest corner of the Home Site Area for Lot 2, Block 1. While no development would likely be allowed within this easement, the County's Ordinances did not expressly prohibit an easement from being located within the Home Site Area and, in addition to this area being intended for buildings, it was also an area intended for a yard where an easement would not be detrimental. Gervais noted that because the subject site was split by Stark Road / CSAH 10, which was located within the platted Right-of-Way, the Preliminary Plat drawing proposed the creation of two separate blocks with a total of six lots. Even though Block 2 was situated between the road and lake and featured three substandard lots, it was staff's opinion, based on Minnesota Statute 505.01, that the plat must be shown this way. It was noted that Gestson Shores, directly east, was platted this same way in 2009. Ultimately, Lots 1-3, Block 2 would not be buildable, but, like the neighboring subdivision, staff had proposed a condition which would require that these substandard lots be combined with the

corresponding lots directly north.

The Plat Review Committee met with Nancy Jamieson on February 12, 2025. The wetland delineation and soils report had not yet been verified due to seasonal constraints, and this would be required prior to submission of request for Final Plat. Additionally, a septic compliance inspection would be required for the existing system located on proposed Lot 3, Block 1. County Engineer Triplett provided written comments expressing concern about the number of driveway accesses from Stark Road / CSAH 10 and providing access to the land-locked property immediately north which was also owned by Nancy L. Jamieson Revocable Trust. Gervais indicated that the County Engineer's concerns had been addressed by way of an amended Preliminary Plat drawing dated amended February 19, 2025. The Fish Lake Town Board considered the request on February 10, 2025 and recommended approval with no conditions or comments. The Ordinance-prescribed 120-day review period was scheduled to expire on June 3, 2025.

Coordinator Gervais concluded by offering a recommendation of approval with conditions, and reviewed options available to the Planning Commission.

Chair Wille invited the applicant to address the Commission. Nancy Jamieson was present and approached the Commission. Jamieson had no additional information to add to the presentation.

Chair Wille opened the public hearing and sought comment. With no members of the audience wishing to speak, **motion** by Sutcliffe to close the public hearing; second by Leivian. The **motion passed** 7-0.

Whitney asked who owned Stark Road / CSAH 10. DuBose and Gervais responded that it was a County-owned road. Whitney further inquired about what would happen if the County decided to widen the road and how that would affect the plat. Gervais responded that the Chisago County Highway Department was currently working on a road improvement project and that the applicant's surveyor had collaborated directly with the Highway Department to ensure that sufficient Right-of-Way was provided. Whitney then asked how often a lot combination was required when the properties were not directly connected, as in the case of the proposed plat. Gervais explained that she believed this was a unique situation but noted that the same process had been used in 2009 with the Plat of Gestson Shores. Gervais further shared that she had spoken with the County Surveyor and the Auditor-Treasurer's Office on the matter, and all parties agreed, based on MN Statute, that this was the best approach. Gervais reiterated that all of the substandard lots could be combined with the corresponding lots directly north by the Auditor-Treasurer's Office.

McCarthy introduced discussion on how the Zoning, Subdivision, and Shoreland Management Ordinances interacted, explaining that he understood that the most restrictive requirements would apply. McCarthy further explained that the minimum requirements for the AG District were five acres with 300' of width / frontage and the minimum requirements for the Shoreland Management District were 30,000 sf with 125' of width, meaning that the most restrictive was five acres with 300' of width / frontage. Gervais acknowledged McCarthy's concern and explained that, historically, the requirements of the Shoreland Management Ordinance had been applied to riparian properties. Director Schneider shared that one particular issue with the property was that it was currently considered a single riparian parcel despite the location of the roadway. Schneider further explained that the plat would have been processed differently if the subject site included two separate parcels with one being riparian and the other being non-riparian. Schneider also noted that, according to the County Surveyor, the only way to subdivide the parcel was by having two separate blocks, as the County Road had severed the property. McCarthy shared that he wasn't concerned about the severing of the property but was instead focused on the lot sizes and questioned why the County wasn't requiring two five-acre lots. McCarthy expressed that he felt the Shoreland Management Ordinance would only allow two lots, and allowing smaller lots was in conflict with the Ordinance. Whitney responded that McCarthy's point would be valid if it weren't already a single parcel. McCarthy countered that he didn't believe the County's Ordinances interacted the way they were being described but he couldn't find any reference in the Ordinances explaining how they should interact.

Moving on, McCarthy commented that, when he looked at other Fish Lake lakeshore properties, this was the only area that was zoned AG District rather than Rural Residential (RR) District, and suggested that, if the properties were Rezoned to RR District, the property owners would be able to subdivide and create smaller lots. Chair Wille acknowledged McCarthy's comment and suggested that it be discussed as part of the larger Zoning Map discussion at the upcoming Special Work Session.

Motion by Whitney to adopt Resolution No. PC2025-0302, a resolution of the Planning Commission of Chisago County, Minnesota, recommending approval of the Preliminary Plat of Anam Cara Acres, with conditions as presented; second by Leivian. The **motion passed** 7-0.

Recommended conditions:

1. The Preliminary Plat of Anam Cara Acres is approved per plat drawing dated amended February 19, 2025. Any significant deviation from the approved plat drawing, except as noted herein and as determined by the Department of Environmental Services, shall require further review by the Planning Commission and approval by the County Board.
2. The property owner shall arrange for a septic compliance inspection for the existing system located on proposed Lot 3, Block 1 prior to submission of request for Final Plat.
3. The County acknowledges that Lots 1-3, Block 2, Anam Cara Acres are substandard but, due to platted Right-of-Way and pursuant to Minnesota Statute 505.01, must be platted in this manner. Therefore, corresponding lots must be combined, either by Lot Combination or Tie Together, and remain in common ownership as follows: Lot 1, Block 1 together with Lot 1, Block 2; Lot 2, Block 1 together with Lot 2, Block 2; and, Lot 3, Block 1 together with Lot 3, Block 2.
4. The property owner shall obtain all necessary and applicable permits from Federal, State, and County jurisdictions for any wetland impacts prior to commencement of development.
5. Request for Final Plat shall not be submitted until the Chisago County Department of Environmental Services has verified the wetland delineation and soils report submitted as part of the January 30, 2025 request for Preliminary Plat, and the Department has found said delineation to be accurate and said report to comply with all applicable regulations.
6. Request for Final Plat shall be submitted within one year of Preliminary Plat approval unless an extension of time is requested by the property owner and/or applicant and granted by the County Board upon recommendation of the Planning Commission.

Public Hearings – Continued Hearings – None

Old Business – None

New Business – None

Communications and Reports

County Board Liaison Report / Update – County Commissioner Dahlberg reported that the County Board would begin the annual budget process in April, and there were concerns with the Governor's proposed budget as it would pass a lot of expenses on to the Counties. Dahlberg shared details of a recent visit to the Minnesota State Capitol and conversations with other County representatives and State officials regarding budget concerns.

Miscellaneous – None

In consideration of the scheduled March 20, 2025 Special Work Session, McCarthy and Whitney each sought approval for remote attendance as they would be out of town. Gervais explained that approval for remote attendance was at the discretion of the Chair and, if approved, the Commissioners would need to provide addresses for their remote locations. McCarthy inquired about remote location requirements, and Gervais

explained that the location, even if it was a private residence, needed to be open to the public.

Gervais shared that there were no new planning cases / public hearings scheduled for the April 3, 2025 regular meeting. The Planning Commission discussed and reached consensus to cancel the March 20th Special Work Session and instead utilize the April 3rd regular meeting to discuss Special Work Session items, as both McCarthy and Whitney would be available to attend in-person. **Motion** by DuBose to cancel the March 20, 2025 Special Work Session; second by Whitney. The **motion passed** 7-0.

Adjourn Meeting – Motion by Yeager to adjourn the meeting; second by Leivian. The **motion passed** 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Jolene Wille
Chair

ATTEST:

Beth Gervais
Land Services Coordinator

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Chisago County
Zoning Ordinance
Section 4.17 Rural Retail Tourism Businesses

A. Purpose.

In accordance with the stated goals of the Chisago County Comprehensive Plan, the purpose of this section is to:

1. Preserve and celebrate Chisago County's archaeological properties, rural and agricultural heritage, and historical landscapes.
2. To recognize Chisago County's scenic features, exceptional rural ambience, historic sites as desirable local amenities which will draw outside revenue from visitors, that is vital to the local economy.
3. Enhance Chisago County's appeal to visitors who are drawn to its rural atmosphere.
4. Provide opportunities for new economic growth through Rural Retail Tourism businesses.
5. Assist the County's citizens in the transition from primarily agricultural land uses to an expanded variety of rural business opportunities as active family farming continues to diminish in Chisago County.

B. Standards.

Rural Retail Tourism businesses shall meet the following standards:

1. Rural Retail Tourism businesses shall be located within the AG or RVC Zoning Districts.
2. Rural Retail Tourism businesses shall require a Conditional Use Permit in accordance with Section [Error! Reference source not found.8-04](#) of this Ordinance.
3. Rural Retail Tourism businesses shall be shown to have a unique and demonstrable relationship with Chisago County or its region, and its history, culture, traditions, arts, crafts, lore, natural resources, or other features and amenities, in accordance with the above stated purposes.
4. Uses.
Allowed Rural Retail Tourism businesses shall be identified and categorized as Class 1, Class 2, or Class 3 uses as determined by the Zoning Administrator, and may include such things as farm or other historical heritage attractions, single family residential rental properties for retreats, crafting, weddings, receptions,

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small-scale, low impact special events, corn mazes, holiday celebrations and harvest festivals, country-craft/antique shops, unique local venues providing for the sale and serving of locally produced raw and/or value-added agricultural products, goods and services, and other reasonably related merchandise, and other uses determined by the Department of Environmental Services to be similar in nature and scope.

5. Size-Rural Retail Tourism Classification Guidance and Requirements
~~The maximum number of attendees allowed at a Rural Retail Tourism site shall be identified in the CUP application and shall not exceed three hundred (300) persons and may be reduced as a condition of approval.~~
Allowed Rural Retail Tourism businesses shall fall within one of the following Classifications as determined by the Zoning Administrator:
- Class 1: Seasonal and/or more frequent predominantly indoor gathering, classroom, or other low impact activities or venues of a minimal attendance / occupancy scale as prescribed below. (quilting, pottery shops, staggered activity levels)
- Class 2: Seasonal and/or more frequent gathering, wedding, event, or other programmed destination events, activities, or venues of a moderate scale and frequency as prescribed below.
- Class 3: Seasonal and/or more frequent gathering, wedding, event, or other programmed destination events, activities, or venues as prescribed below.

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Minimum Classification Requirements & Guidance: *(Insert of draft table for demonstration)*

	No Minimum Acreage	20 Acre Minimum	40 Acre Minimum	Max. Total Event Attendees/Occupancy	Max Event Attendees at any one time	Max Event days per week	Class 1 low impact-events Permitted (Sun. - Thurs. as prescribed within Conditional Use Permit Approval)	Max weekend Event Bookings per month (Fri. Sat.)	Minimum Event Venue Bldg. or Outdoor Gathering Space Setback From Property Lines	Setback Reduction Candidate as may be recommended by Condition of the Planning Commission In Conjunction with High Performance Intensive Screening/Solid Screening Fence Plans	Minimum Onsite Parking spaces	General Designated Parking Area	Formal Drainage Plan	Engineered Pre/post development stormwater management drainage plan	Limited Amplified Outdoor Music (#of days)	Preliminary Pre-Application Road Authority Driveway Access & Traffic Review Comments Recommendations Required	Minimum Facility/Programmed space Setback from Adjacent Developed Property	Screening Plan (Existing and Proposed) As May be Amended By Condition of the Permit	Boundary Fence Required – Event Area Specific As May be Amended By Condition of the Permit	CUP/IUP Amendment Required for any expanded use specific parking, buildings, or other substantial site features not itemized on approved site plan
Class 1	X			-	50						X									X
Class 2		X		125	125						X	X			X		75'	X		X
Class 3			X	200	200	3	X		250	X	X	X	X	X	X		125'	X	X	X

6. Hours of operation.
Hours of operation are only permitted between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. and may be reduced as a condition of approval. Quiet hours shall be observed outside of hours of operation.
7. Outdoor amplified music and fireworks shall be prohibited.
8. Screening Required.
Screening shall be required for Rural Retail Tourism businesses. A screening plan shall be submitted as part of the CUP application and shall adhere to the following general standards:
 - a. Required screening shall consist of a fence, or berm and plant material with eighty (80) percent opacity within three (3) years of planting, while separate or in combination thereof shall achieve a height of not less than five (5) feet high and shall not extend within fifteen (15) feet of any driveway and at least twenty (20) feet from the street right-of-way.
 - b. Trees shall be setback a minimum of fifteen (15) feet from property lines in all districts. Distance is measured from the center of the trunk at the time of planting. This requirement may be waived where there is mutual written consent between property owners.

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9. Parking.
All parking generated by the Rural Retail Tourism business shall be on-site in the AG District. The RVC District does not require on-site parking. A parking plan shall be submitted as part of the Conditional Use Permit application.
 10. The minimum lot size for the Rural Retail Tourism business in the AG District shall be ~~twenty (20) acres as prescribed in the Minimum Classification Requirements & Guidance Table~~ in the AG District. The minimum lot size for the Rural Retail Tourism business in the RVC District shall be the minimum lot size for the RVC District.
 11. In the AG District, the minimum setback for any structure in which the Rural Retail Tourism business is being conducted or any appurtenances shall be two hundred fifty (250) feet from residentially zoned or used properties or active established neighboring ~~cattle farm animal~~ of livestock yard or pasture. Said setback may be waived with written consent of the neighboring property owners. The minimum setback for the Rural Retail Tourism business in the RVC District shall be the minimum required structural setback for the RVC District.
 12. Code Compliance.
An existing structure or SSTS which is subjected to a change in occupancy or GPD loading as a result of an approved Conditional Use Permit for a Rural Retail Tourism business shall be retrofitted and/or upgraded to conform to current code requirements. All existing buildings proposed for use in association with the business shall be certified by an architect or engineer to be in compliance with current structural standards for the new occupancy prior to any use of the structure.
- C. The terms "small-scale" and "low-impact" shall be construed to refer to land uses which:
1. Do not create an excessive demand upon existing services or amenities.
 2. Are screened or able to be screened adequately, or are sufficiently separated from adjacent development or land, to prevent undue negative impact to nearby properties.
 3. Will not have an appearance that is inconsistent or incompatible with the surrounding area.
 4. Will not cause traffic hazard or undue congestion as determined by the road authority.
 5. Will not negatively impact the neighborhood by intrusion of noise, glare,

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odor, or other adverse effects.

- D. All conditional uses for Rural Retail Tourism businesses shall be subject to the applicable requirements of Section 8 Administration and Enforcement.

DRAFT

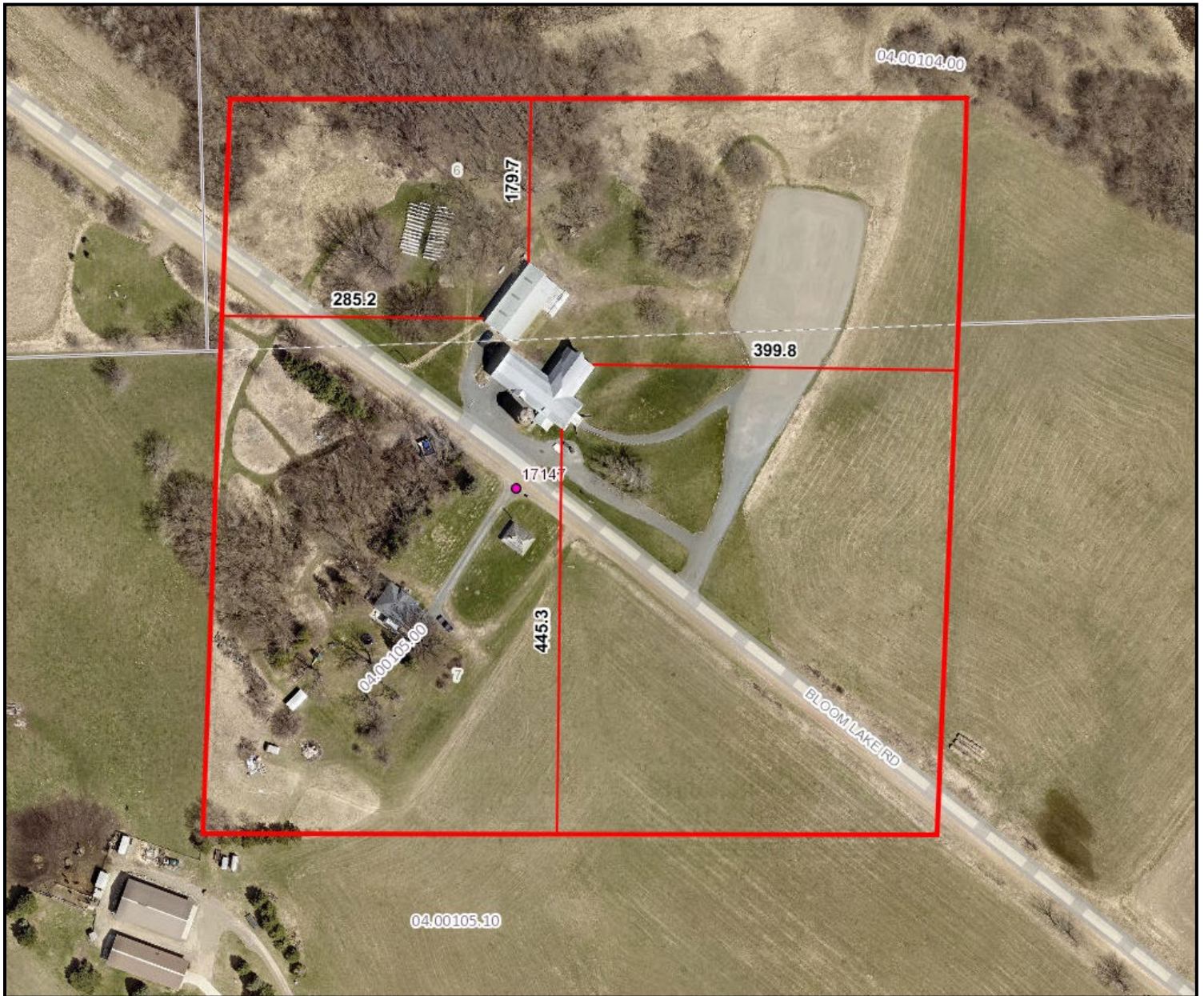
	No Minimum Acreage	20 Acre Minimum	40 Acre Minimum	Maximum Total Event Attendees/Occupancy	Maximum Event Attendees at Any One Time	Maximum Event Days per week	Class 1 Low Impact Events Permitted (Sunday - Thursday as prescribed within Conditional Use Permit approval)	Maximum Weekend Event Bookings per Month (Friday - Saturday)	Minimum Event Venue Building or Outdoor Gathering Space Setback from Property Lines	Setback Reduction Candidate as may be Recommended by Condition of the Planning Commission in Conjunction with High Performance Intensive Screening / Solid Screening	Minimum Onsite Parking Spaces	General Designated Parking Area	Formal Drainage Plan	Engineered Pre/Post Development Stormwater Management Drainage Plan	Limited Amplified Outdoor Music (# of days)	Preliminary Pre-Application Road Authority Driveway Access & Traffic Review Comments / Recommendations Required	Minimum Facility / Programmed Space Setback from Adjacent Developed Property	Screening Plan (Existing and Proposed) as may be Amended By Condition of the Permit	Boundary Fence Required – Event Area Specific as may be Amended By Condition of the Permit	CUP / IUP Amendment Required for any Expanded Use, Such as Specific Parking, Buildings, or Other Substantial Site Features Not Itemized on Approved Site Plan
Class 1	X			-	50							X								X
Class 2		X		125	125							X	X			X	75'	X		X
Class 3			X	200	200	3	X		250	X		X	X	X	X	X	125'	X	X	X

Class 1 Uses: Seasonal and/or more frequent predominantly indoor gatherings, classroom, or other low impact activities or venues of a minimal attendance / occupancy scale. (*quilting studios, pottery studios, staggered activity levels*)

Class 2 Uses: Seasonal and/or more frequent gathering, wedding, event, or other programmed destination events, activities, or venues of a moderate scale and frequency.

Class 3 Uses: Seasonal and/or more frequent gathering, wedding, event, or other programmed destination events, activities, or venues.

Existing Wedding and Gathering Venue
Approved in 2014
PID 04.00105.00 (Franconia Township)
15 Acres



Existing Wedding and Gathering Venue
Approved in 2021
PID 02.00546.00 (Chisago Lake Township)
33 Acres

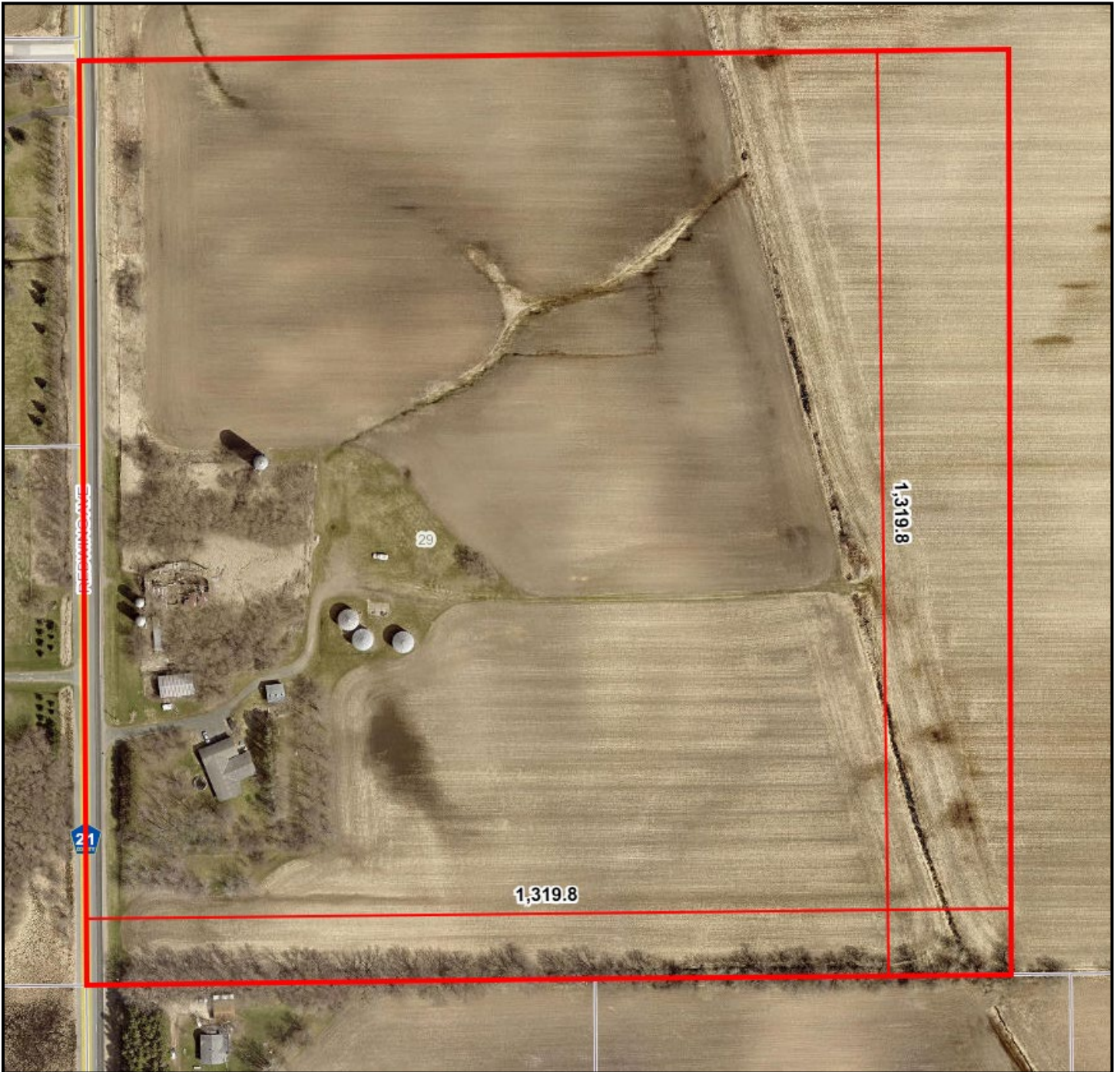


04.00123.00
280TH ST
17530
459.2
127.8
88.2
33.3
17320
1732
04.00186.00
17
04.00183.20
04.00187.40
04.00188.00
REDWING AVE
26
86
PLEASANT VALLEY RD

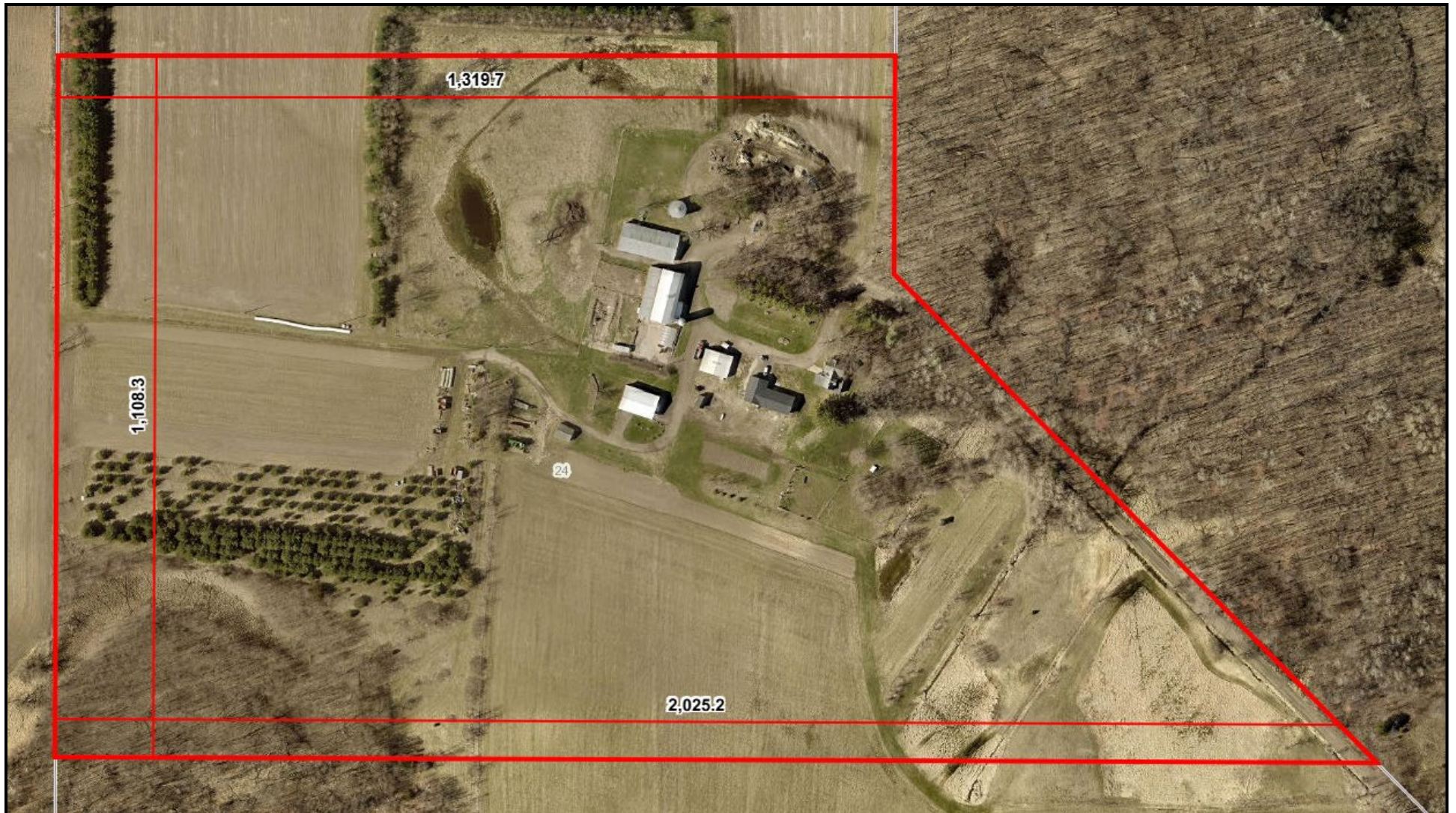
Example of Standard 20-Acre Parcel
Dimensions: Approximately 660' Wide x 1,320' Deep



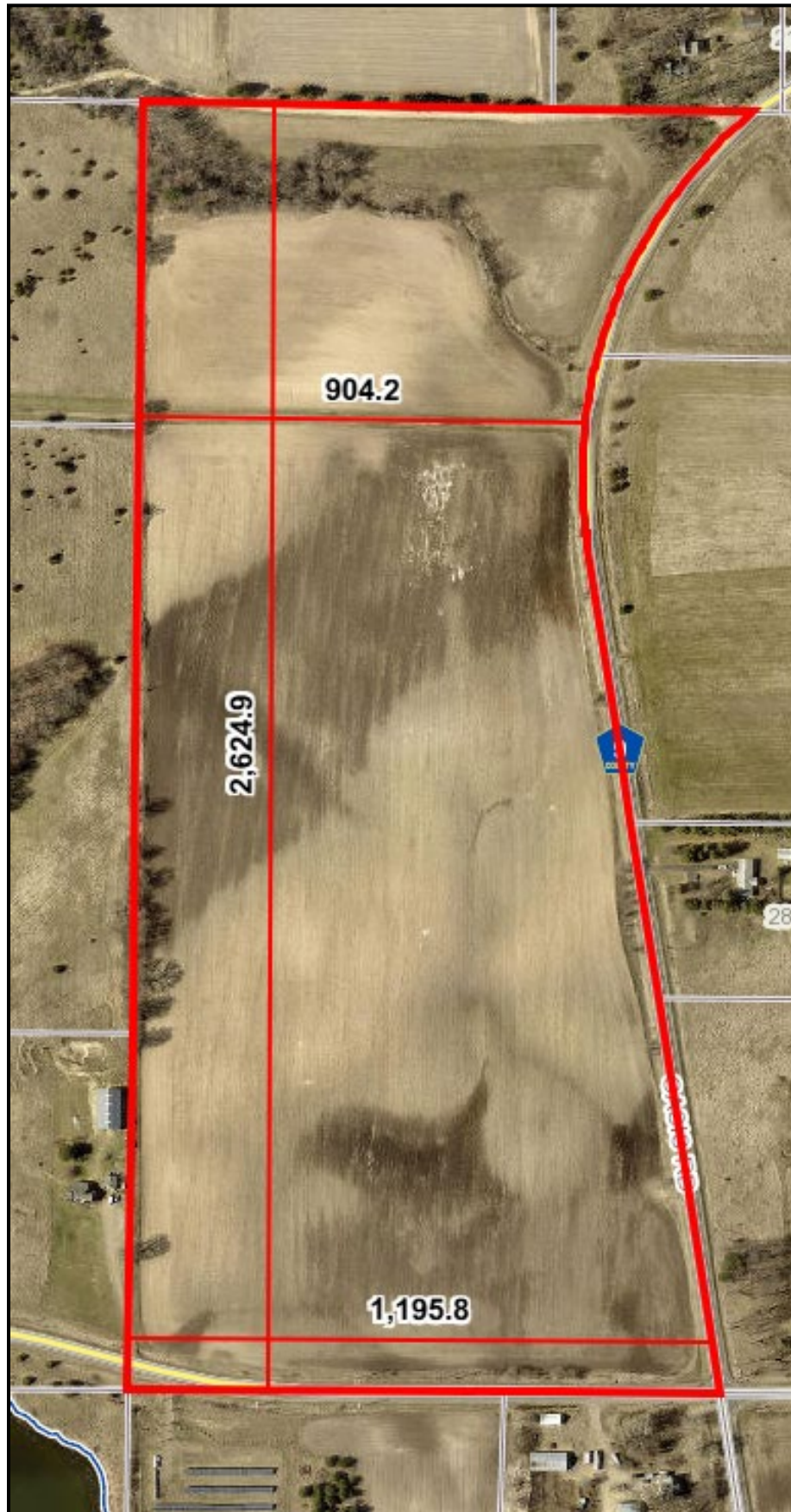
Example of Standard 40-Acre Parcel
Dimensions: Approximately 1,320' Wide x 1,320' Deep



**Example of Irregular 40-Acre Parcel
Varying Dimensions**



Example of Irregular 62-Acre Parcel
Varying Dimensions: Approximately 904' x 2,625'



Commercial & Non-Commercial Equine Businesses

2/24/2025

RECOMMENDED ZONING ACTIONS:

1. Add the following terms to SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS:

- **Equine Animals:** Horses, ponies, mules
- **Equine Facility:** The commercial or non-commercial training, breeding, showing, selling or boarding of equine animals for the purposes of riding, driving, farm or ranch work, competition, racing, recreation, sale, or as breeding stock.
- **Commercial Equine Facility:** An agricultural operation used to train, breed, show, or sell non-owner/customers equine animals for a monetary fee. It may include boarding barns, indoor and/or outdoor riding arenas, breeding & living facilities. A Commercial Equine Facility requires a CUP.
- **Non-Commercial Equine Facility:** An agricultural operation used for recreation purposes to train, breed, show or sell the owners equine animals and/or to board outside equine animals. It may include indoor/outdoor riding arenas, but no living facility, trainer or the rental of the facility to outside organizations is allowed. Non-commercial equine facility is a permitted use.

2. Under 5.06 Agricultural District (A)

- **Slightly Modify #15 under Permitted Uses which says:**
 - *"15. Non-commercial equine facility containing no living quarters."*
(REPLACE WITH:)
 - ***"15. Non-commercial equine facility" (See definition)***

3. 5.06 Agricultural District (A)

- **Replace #23 under Conditional Uses which says:**
 - *"23. Horse barns as a principal or accessory use."*
(REPLACE WITH:)
 - ***"23. Commercial equine facility (See definition)***

4. 5.08 Rural Residential District (RR)

- **Replace #9 under Permitted Uses which says:**
 - *"9. Horse keeping at a maximum density of one (1) horse per two (2) acres."*
(REPLACE WITH:)
 - ***"9. Commercial or Non-Commercial equine facility with a maximum density of one (1) equine animal per one (1) acre."***

CHISAGO COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE: ISSUE IDENTIFICATION & POLICY CHANGE TRACKING MATRIX

March 19, 2025

No.	ISSUE TOPIC / SUMMARY	DATE IDENTIFIED	SECTION LOCATION(s)	PAGE(s)	ISSUE NARRATIVE / DETAIL	ALTERNATIVES / SOLUTIONS	COMMISSION / BOARD CONSENSUS & DIRECTION	CONSENSUS DATE	ACTION PRIORITY / Annual Update / Other	High	STATUS
1	Rural Retail Tourism - Wedding/Gathering Venues	12/18/2024	5.06	4.17	119 104	Improve code treatement of Rural Retail Tourism businesses - wedding/gathering venues. Review recent wedding venue proposal on 260th for issues discussion.	Expand and detail wedding/gathering venue performrance standards within the code	County Board Directed	12/18/2024	High	In Progress
2	Major Home Occupation - Horse Equine	1/3/2025	5.06 B & C 3	4.04	118 9 66	Proposed by Commissioner Whitney. Horse-Equine Businesses are better suited as Permitted Agricultural Use rather than a Major Home Occupation. An equine facility whether it’s amateur or professional and whether its focus is on training, breeding, showing, sales or boarding of equine animals is an agricultural business which should meet agricultural standards NOT Major Home Occupation standards.	Ref. Commissioner Whitney research/reccomendation paper dated 1/02/2025	Commisison Direction Requested	Other - Commisisoner Whitney does not want this issue to interrupt other high priority issues.		
3	Zoning Map Amendment - RR Districts Consolidation & Renaming of UR District	1/7/2025	5.02		116	As a part of the recent comprehensive update of the Chisago County Zoning Ordinance, the Rural Residential Zoning Districts (RRI and RRII) were consolidated into one single Rural Residential (RR) District; and "Urban Fringe" residential terminology is used in place of "Urban Residential".	Amend the zoning map to reflect consolidated RR District and change the map legend to reflect Urban Residential as Urban Fringe Residential.	Board Directed Public Hearing	1/7/2025	High	Completed 2/19/2025
4	SSTS Ordiance 10-1	3/19/2025	Full Ordinance			Comprehensive "housekeeping" review and update of 2010 septic system ordinance	Update of the 2010 Chisago County SSTS Ordinance in close consult with MPCA staff and related rule and policy adjustments of the past 15 years.	Board Direction to Proceed	3/19/25	Other	Staff Review