

**CITY OF COHASSET
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
305 NORTHWEST FIRST AVE, COHASSET, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2015, 6:00 P.M.**

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chair Steve Brown called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

a. **Voting Members Present:** Steve Brown, Josh Casper, Johnnie Fulton, Brian Kielpinski, Lois Kirschbaum, and Steve Otto

b. **Absent with Notice:** John Chell & City Council Liaison Jason Tabaka

c. **Ex-Officio Members Present:** Zoning Officer Greg Tuttle and City Attorney John Licke

d. **Others Present:** Scott & Nancy Drumbeater

3. **Review and Approve Agenda**

a. **Additions:** None

b. **Deletions:** None

A motion was made by Kielpinski/Casper to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Resident Input** – None

5. **Review & Approve Planning Commission Minutes of July 1, 2015:** *A motion was made by Fulton/Casper to approve the July 1, 2015 minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.*

6. **Public Hearing #1 (6:05 p.m.)** to act on a variance request to allow Scooter's Septic Service a 26 x 64 foot detached garage no closer than 80 feet from the centerline of County Road 87, four feet from the north (rear) property line, and six feet from the east (side) property line (ordinance requires a minimum of 110 feet centerline of County Road 87 and 15 feet from the side and rear property lines) for the property located at 585 NW Third Street (County Road 87) and legally described as South 158.16 feet of the West 3 acres of the NW-NE lying South of the GN RR ROW, Section 10, Township 55 North, Range 26 West, City of Cohasset, Itasca County, Minnesota.

Zoning Officer Greg Tuttle summarized the informational packet and Attorney John Licke reviewed the definition of practical difficulties. Scott Drumbeater explained the reasons for a variance request & answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Chair Brown opened the public portion of the meeting and asked three times for anyone in favor of the variance to come forward. There was no response. Chair Brown asked three times if there was anyone opposed to the variance. There was no response. Brown asked if there were any written communications. Tuttle received a letter from the neighbor, Amanda Mitchell, and she has no objections to the variance request. The other communication was from the Itasca County Transportation Department stating they have a plan to widen County Road 87 but this will not impact the variance request and thus they have no objections.

Brown closed the public portion of the meeting.

A motion was made by Kielpinski/Fulton to approve the variance request with the condition that rain gutters are installed on both sides of the building and routing roof runoff to the drainage ditch behind the proposed building.

1) *Are there practical difficulties in complying with the zoning ordinance? “Practical difficulties means that the property owner’s proposed improvements are reasonable (economic considerations alone shall not constitute practical difficulties.)*

Kielpinski answered yes, due to the size of the lot and location to put the building up which is going to be an improvement of the appearance and safety of the neighborhood. All Commissioners voted agreed.

2. *Are the circumstances which justify the variance unique to the property and not created by the applicant?*

Fulton answered yes the property is there and they looked at which directions the trucks can come and go and it fits the size requirement to and would be an improvement. All Commissioners agreed.

3. *If granted, will the variance maintain the essential character of the locality? Is the proposed improvement anything more than others in the area already have?*

Casper answered yes, it’s already light industrial and the proposed setbacks are no closer than other buildings in the area. Brown added that it will not interfere with the county’s proposed road improvement. All Commissioners agreed.

4. *If granted will the variance be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance?*

Kirschbaum answered yes and indicated “it just seems to be good.” All Commissioners agreed.

5. *If granted will the variance be consistent with the comprehensive plan?*

Otto answered yes and indicated it is good to promote business. Otto stated he has done business with Scooters through his workplace and home and always been satisfied. All Commissioners agreed.

Motion passed unanimously.

Tuttle explained there is a 15 day appeal period after which the permitting process can begin.

7. *State Basic Code* – City Attorney John Licke explained the state basic code. After extensive discussion, ***a motion was made by Brown/Kielpinski to table this item until September and schedule a joint work session with City Council in order to get clarification.***

8. *Review Blight Ordinance Regarding Noise* – Chair Brown requested that anyone in favor of tabling this item to signify with aye. This item was unanimously tabled.

9. Review Zoning Ordinance Sign Section Regarding “Occasional/Incidental”- Tuttle received a request for an off-site electronic billboard and he would like clarification from the Planning Commission regarding the language in the ordinance. *A motion was made by Brown/Kielpinski to table this item until the September meeting and review the Comprehensive Plan. Motion carried unanimously.*

10. FYIs/Updates:

- a. **Rajala ball field green space requirement** – Zoning Officer Tuttle reported there is no legal requirement attached to the Rajala ball field.
- b. **Nelson Wood Shims Noise** – Nelson’s are in the process of building noise reducing walls.

Adjourn: Chair Steve Brown adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Submitted by Karen Mester, Deputy Clerk

Approved: 9/2/2015