

**CITY OF COHASSET  
SPECIAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
305 NW FIRST AVENUE, COHASSET, MINNESOTA  
WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 3, 2021 – 6:00 P.M.**

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chair Steve Otto called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

- a. **Voting Members Present:** Josh Casper, Steve Lavalier, Steve Otto, & Lucas Thompson,
- b. **Absent with Notice:** Scott Gerling, Gary Wheelock, and Harlow Zeppelin
- c. **Ex-Officio Members Present:** Zoning Officer Greg Tuttle, and City Council Liaison Tom Sutherland
- d. **Others Present:** Eric and Brenna Gunderson

3. **Review and Approve the Agenda**

- a. **Additions:** None
- b. **Deletions:** None

*A motion was made by Casper/Thompson to approve the agenda as presented. Voting in favor: Casper, Lavalier, Otto, & Thompson; Voting against: None; Absent: Gerling, Wheelock, and Zeppelin; Motion carried.*

4. **Resident Input:** None

5. **Approve October 6, 2021 Planning Commission Minutes:** *A motion was made by Lavalier/Thompson to approve the October 6, 2021 Planning Commission minutes as written. Motion carried.*

6. **Public Hearing** to act on a variance request for Eric & Brenna Gunderson for 30 x 40 foot detached garage no closer than 70 feet from the Ordinary High Water Level (OWHL) of Rice Lake (ordinance minimum is 100 feet) located at 23574 Stark Road (PIN# 05-029-2310) and legally described as SOUTH 250 FEET OF GOVERNMENT LOT 3 LYING EAST OF STARK ROAD, Section 29, Township 55 North, Range 26 West, Itasca County, Minnesota.

Zoning Officer Greg Tuttle summarized the information packet. Tuttle called for questions for himself or for the applicants. Lavalier asked the size of the existing garage? The applicant said 30 feet x 40 feet. Tuttle asked what is the floor plan of the existing garage? The applicant said it has one stall and the rest is his wife's office. Lavalier asked what the reason for the 100 foot lake setback? Tuttle said it was for aesthetics for those that use the lake and to protect the lake from runoff. Lavalier asked how far it is to the neighbor's garage to the north? The applicant said 60 feet. Lavalier asked if the existing garage would be kept? The applicant said yes. Tuttle suggested keeping the garage as close to the driveway as possible. Tuttle asked about adding onto the existing garage? The applicant said either too close to the lake or there is buried power line going toward the road. Lavalier asked about adding onto the existing garage to the north? The applicant said that would block the view of the lake from the house. Tuttle passed around pictures from the site visit. Lavalier added that it is a small lot. Tuttle added that the most room

is the direction they are proposing. The applicant added the neighbor's house to the north is about 65 feet from the lake. Tuttle added the ridge of the garage would run parallel with the lake.

After questions and discussion *a motion was made by Casper/Thompson to grant the variance without conditions.*

Lavalier stated he would like the condition of a catch basin (rain garden) for roof run off and no floor drain. Josh Casper stated he was okay with no floor drain but the rain would drain toward the lake regardless so he would not agree with the catch basin. After discussion, **Casper/Thompson amended their motion of granting the variance provided the garage has no floor drain.** Although it was not part of the motion, it was thought a catch basin for roof runoff would be a good idea.

Otto called for anyone in favor of the variance, there was no response. Otto called for anyone opposed to the variance to come forward, there was no response. Tuttle received one written communication with questions about the purpose of the garage that were answered to his satisfaction by Tuttle.

Otto closed the public portion of the meeting.

### **Findings of Fact**

1. Are there practical difficulties in complying with the zoning ordinance? Why do you need the attached garage?

**Casper answered yes because a garage to put stuff into is a good idea due to the climate in Northern Minnesota. All Commissioners agreed.**

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

**Thompson answered yes because difficulties with the size of the lot and putting it in front of the house would block the view of the lake. All Commissioners agreed.**

3. If granted will the variance maintain the essential character of the locality?

**Otto answered yes noting that it is like the other homes in the locale. All Commissioners agreed.**

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

**Lavalier answered yes. All Commissioners agreed.**

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

**Casper answered yes because it is not in inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. All Commissioners agreed.**

*Motion carried on a voice vote.*

Tuttle stated there is a 15 day waiting period after which a permit can be pulled.

7. **FYI:** Expiring Terms

- a. Otto will not reapply
- b. Gerling will reapply
- c. Wheelock not reapply

Zoning Training Date: Wednesday, February 23, 2022, 4-7:00 p.m.

Adjourn: Chair Otto adjourned the meeting at 6:40p.m.

Submitted by Deputy Clerk Karen Blair

Approved:

DRAFT