Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

October 1, 2026

Completed by: Sue Bertrand, P&Z Staff

Site visits completed by Adam Ossefoort and Lloyd Graves 9/22/2026 on the Oaks Tree and Miller Sites

Meeting attended by board members: Chairman Jim Pratt, Vice Chair Ken Hovet, Roger Hendrickson, Lloyd Graves, Andy Watland and Commissioner Tim Denny.

Staff members: Adam Ossefoort and Sue Bertrand

Other members of the public: Sign-in Sheet is available for viewing upon request.

Jim called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited as a collective group.

Introduction of the staff and board members by Jim.

Roger motioned to have the agenda approved as printed. Lloyd seconded, voice vote, no dissent heard. Motion carried.

Ken motioned to have September 3rd, 2026, meeting minutes approved. Andy seconded, voice vote, no dissent heard. Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM 1: John H. Kessler & Jessie A. Kessler Jacobson, "Kessler's Bay Addition": Section 22, **Kandota Township, Site Address:** 11264 US 71, Sauk Centre, MN 56378 **PID:** 14-0025200

1. Request to Create a two-lot Plat in Recreational Development Shoreland Zoning District.

Kessler's have requested to table until next month, and we have a time extension in writing on record.

Motion to table until November by Ken, seconded by Roger.

Roll call vote commenced as follows:

Board member	Vote (yes or no)
Ken Hovet	Yes
Roger Hendrickson	Yes
Lloyd Graves	Yes
Andy Watland	Yes
Jim Pratt	Yes

Motion carried.

AGENDA ITEM 2: Oaks Tree Service LLC, Samson Sjogren: Section 26, **Birchdale Township, Site Address:** 10247 Alcott Drive, Sauk Centre, MN 56378 **PID:** 03-0037500

1. Request for CUP to operate Service Business from the site in Recreational Development Shoreland Zoning District.

Sam and Melissa Sjogren were present as the applicants.

Staff Findings: Adam read through the staff report. This report is available for viewing upon request in the

Planning & Zoning Office.

A site visit was completed on 9/22/2026. During the site visit, violations were discovered that would need correction prior to approval of any permits.

The staff recommendation was motion to table this application and allow the property owner to make corrective actions prior to making any decisions related to this application.

Correspondence received: Yes, from Birchdale township, and from Bruce Fisher, 10221 Alcott Drive, Sauk Centre, MN 56378. These letters may be viewed in full, upon request, at the Planning and Zoning Office.

Public comment:

Gene Walter, 10333 Alcott Drive, because he lives three properties from applicant, the traffic and dumping debris on neighboring property, hauling gravel out of the property and do they have permission? If they have permits for the gravel being brought to the property? Concerned about the debris turning into a dump, and the neighbors end up having to clean it up and not sure the property owner knows what is happening with the dumping. He asked to deny application.

Ed Vohnoutka, four lots north of Conditional Use Permit site, bought a lot there 30 some years ago, lived his whole life in the city, retired, and wants to retire in a nice quiet place. Does not want a commercial enterprise, with heavy equipment. They lease the property across the road from Ed, they dump all their stuff over there, and agreed with Gene, she does not know what is going on. He built a 2nd home on his property, went through all the right things to do so and these people put up buildings left and right and use them left and right, do anything they want and with the increased traffic, it is not his idea of a lake home, plus what it could do to the property values. Two or three years down the road when he wants to sell, who will not want to buy if there is this business right down the road?

Michelle Sjogren, 10249, right next door, she told Jean they do have permission for dumping, they lease 40 acres and there is a gravel pit on the north end and she does know they dump up there. She stated she does think that they have legitimate concerns because of the increase of traffic because of the pavement that has happened this year. There has been a lot of heavy equipment, and she is even wiped out from the noise and added they enjoy their lake shore property too. Their intentions are not to bother the neighbors, but with the construction of the shed and all the problems with the noise, trucks and hauling in dirt, putting in a driveway and making sure all is taken care of. There really has been no complaining prior to this, and the business has been on this property for three years. With the construction going on, it is drawing attention to the business. Other than personal things that have happened that do not have anything to do with the business, but she lives right next door and approved of the application and the business. Once construction is complete the noise level will go down and she is sure he will abide by the boards' requirements.

Board discussion:
Lloyd was on the site visit and stated you have a nice building there, but there is a lot of impervious surface going on.

Sam stated they did put down a lot of granite for the safety and wellbeing of the construction workers, so they did not have to work in the mud, and they do plan on getting rid of that after construction is done.

Ken, what is the building for?

Sam, both personal and business. He has pontoons, 4-wheelers, a skid loader, all personal, and also his business equipment that goes in and out.

Ken, how long before done?

Sam, it needs to be done by April.

Ken, this land you are dumping stumps and stuff, the leased land, eventually do what with it? Because eventually it will be full.

Sam, we have obtained burning permits to burn in the past and it is an old gravel pit.

Ken, no chipping on site?

Sam, no.

Ken, how many employees?

Sam, depends on the time of year, 5 to 6 total during the busy season.

Ken, so 3, 4 extra trucks on site?

Sam, yes, but some just take their trucks home from the job site.

Andy, business has been operational for a few years? Just not without this building. It looks done on the outside, what is left?

Sam, the steel, more concrete, and garage doors, and finish the aprons.

Andy, are there rules for impervious?

Adam, yes, and that is the nature of his notes in reference to the violations. Max impervious is 25% and this lot is in the 39% to 40% area impervious now. He and Sam had talked prior to tonight's meeting and we would need that corrected before we could grant anything tonight. Pretty flat, more of a slope up towards the lake.

Andy, so Soil and Water had no comment or the DNR?
Adam, correct, we did not receive any comments than what was read.

Ken, did I hear you say the township road was recently paved?

Melissa, yes they put new pavement down.

Ken, was paved, just needed new.

Melissa, yes.

Andy, if we table do we need extra time?

Adam, we can extend beyond that the October 60-day mark, timing wise, we are in good shape.

Jim, so, do you do tree trimming and removal, including stumps, trees and everything and haul everything away?

Sam, yes, multiple lease sites or agreements, for piles of branches. One by Big Birch Lake, Alexandria, one closer to home, one by Osakis, a lot of places where we bring that stuff.

Jim, so the stumps are the only thing going in that gravel pit?

Sam, some of them, yes.

Ken, so does any of that ever get turned into firewood?

Sam, does not unless it is personal.

Jim, what do you do with the logs?

Sam, some agreements they let us dump everything if we give them the logs.

Lloyd, if logs are good for lumber, do they get saved?

Sam, if we have a surplus of logs, sometimes they will sell to Amish or whoever.

Andy, no materials other than your equipment on the site? No operations being conducted? No saws, chippers or anything for the business, just storage and a mailing address for the business?

Sam, right.

Across the street where you have materials, any operation going on over there?

Sam, just a skid loader moving piles or brush. Have no reason for running saws.

Ken, operate five days a week? No Saturdays or Sundays?

Sam, five days a week, unless there is a storm and stuff needs to be done on a weekend.

Larry Bebus, Birchdale township, met FYI about this, and his concern is they just spent over one million to repair the Alcott Drive all summer and if you are going to be driving on this. Will there be logs and heavy equipment? One of the biggest complaints on Alcott over the years are too many trucks, heavy duty machinery and semi's ruining on the road. What's going to happen in the future, with your equipment on there, is the Township liable or are you going to be liable for fixing the road?

Melissa, she agrees, quite a few people who own semi's that live on this road, and if you have other semis, are they liable?

Larry, yes, in some cases, they are liable and have to help maintain it.

Melissa, if people are driving on the County road, who fixes that?

Larry the township maintains Alcott, and it is a township road. What is going to happen down the road with the heavy equipment?

Roger, he's sure there are farmers going with trucks every day. What is your heaviest piece of equipment?

Sam, 13,000-pound mini excavator.

Roger, tandem or single axle truck?

Sam, single.

Roger and Jim stated farmers are 40,000 lbs. to 80,000 lbs. and sometimes over 100,000.

Roger, would there be something that insurance would be responsible for if the road gets destroyed and you can prove it? In his township they have trucks all the time, and the guy had just asked if the road needed fixing, if so, call your contractor, fix it and send me a bill. Big businesses sometimes do that.

Andy, is this something that needs to be in writing?

Adam, yes, we would establish a condition that would require some sort of road agreement between the applicant and the township, and they provide evidence that this has been met for our CUP purposes. Typically, that agreement would need to be in place as a condition.

Andy, if we table, it is for corrective actions and give the township time to come up with this?

Adam, we cannot grant anything when there are violations and this extra time will be used for corrective action. He and Sam can work on it outside the meeting, and if Sam is not ready yet, we can table it again, outside this meeting, and if he is ready to go next month, we can have it on the agenda.

Andy, it is for their advantage to extend this, because the alternative is denial.

Adam, allowing time to get those things corrected.

Tim asked Adam to reach out to County Engineer, Loren, just to pick his brain about impact to the road and maybe get County guidance?

Jim, agreed, then asked Sam if the trailer behind the truck was single axel?

Sam, one ton truck (not a dual) with a tandem axel trailer.

Jim, so three axels.

Sam, yes.

Ken motioned to table for one month and Andy seconded.

Roll call vote commenced as follows:

Board member	**Vote (yes or no)**
Ken Hovet	Yes
Roger Hendrickson	Yes
Lloyd Graves	Yes
Andy Watland	Yes
Jim Pratt	Yes

Motion carried. Adam reminded we do not re-notice the adjacent, it is tabled until November 5th, 6:00 PM in this room.

AGENDA ITEM 3: Adam Miller -Section 29, **Staples Township, Site Address:** 23285 464th Street Staples, MN 56479 **PID:** 22-0026402

1. Request for CUP operate a Truss Business in AF-2 Zoning District

Adam Miller and Emanuel Yoder were present as the applicants.

Staff Findings: Adam read through the staff report. This report is available for viewing upon request in the Planning & Zoning Office.

Recommendation:
A motion to recommend approval to the County Board of Commissioners.
Proposed Conditions:

1. There shall be no loading/unloading of materials within the public roadway.
2. Off-street parking shall be provided for all business traffic.
3. Storage of supplies and finished products shall be stored meeting all setback requirements.
4. Land use permits shall be required for all future construction.
5. Applicant must abide by all other applicable federal, state, and local standards.

Correspondence received: None

Public comment: None

Board discussion:

On Site Visit Report was reviewed by Lloyd: stated it looked and sounded good, and he is okay with the request.

Ken, neighbor to the east?

Miller, correct, a hunting cabin, about two months, not all year round.

Roger, not too much noise or dust or anything else going on as it is in the middle of an entire 40.

Lloyd, no heavy machinery?

Miller, outside there will be trucks to haul trusses, setting up an I beam system, hoist to load, but may be a loader to unload lumber to put in the building.

Jim, most work inside the building?

Miller, yes.

Jim, so not much noise.

Andy, how often do trucks come in?

Emanuel, depends on how fast we are working; 2 to 3 times a week for trusses.

Andy, straight trucks or semis?

Miller, mostly with a Dooley truck with truss trailer that goes above the truck.

Lloyd, depends on how many orders they get.

Andy adequate access for loading and the road consideration.

Roger, township okayed it?

Adam, never heard from township after Miller attended.

Miller, put approaches in, not like it's downhill, put 15" culverts in.

Ken motioned to approve, Lloyd seconded as presented.

1. There shall be no loading/unloading of materials within the public roadway.
2. Off-street parking shall be provided for all business traffic.
3. Storage of supplies and finished products shall be stored meeting all setback requirements.
4. Land use permits shall be required for all future construction.

5. Applicant must abide by all other applicable federal, state, and local standards.

Roll call vote commenced as follows:

Board member	Vote (yes or no)
Ken Hovet	Yes
Roger Hendrickson	Yes
Lloyd Graves	Yes
Andy Watland	Yes
Jim Pratt	Yes

Motion carried. Jim noted the application will be presented to the County Board of Commissioners on October 20th, 2026.

4. AGENDA ITEM 4: Proposed Amendment to Section 9.22, Riparian Protection, of the Todd County Planning and Zoning Ordinance.

Staff Findings: Adam read through the staff report. This report is available for viewing upon request in the Planning & Zoning Office.

Board discussion:

Adam pointed highlights from the model ordinance. Pieced together what he thought the board's direction would be and added that after the model for review and discussion.

Jim, what do we have now for enforcement?

Adam, the ordinance as a whole criminal or administrative penalty. Suggestive option three which leaves each option on the table for both.

Jim and Ken, agree that was the best, and keep options open.

Adam, on whether to include public drainage systems where the County is not the drainage authority or excludes and he suggested "excludes" to match our existing ordinance language.

Jim, that is what he was thinking as well.

Adam, page 41 of staff report is generally what the ordinance would look like. In the enforcement section, page 44 the Enforcement part we have the criminal part in there and the Administrative Penalty Order in there. Pointed out the fees as penalty, $0, $200.00 and $500.00 same as ordinance and repeat offenders same as existing etc. and can adjust those accordingly. Add the definitions to our definition section. Next steps, review and in the meantime, Adam will submit this draft to BWSR and make any edits they recommend and recommendations of Planning Commission, make edits, needs final tune up with the yellow highlights matching ordinance sections, minor. By November or December maybe forward it to the commissioners or if not ready, just keep moving forward with this as we have until June.

Andy, give an example of public drainage ditch where the County is the drainage authority compared to the public is the drainage authority.

Tim explained when the County cleans the ditch it can be an assessment.

Andy, so County is accountable, and ditches in existence that are man-made, the cost is on that individual.

Jim, 2 or 3 landowners get together and create their own ditch sometimes as a private ditch.

Tim, the County may have guidance, but you are responsible for the costs. Nancy Uhlenkamp is our County Ditch and Ag inspector who comes to the commissioners with those who are maintaining their own and states they are assuming all costs and responsibilities.

Andy option 2, County is not going to monitor or care or have anything to do with a personal ditch that does not comply?

Adam between now and November he will talk to Nancy to provide some comments and provide a map that may be helpful.

Andy surprise they have the options, not pushing for more restrictions for water, but does the State law cover public drainage system that the County is not the authority?

Adam, the rule has been written where the responsibility may be passed on to the County to adopt locally for some ditches, cannot think of public ditches not under County authority.

Andy, "should I really participate when I don't understand 100% what is being said? Maybe next time".

Adam stated he will get our ditch person to provide some comments or come in and talk a bit.

Jim, there are probably other parts of the state that have more public ditches that are not County ditches.

Roger, had one right in the middle of the township and back in 1908, dug through ¼ mile through a guys field, some 15' deep, put cement pipe, 48" set end to end not connected, big hole, many meetings at the town hall, one guy questioned it, had to be fixed, new plastic from where the DNR had put in a steel line with a dam gate on it years ago, all the way to the next lake and the old cement pipe could not be crushed, only left. Nancy was there a few times, got it done.

Roger, DNR does control a lot of this buffer stuff.

Adam corrected, actually BWSR.

Andy, time restraint?

Adam, June of next year, maybe get done by January or December, maybe even by November.

Jim, need a motion to table.

Ken motioned to table, Roger seconded.
Roll call vote commenced as follows:

Board member	Vote (yes or no)
Ken Hovet	Yes
Roger Hendrickson	Yes
Lloyd Graves	Yes
Andy Watland	Yes
Jim Pratt	Yes

Motion carried. We look at it again next month and hopefully have some answers.

5. Proposed Amendment to the Todd County Planning and Zoning Ordinance to create Section 9.24 – Data Centers.

Staff Findings: Adam read through the staff report. This report is available for viewing upon request in the Planning & Zoning Office.

Board discussion:

Adam, added the people from Great River Energy are a good resource to get them here, if they come together, it would be the same night, with the intention to educate. They mentioned what the permitting process from their perspective looks like, electrical rate impacts and infrastructure needs as topics.

Adam, it will be open to the public to come here. May be a special meeting. We would have to submit to Long Prairie Leader by next week, then they distribute to Staples, Ind News Harold, Osakis, Long Prairie and Clarissa. Tom says he has two guys (keep in mind supportive of DATA centers) Lucas, CEO of Giant. If we want to bring him in and Chet Boden with Dept. of Employment and Economic Development for the State and he could reach out to him too.

Ken, what does Giant do?

Adam, GiantVoices.com, out of Duluth, consultants, and continue to get in touch with Elise.

Adam, on U of M toolkit, there is a webinar on 6:00 PM October 14th, need to register. If want the link, you can for one hour. Focused mostly on SE, MN.

Ken asked for the link.

Adam will send to everyone. Work with Jeff and Tom and reach out with Elise, send link for Webinar and reach out to the other two gentlemen. Well-rounded knowledge base with all. Hope with AMC makes a model, but for now we are starting from scratch.

Jim, anyone talk to any other counties?

Adam, yes, there are a couple ahead of us as the moratorium was ahead of us. Structure like solar ordinance, set size, performance standards and the very large, we could not allow and define what that is, as an example.

Andy, not constrained quite as much.

Roger, heard any cannabis applications in the townships?

Adam, Bruce twp. has cannabis outdoor cultivation granted.

Roger, Steve Voss on the Kesslers? Should be grandfathered in.

Adam is communicating to the Kesslers the options offered.

Roger digging to the South taking out pine trees, off the right of way, last week he noticed.

Ken motioned to table the DATA Center ordinance, Roger seconded until November.
Roll call vote commenced as follows:

Board member	**Vote (yes or no)**
Ken Hovet	Yes
Roger Hendrickson	Yes
Lloyd Graves	Yes
Andy Watland	Yes
Jim Pratt	Yes

Motion carried.

Ken motioned to adjourn and Roger seconded. Voice vote to adjourn the October Planning Commission Meeting, no dissention heard. Motion carried and meeting adjourn 7:25 PM.