MEETING MINUTES
POPE COUNTY BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Thursday January 23, 2025

The Board of Adjustment convened in regular session on Thursday, January 23, 2025 at the Pope County Courthouse, 3rd floor Meeting Room.

Members Present: Mark Halls, John Messenger, Ted Kannegiesser, Russel Barkeim, and Kathy Christiansen.

Other Officials Present: David Green (Land & Resource Management Director), Galen Gruber (Land Use Specialist II), Paul Gerde (County Commissioner), and Paul Wildman (County Commissioner)

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by Director Green at 6:05 p.m.

Annual Organization Business
First order of business was to seek nominations for Chairperson. Director Green requested nominations for Chairperson. Barkeim nominated Roger Isdahl for Chairperson with a second by Halls. Director Green asked for other nominations and, receiving none, the Board members present voted in unanimous support of Isdhal for Chairperson. Since Isdahl was not present for this meeting, Director Green continued with the organizational business and requested nominations for Vice Chair. Messenger nominated Russell Barkeim for Vice Chair with a second by Halls. Director Green asked for other nominations and, receiving none, the Board members present voted in unanimous support of Barkeim for Vice Chair. The meeting was handed over to Vice Chair Barkeim who asked for nominations for the Site Team Members. Messenger nominated Christiansen. Halls nominated Messenger and Barkeim as site team members with Kannegiesser as an alternative. Nominations were accepted unanimously. The BOA members were provided a copy of the bylaws and discussed meeting dates. On motion by Messenger, with second by Halls, the Board unanimously adopted the bylaws as presented and regular meetings dates to occur on the 4th Thursday of the month.

Acceptance of Agenda
There was no additions or corrections to the agenda. On motion by Halls with second by Messenger a unanimous vote by all members present was made to approve the agenda.

Review minutes of November 21, 2024
The minutes of the Board of Adjustment meeting that was held on November 21, 2024 were submitted for approval. Motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Kannegiesser and seconded by Christiansen. Motion carried with no dissenting votes noted.

General Business
Messenger recognized previous Board Member Ivie Cooley's nine years of service as valued member of the Board and noted the excellent job she did as a member of the Board.

Tabled/Old Business
There was no tabled or old business to discuss.

New Business
Variance Request #VAR-24-009, Daron and Janell Koehn (present) PID# 07-0044-000

The applicant is seeking relief from the ordinary high water level setback standard in a Shoreland Natural Environment zoning district per section 4.4.4.A of the Pope County Land Use Control Ordinance. The applicant is requesting to reduce the 200-foot setback to 150 feet. Parcel is described as being located in Section 7 of White Bear Lake Township.

Director Green presented the application and staff report.

Halls asked Director Green about the agriculture land uses in the area and asked about the need for a "right to farm" form. Director Green said that the subject property is located in the Shoreland Zoning district and that a "right to farm" form would likely not be applicable for this site.

Barkeim provided an opportunity for the applicants to comment. Applicant Daron Koehn noted that Director Green covered their request well and noted that there are stakes onsite marking the corners of the proposed structure and asked that, if approved, the approval reflect the current location of the stakes. Director Green noted that requested setback of 150 feet to the ordinary high water level takes the current stake locations into account.

There was discussion about the applicant's plans for future expansion, such as a deck, and ensuring the request takes this into account. Applicant Daron said that their request takes into account a planned roofed porch on the lakeside of the structure.

Discussion was had about the grove of trees to the north of the proposed location currently functioning as a windbreak. Kannegiesser asked the applicant how many trees would be removed if they were required to build at the 200 foot setback. Applicant Daron said that they would likely clear trees within about 30 feet of the structure and estimated that they would end up reducing the grove's width by 50%-75% adjacent to the structure. Hall asks to "zoom out" the digital GIS map and noted that moving the structure to the 200 foot setback would put the structure into the snowline which is visible within the grove in the aerial photos. Christiansen noted the importance of the trees and use as a wind break.

Barkeim opened the hearing for public comment. Hearing no comments offered, Barkeim closed the public hearing and asked for a Site Team report.

The Site Team, comprised of Board members Barkeim and Messenger, provided comment about their onsite observations noting that the proposed location seemed like an appropriate location and noted the importance of the windbreak for the proposed use.

Motion
Board Vice Chair Barkeim asked for a motion. Halls made motion to approve the request with staff recommendations and with the condition that the applicant sign a "right to farm" form. Messenger seconded this motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment 6:36 p.m. Motion by Messenger to adjourn the Board of Adjustment meeting with a second by Christiansen. Motion carried with no dissenting votes noted.

Respectfully submitted,

Galen Gruber, Land Use Specialist II
Pope County Land & Resource Management