

CITY OF ALBERT LEA
BOARD OF APPEALS
MEETING MINUTES

May 8, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.
City Center – Council Chambers

Board Members Present

Colby Cunningham
Craig Hoium, Chair
Aaron Farris
Steve Guenthner
Kristopher Moen
Sherri Rasmussen, Ex-Officio

Board Members Absent

Matt Greibrok

Staff in Attendance

Megan Boeck, City Planner
Cierra Maras, Board of Appeals Secretary

Interested Parties

Tom Leland
Courtney Phillips, Shell Rock River Watershed District

Board of Appeals Chair, Craig Hoium, called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Farris made a motion to approve the agenda and Cunningham seconded the motion. The agenda was approved unanimously on a voice vote.

Approval of Minutes

Guenthner made a motion to approve the minutes from July 27, 2022. Farris seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously on a voice vote.

Staff report prepared by Megan Boeck, City Planner, is to become part of these minutes by reference.

Appeal: VA2024-001 – Olsen Drive (PID#34.211.0040)

Boeck stated that the applicant, Shell Rock River Watershed District (SRRWD), seeks a variance from the minimum lot size required in the B-2 Community Business District zone to subdivide three non-conforming parcels from the property which currently holds three separate advertising contracts (billboards). The applicant plans to purchase the remaining property and later donate the property to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for habitat protection and enhancement as well as public use and benefit.

Hoium opened the public hearing at 10:08 a.m.

Hoium asked if there is a contract drawn up already for the transfer of property. Courtney Phillips (SRRWD) stated there is a signed purchase agreement with the landowners and the next step is a survey of the official site. Phillips stated they were waiting for approval of the variance before they did the official survey and pins.

Phillips noted that one reason for the variance request is for access to the property. She also stated that neither the SRRWD or USFWS can have income generating billboards so by subdividing in the fashion requested the landowner can continue generating income.

Moen asked what the public use would be. Phillips stated fishing would be allowed at Goose Lake using this property for access, however the parcel itself is in city limits so you would not be able to hunt or discharge a firearm. Boeck noted that you could use this property to access the city limits boundary for hunting.

Public hearing closed at 10:18 a.m.

Farris made a motion, seconded by Moen, to recommend to City Council approval of the application for a variance from the minimum lot size required in the B-2 Community Business District to subdivide three non-conforming parcels for habitat protection and enhancement.

The motion passed on a 5-0 voiced vote.

Commissioner Communications

Sherri Rasmussen introduced herself to the board as the new ex-officio. She said she grew up in Albert Lea, moved away for a while, and came back about 2 ½ years ago. She is the city council representative for ward 4.

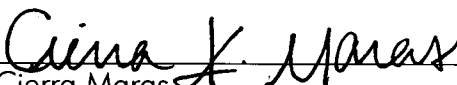
Staff Communications

None.

Adjournment

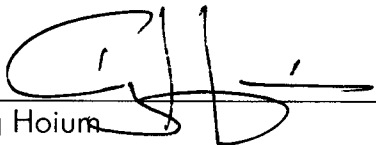
The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m. The motion to adjourn was made by Cunningham and seconded by Guenthner. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously on a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Cierra Maras

Secretary, Board of Appeals



Craig Hoiu
Chair, Board of Appeals