

Memorandum

To: Sunfish Lake Mayor Dan O'Leary and City Council Members

From: Lori Johnson, City Planner

Date: July 3, 2024

Re: Sunfish Lake – Planner's Report for the July 9, 2024, City Council Meeting
WSB Project No. 024343-000

Planning Commission Meeting: A Planning Commission meeting was not held in June and there will be no meeting in July. There will be a meeting in August.

1. 5940 Zehnder Road: The owner of this property needs to replace his septic system as it is failing. This property is adjacent to 5960 Zehnder Road and the situation is very similar in that he needs a variance from the required septic setback from the Ordinary High Water Level. A variance application has been submitted for this site and the two property owners (5960 and 5940) would like to coordinate the installation of the septic systems to minimize disruption to the sites and the neighborhood in general. It would also be a cost-saving benefit to the property owners. The plans were submitted for the 5940 variance on Thursday, June 27. The application deadline for this application was on June 3 for the July Planning Commission agenda and on July 1st for the August Planning Commission agenda. Given the property owners desire to work together and get this project completed, I would like to propose that the public hearing be held at the August City Council meeting rather than at the Planning Commission meeting in July. Staff has yet to fully review the plans and the deadline for publishing the public hearing notice in the paper has passed, which makes it impossible to hold the public hearing at the July Planning Commission meeting. The other option would be to set a special City Council meeting date later in July so hearing notices can be properly sent and it would still accommodate the property owners desire to work together. This process has been discussed with the City Attorney who has indicated that the public hearing could be held, in special circumstances, at the City Council meeting rather than at the Planning Commission meeting. Staff would recommend approval of the variance much like the recommendation for 5960 Zehnder. Discussion on this will be initiated at the City Council meeting.
2. Solar proposal: St. Anne's Church has proposed a ground mounted solar system on their property. The Zoning Ordinance requires a conditional use permit for ground mounted solar. St. Anne's has made the appropriate land use application and the public hearing for this item will be held in August at the Planning Commission meeting.
3. 205 Salem Church Road/145 Salem Church Road: Mark and Katherine Sullivan are the property owners of both lots and they are proposing to realign the property line between the two properties as there are improvements associated with 205 Salem Church Road that are over the property line between the two properties. This request may also include a variance but that will be vetted once the application is submitted—no application has been submitted yet, only preliminary discussions regarding the application.

4. Ordinance Updates: A meeting will be set up with the Mayor and City Attorney to discuss the process of updating the city's ordinances.
5. Shoreland Ordinance/Septic Setback: At their meeting on April 18, the Planning Commission concurred that some research should be done with regard to the current required septic setback from the Ordinary High Water Level in the Shoreland District. The current setback requirement for septic systems is 150 feet from the Ordinary High Water Level in the Shoreland District. The City Council concurred with the Planning Commission and directed WSB to do an analysis of lot sizes and review setback requirements of other cities regarding this issue. This information will be presented to the City Council in August. If ordinance changes are requested, a public hearing will be held at the Planning Commission meeting later.
6. Land Use Application Revisions: The City Engineer and I will be working to revise the land use application that is currently in use to ensure that applicants can easily understand the approval process and submittal requirements.