

02-01-2021  
Planning Commission  
Supplemental Packet - 2

# Planning Commission Memo

## Meeting: February 1, 2021

To: Chair Kopitzke and members of the Planning Commission

From: Ron Moorse, City Administrator

Date: February 1, 2021

Re: Tony Sonnen Application for a Preliminary Plat and Variance for a 6-lot Residential Subdivision at 680 Neal Avenue – **Supplemental**

---

### Variance to Maximum Length of Cul de Sac

The Preliminary Plat proposal includes a cul de sac that is 1,870 feet long vs. the maximum allowed length of 1,320 feet. This is 550 feet longer than allowed. The parcel is long and narrow, with a total length of 2,640 feet, and has a significant wetland in the center portion of the property. The width of the parcel, as well as the wetlands and the existing house in the center of the property, do not allow a cul de sac with lots on both sides, and do not allow a street that loops back to Neal Avenue on the same property. So the applicant has proposed a street stub at the half-way point on the property (1320') that allows for the street to be looped to the south to connect with 10<sup>th</sup> Street. While the stub street may not be extended to connect with a public street for some time, it will be available for a connection in the future when the properties to the south are subdivided.

### Findings Related to the Variance Application

While the Planning Report provides substantial detail regarding the property, it does not provide findings specifically related to the variance application. The following are findings related to the variance application. The Planning Commission may revise or add to the list of findings.

1. The subject property is located in the Rural Residential zone, as are the surrounding properties
2. The subject property is 40 acres in size
3. The subject property has a relatively unique size and shape, in that it is very long, particularly in relation to its width.
4. The subject property has a number of wetlands, as well as an existing house, in the central portion of the property.
5. The proposed cul de sac is 1,870 feet long vs. the allowed maximum length of 1,320 feet
6. The proposed cul de sac would serve six lots
7. The combination of the narrow width of the property and the wetlands and house located in the center of the property does not allow a cul de sac in the center of the lot with lots on both sides of the street.
8. The narrow width of the property does not allow a loop road on the property without creating double frontage lots, and without the two access points to Neal Avenue being closer than allowed by Washington County.
9. The applicant has proposed a stub street that would allow the street to be looped to the south to connect with 10th Street.

City of Afton  
3033 St. Croix Trl, P.O. Box 219  
Afton, MN 55001

# Planning Commission Memo

## Meeting: February 1, 2021

To: Chair Kopitzke and members of the Planning Commission

From: Ron Moorse, City Administrator

Date: February 1, 2021

Re: Kim and John Ziton Variance application at 4102 River Road - **Supplemental**

---

### Additional Information Regarding the Holz Variance Approval

In response to a request by Council member Wroblewski, the Holzes have provided additional information regarding their variance application for their new house at 4206 River Road. The following is the additional information provided by the Holzes.

1. Variance to allow a 92 foot front yard setback from the centerline of the road; In exchange we pushed the house further back than the original house which was only 89 ft from the centerline of the road
2. Variance to allow a 177 ft setback from the ordinary high water line of the river; in exchange we pushed the house further back than the original house which was only 172ft from the ordinary high water line
3. variance to allow grading in areas with slopes greater than 12% - majority of our build went out to the side rather than back. We did put a massive retaining wall in the back to allow us to go back per variances 1 & 2
4. Variance to allow roof height to be 5 ft higher than existing roof in one corner spot so we could change roof lines/slope to run north south instead of east west to protect water run off going into the river. There was only 55 sq. ft of roof above the current roof line however we also brought 81 sq. ft of roof line further lower than the existing house.

We were very intentional to demonstrate a sacrifice in each of the variances we requested (moving house back, bringing majority of roof lower, etc.).

Our finished square feet was about 2700. Ideally we wanted it all on one level with no upstairs however we couldn't get it to fit on the lot since we were told we were not allowed to go forward and were limited with sideyard setbacks. So that's how we ended up with a modified two story with no basement and going back a few feet (hill behind limited more movement back). Not our ideal or first choice floor plan, but it's what seemed to work for the limitations we had to operate within.

We wanted to prevent the rainwater off the roof from running into the river so shifting the roof slope to run north/south draining into rain gardens instead of the roof running east/west like it originally was created the need for the roof height variance in one corner (not the overall roof as I explained in my prior email); in exchange we brought other roof heights lower to make it a win-win.

The conservative increase in roof height in one corner but lower in other areas created an additional \$100K+ in building expenses. The retaining wall necessary to move the new home further back than the existing house created an additional \$50K - \$100K in landscaping costs.

We spent about a year+ planning with our architect and the city, and spent quite a bit on architectural fees to come up with our final presentation to the city for approval.