



STEELE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Steele County Administration Center – 630 Florence - Owatonna, MN 55060

Steele County's Mission:

Driven to deliver quality services in a respectful and fiscally responsible way.

Monday, August 6, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. – Steele County Boardroom

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Lammers at 7 pm. Present were Lammers, Dinse, Ingvaldson, Queen, Pool, Spatenka, Commissioner Brady and staff member Oolman.

Agenda:

Motion by Queen, second by Dinse to approve the agenda as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes:

Motion by Ingvaldson second by Spatenka to approve the July 1st, 2024, minutes as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

Building Permits:

The building permits for July were reviewed.

County Board Action

Oolman reported the County Board approved Rezone #85 (Wilkie -Hope Property), CUP #251 (Routh Pit), and IUP #2010-01 (Arndt-Zuphal Pit) as recommended by the Planning Commission

CUP #439 Steele Waseca (Substation)

This request is from Steele-Waseca Cooperative to construct an Electrical Substation on property located in the SE ¼, SE, ¼, NW ¼, Section 9, Medford Township. The property address is 1748 69th St. NW.

The public hearing was opened.

Michelle Blum, 511 Oakridge Place, - Stated she bought her property partially because of the wooded area across the street. She is concern that her property values will be reduced if that wooded area is removed.

Maria Sexton with Straight River Cable- Stated she has concerns about run off to the river.

Asked what the setbacks are from the property lines?

Oolman- There is a 20-foot setback from property lines.

Sexton- Is there going to be a border of trees?

Steele-Waseca replied - We will take down the minimal amount of trees down. We try to make the substation as inconspicuous as possible.

Blum- We have seen eagles above the property. She heard they cannot remove trees if eagles nest there.

Oolman- I am not aware of rules regarding eagle nesting as those are regulated by the DNR.

Spatenka- Will you be planting more trees on the property?

Steele- Waseca- There are 2 really nice oak trees in the front of the property that we are going to try and keep. We want to keep as many trees as possible to make the project as inconspicuous as possible.

Spatenka- Can the fence around the substation have privacy lathe in it?

Steele-Waseca- Yes it can. But they cautioned that the fence is only 7 feet high and some of the equipment is 35 feet higher or more.

Steele Waseca- Explained the logistics of why they selected this site. It is near the transmission line. It will provide better reliability for the Community of Medford, especially that part of town west of the railroad and the school. The project will also bury the existing power lines located on the north side of the road but will install an above ground line to connect the substation to the transmission line.

As there were no further questions or comments, the public hearing was closed.

Motion by Spatenka, second by Dinse to recommend approval of CUP #439 Steele Waseca (Substation). With the following 4 conditions:

1. No outside storage of equipment or materials unless screened from neighboring residential uses.
2. Lighting shall be directed so that it does not shine directly onto public roads or neighboring residential property.
3. Operator will provide a lot area large enough for vehicles to turn around within the site. At no time shall vehicles be allowed to park or unload on the road, back up from the road into the site, or back from the site on the road.
4. Privacy slats shall be used on the south side of the fence to provide screening to neighboring residential properties.

Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment:

Motion by Spatenka, second by Pool to adjourn at 7:31pm.