



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, July 7th, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. – Steele County Boardroom

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lammers at 7:00 pm. Present were Smith, Lammers, Gillis, Spatenka, Queen, Cole, Commissioner Brady, and staff member Brooks.

Agenda:

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

Minutes:

Motion by Queen, second by Smith to approve the June 2nd, 2025, minutes as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

Building Permits:

The building permits for June 2025 were reviewed.

IUP 2020-03 (MS&G- Hanson Pit Renewal 2025)

This request is from MS&F- Hanson allowing Medford Sand and Gravel to mine sand and gravel on Gov't Lot 2 and Lot 3 in the SW ¼ of Clinton Falls Township on property owned by Benjamin Hanson. The property address is 4895 NW 21st Ave.

Questions and comments of the commission.

Spatenka- Have we had complaints on this gravel pit before?

Brooks- No

The public hearing was opened.

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

Discussion by the planning commission.

As there were no more questions or comments, this discussion was closed.

Motion by Spatenka, second by Queen to recommend approval of IUP 2020-03 (MS&G- Hanson Pit Renewal 2025) with the following 19 conditions: (underlined is added, ~~strike through~~ is deleted)

1. Mining and processing is limited to the areas identified in the application. Before excavation can begin the boundary of the area shall be clearly marked onsite at the corners and a minimum of every 500 feet along the west and north boundary.
2. Mining is limited to a bottom elevation of 1080 feet.
3. Before excavation can begin, the permittee or operator shall furnish bond or other financial surety as approved by the county, for potential haul road repair and for site restoration. The bond or other financial surety shall be in an amount of \$5,000 per permitted acre for a total amount of \$70,000 and remain in place for 6 years from the from date of issuance of the permit.
4. Before excavation can begin the permittee shall obtain an access permit from the Steele County Highway Department and shall be required to comply with all conditions of that permit.
5. The excavation of material shall be setback a minimum of 30 feet from all property lines and 50 feet from the road right of way. Any erosion within this setback shall be immediately corrected by the permittee. Overburden may be stored within the setback area but cannot be done in a manner that directs water runoff or causes siltation onto the neighboring property. Or done in a manner that impedes the natural overland flow of water or backs water up onto neighboring properties.
6. The dewatering of the pit for mining purposes shall be prohibited.
7. Equipment shall only be operated between the hours of 6:00 AM and 7:00 PM. Monday thru Saturday.
8. The access shall be gated to deter unauthorized access.
9. Signage warning of truck traffic shall be located along County Road #9 if required by the County Highway Department. The size and placement of these signs shall be at the direction of Steele County Highway Department.
10. All trucks shall comply with the weight limits of County Road #9.
11. Trucks shall not track material from the pit onto the public road.
12. Trucks hauling material to and from this site shall not use "jake brakes"
13. Operator is responsible to maintain dust control in the pit and on the access road so it does not negatively affect neighboring properties or highway traffic.
14. Operator shall maintain the viability of any existing private drainage system at all times during the operation of the pit.
15. The applicant shall follow their submitted reclamation plan. Final reclamation shall include grading slopes to a 4:1 slope or flatter and replacing topsoil.
16. This permit remains valid during times when the owner/operator is current on all tax obligations including but not limited to aggregate taxes. In addition, if notified by the Auditor of a delinquency, the owner/operator is required to either pay the tax or file an appropriate challenge within 30 days or else the permit is null and void.
17. Applicant is responsible to obtain and follow all other federal, state, and local permits and regulations including but not limited to NPDES permits, DNR Water Appropriation Permits, and Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act regulations.
18. This permit expires on July 1st, ~~2025~~ 2030. All reclamation shall be completed or the permittee shall initiate the renewal of this permit before this date.
19. Truck traffic shall only enter and exit the site from the north on County Road #9. Signage shall be placed in the pit directing all traffic to the north.

Motion passed unanimously.

CUP #442 Urban Farms LLC (Cannabis Facility)

This request is from Urban Farms to use an existing building currently located on property located in the SE Corner of the SE ¼, of the NE ¼, Section 5, Medford Township, on property owned by Chris Hanke for a state-licensed cannabis operation that includes indoor cultivation, processing, and packaging. The property address is 8060 Cabot Ave, Medford.

Questions and comments of the commission.

Spatenka- Is concerned about the security of the building.

Cole- Has concerns about the smell when the plants are being processed.

Lammers- Had questions about the drying process.

Charlie Urban (with Urban Farms)- It is a natural hang drying system.

Spatenka- Is there going to be a fire suppression system in the building?

Brooks- The building will have to meet fire code.

Smith- How do you track the water usage?

Urban- We are working with the contractor to monitor our water usage.

The public hearing was opened.

Urban Farms presented the public with a presentation explaining the process of the cannabis manufacturing business, answering a lot of the questions from the Planning Commission.

Spatenka- Will Urban Farms be looking into expanding any time soon.

Urban- No, we will be running at 50% the first 6 months and hopefully at 100% within the year.

Lammers- Do you grow the plants from seed?

Anna Lieb (With Urban Farms)- At the beginning of the process yes, then we use mother plants.

Queen- Will the process be like farming, where you are busy in the spring and fall?

Lieb- We can plan it out to when we want our busy season.

Urban- It will be a perpetual harvest. We will be harvesting every single month.

Queen- How often will you expect OCM (Office of Cannabis Management) at the site?

Nicole Rash (Lanyer for Urban Farms)- We are not sure, but the site will be frequently visited by the OCM.

Scott Svenby- Has concerns about the lighting.

Urban- We will have all lights shielded to point down.

James Brady- Wanted to know what the Bi-product in the runoff water consist of, and if it could be reused for something else.

Urban- It is a water that contains fertilizer, we are working with a farmer to reuse the Bi-product on crops.

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

Discussion by the planning commission.

Motion by Spatenka, second by Gillis to recommend approval of CUP #442 Urban Farms LLC (Cannabis Facility) with the following 12 conditions: (underlined is added, ~~strike through~~ is deleted)

1. This permit allows for a state licensed cannabis operation that includes indoor cultivation, processing, and packaging. Any changes in the use of this facility may require additional action by Steele County.
2. The site must be operated in a manner that does not create offensive odors to the neighboring residential used properties.
3. The site must be rodent free at all times.
4. Operations must comply with all requirements of the Office of Cannabis Management.
5. Before operation can begin, the building must be evaluated by a licensed professional and any improvements permitted and inspected by Steele County Building officials.
6. A holding tank must be installed to contain water used in the growing process per MPCA regulations.
7. If the facility exceeds 10,000 gallons a day or 1,000,000 gallons a year of water usage, the applicant must obtain an appropriation permit through the Department of Natural Resources.
8. Business hours, including trucks entering and exiting, shall only be between the hours of ~~10:00~~ 7:00 AM and ~~9:00~~ 10:00 PM. Monday thru Sunday.
9. Current screening from residential property must be maintained.
10. ~~Parking must comply with Section 1501 of the Steele County Zoning Ordinance required one parking space for each two employees on maximum shift or one space for each 500 sq. ft. of gross floor area, whichever is largest.~~ Current number of parking spaces must be maintained.
11. All lighting and signage must comply with Section 1514 of the Steele County Zoning Ordinance.
12. Once issued, this CUP may be revoked, following notice and hearing, and upon finding(s) established by the Planning Commission that the Subject Property and/or use is not in compliance with the Conditions of Approval as stated herein.

Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment:

Motion by Spatenka, second by Queen to adjourn at 8:01 pm. Motion passed.