The Lake County Planning Commission sat in session at 6:00 p.m. on this date and conducted hearings & other business.

Members Present: Chair Joe Skala, Vice Chair John Bathke, Mabel Tarlton, Nancy Mancini, James Weinzierl, and Jim Linscheid

Members Absent: Commissioner Rich Sved, Blaine Fenstad,

Zoning Staff Present: Christine McCarthy (Environmental Services Director), Neva Widner (Environmental Services Specialist), Luke Champa (Planning & Zoning Technician).

Joe Skala called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

The first hearing, I-17-013, was an (initial) interim use application, filed by Sharon Ropes which if approved, would allow a vacation rental home on property described as Cragsmere Outlots 6, 7, & 8 of Govt Lot 2 and NW 1/4 of NW 1/4 in Section 15, Township 52, Range 11, total of 11.39 acres, zoned RC/Resort-Commercial District, two-acre minimum, Unorganized Territory #2.

Joe Skala introduced the application. Christine McCarthy summarized the staff report along with one comment opposing the application. Sharon Ropes opened by explaining how the property would be where she and her husband retire, and would serve as an investment property in the meantime. Ropes added that the property would be rented to 6 people max., and would be ideal for families & small groups. She then submitted “Rental Rules” and photos for the planning commission & staff to include with the application.

Skala asked if the property lines were clearly marked, and how garbage would be removed from the property. Ropes explained that she could put flags up on the property lines, or encourage guests to stay out of the wooded areas where the property lines fall. She said that Maher Trucking, a garbage service out of Two Harbors would be handling the trash pickup and removal from the property.

McCarthy asked about who would be doing the housekeeping for the rental. Ropes said that her sister is 6 minutes away and would be the property manager.

Tarlton suggested there be quiet hours included in the “Rental Rules” and that it is important to include a portion of quiet time in the morning. Ropes agreed and said she wants the property to be a quiet place for guests, but especially the neighbors. Tarlton also offered advice to have a designated fire ring to discourage guests from having bon fires on the ledge rock.

Linscheid said he likes this property for vacation rental because of the acreage, the Resort-Commercial District zoning, and the natural side yard screening from the wooded areas. Widner added, one concern would be making sure the fire number was visible from the road by clearing some of the overgrown vegetation nearby. Linscheid then suggested that the fire number should be somewhere inside so guests know the address if there were an emergency.

Motion by Linscheid supported by Bathke to approve the (initial) interim use application with the following findings:

Findings:
1. Acreage is significantly more than the minimum required.
2. Property is zoned Resort-Commercial.
3. Side yards are naturally screened by vegetation.

Motion passed by unanimous vote (PCR-17-020).

The second hearing, C-17-008, was a conditional use application filed by Michelle Ronning which if approved, would allow operation of a one-bedroom bed & breakfast with art gallery on the property described as Lots 12 & 13 Block 27, Townsite of Knife River in Section 31, Township 52, Range 11, Unorganized Territory #2.

Skala introduced the application. McCarthy summarized the staff report and the 9 comments received regarding the application. She also
stated that the planning & zoning office supported the application because there was a previous conditional use for the same operation in 1999. McCarthy discussed how many of the comments received were concerning parking and pedestrian safety, and how it was surprising there were no comments received about a recent conditional use application for a much larger operation.

Ronning discussed the plan for her operation and said the art gallery would be open seasonally, June through December Friday, Saturday, and Sundays from 10:00am to 5:00pm. She discussed how her long-term tenant whom lives upstairs would be the on-site manager for the bed & breakfast which is located on the same floor as the art gallery. Ronning added that she lives 15 minutes away from the property while the on-site manager is 15 seconds away.

Skala inquired about parking. Ronning said that the bed & breakfast parking would be in back, and that the current front parking area would serve people visiting the art gallery. She explained that parking is only an issue due to how people leave, because the street does not go through to Highway 61 so people often leave and end up turning around to get back to the highway through Knife River. She went on to discuss how straight in parking seems to work better than angle parking because the angle parking forces people to back out the wrong way when they are trying to leave the gallery.

Skala asked if the operation would have a blue sign on the highway or if there were signs currently. Ronning explained that she currently puts out "yard signs" and has no plans for a large, professionally designed sign but would not mind having a blue destination sign on the highway.

Motion by Mancini supported by Bathke to approve the conditional use application with the following condition:

Condition:
1. Health department requirements for operations are met.

Motion passed by unanimous vote (PCR-17-021).

The final hearing I-17-014 was an (initial) interim use application, filed by Chad & Jeff Linden which if approved, would allow for gravel pit and washing operations on property described as NW 1/4 and SW 1/4 of NE 1/4, SE 1/4 of NE 1/4 Less R of W, and NE 1/4 of NW 1/4 Less R of W in Section 18, Township 54, Range 11, Unorganized Territory #2.

Skala introduced the application. McCarthy summarized the staff report and the 8 comments received regarding the application. Chad Linden discussed the potential operation and said the aggregate provided on site would include class 5, washed sand, and sewer sand. He said the plan is to mine 10 acres at a time, restoring the 10 acres as operations are moved.

Skala asked if Linden had all the requirements taken care of for operating a gravel pit. Linden responded that he understands the process and the permits that are required, and was waiting for approval from the planning commission before acquiring the final permits from other agencies in the State. Skala then asked if bituminous operations would be occurring onsite. Linden said no, and articulated that it would be crushed and washed aggregate only, with the potential for pit run as well. Linden described the aggregate as good for concrete and bituminous paving however, no bituminous operations would occur on site.

Skala asked about Drummond Grade access. Linden said that he spoke with the Highway Department. He stated that they had mentioned maintenance plans for the road. McCarthy included that the road restrictions are put in place to prevent logging or other large trucks from damaging the surface during the spring season.

McCarthy asked for clarification on the washing pond. Linden said the pond would be about half a football field in size and 8-10 feet deep. He went on to say the water table level would be the top of the pond, and there would be a pea rock divider in the center which would clean water from the side where runoff would go to the opposite side where water would be pumped from. McCarthy added that the Soil & Water Conservation District would be available to walk the site with Linden if the application is approved and go over what can be done to maintain the health of the soil & water on site.

Linscheid asked about the life of the gravel pit. Linden said they have estimated that there are 14 million cubic yards of aggregate there. He added that he does not want high production and that it is something he could work on incrementally through
Skala opened-up the meeting for public comment. Paul Figgs spoke up and asked three questions about road restrictions, operation hours, and the impact to local property values. Widner said that she couldn't speak on property appraisals and how or if a nearby gravel pit operation affects them.

Terry G. asked how many trucks a day would be driving down the Drummond. Linden responded, at full production, maybe one or two trucks an hour but probably less than that. She then voiced her concern about the noise and the dust associated with the hauling up and down the road. Linden said that the Highway Dept. provides dust control on roads and that the noise would be as minimal as it can be for large dump trucks because of the constant slight grade downhill from gravel pit.

Mancini then inquired about whether there would be winter operations or not. Linden said it is mostly seasonal but depending on demand there may be crushing and or hauling activity but not the same activity as during the summer.

Fran Kaliher said she would recommend looking at the original conditions that were placed on a gravel pit in the area and that she would like to see a shorter interim use permit for one year as opposed to five. She added that the Drummond Grade has no shoulder to get out of the way of barreling logging trucks, let alone gravel trucks and was concerned about safety.

Dwight Lind announced his support for the application and said that Lake County needs more gravel pits, especially with good septic sand. Lind said the benefits of the gravel pit would be far reaching.

Terry G. inquired about the crushing time. Linden said that it would be 2 weeks out of the year with a large crusher or one month a year with a small crusher. He went on to explain the large crusher is louder and that the small crusher is quieter.

Kaliher asked about monitoring the pond and plan for washing operations. McCarthy said the Soil & Water Conservation District or Environmental Services Department would be checking the pond and its function as operations went on. McCarthy added the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has their own people who will come out and inspect the site also. Widner said that in addition, a financial guarantee is required before gravel pit operations can begin as to guarantee reclamation & rehabilitation of the gravel pit.

Motion by Weinzierl supported by Linscheid to approve the interim use application with the following conditions:

**Conditions:**
1. Operating hours 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday through Saturday (6 days a week).
2. Administrative review in three years.

Motion passed by unanimous vote (PCR-022).

The last item of business included a general discussion about the adoption of State Buffer Law and enforcement of the said law in Lake County.

Motion by Linscheid supported by Bathke to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine McCarthy
Environmental Services Director