

MINUTES OF THE HAVEN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
April 14, 2026

The Haven Township Planning Commission Board met at the Haven Town Hall on Tuesday, April 14, 2026. The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairperson Collin Gau. Members present: Collin Gau, Kari Watkins, Penny Weihrauch, James O'Donnell, Robert Kolkman and Clerk Tammy Schefers. Ben Oleson (Hometown Planning) attended in person. There were 2 virtual people and 4 other people in house who attended the meeting.

Approval of Agenda – Robert Kolkman made a motion to accept and approve the agenda. Penny Weihrauch seconded the motion. Role Call was taken; Kari Watkins – Aye; Collin Gau – Aye; Penny Weihrauch – Aye; James O'Donnell – Aye; Robert Kolkman - Aye. The motion carried.

Public Hearings – None

Minutes – Robert Kolkman made a motion to accept and approve the meeting minutes as presented from the March 10, 2026 Haven Township Planning Commission Meeting. James O'Donnell seconded the motion. Role Call was taken; Kari Watkins – Aye; Collin Gau – Aye; Penny Weihrauch – Aye; James O'Donnell – Aye; Robert Kolkman - Aye. The motion carried.

Other Business:

Request for Township Recommendation – Sherburne County Variance Request (Brandt), PID#25-00015-1410 (3112 54th Avenue SE, Section 15, Township 35, Range 30)

Erik Brandt explained to the Planning Commission about the variance he is requesting. He is requesting a 66 foot variance to the road centerline of 54th Avenue SE to construct an accessory building. The required setback to the road centerline for a township road in the Agricultural District is 100 feet. He would like to construct a detached accessory storage building on his property. Sherburne County approvals required include variances to construct a 50'x 64' storage building/lean-to approximately 34 feet from the centerline of a Township road (minimum 100 feet required). He would also like to keep the building east for an existing windbreak on the property. The property immediately west of the site is a large open agricultural field that experiences high winds and snow drifts. His septic has been upgraded in 2025 when he purchased the property.

Ben Oleson made the comment that the proposal involves building the structure approximately 34 feet from the road centerline. The property also contains an existing approximately 24'x 36' detached garage and a single-family home. A primary question in the review of a variance of this type is whether the applicant's proposed location will adequately protect the ability of the Township to continue conducting road maintenance activities (snowplowing, ditch mowing and road grading), whether it will impede on any construction or maintenance of utilities and whether it will impede any future improvements to the roadway or right-of-way. A document recorded with Sherburne

County Recorder's Office on November 26, 1975 indicates that the owners at that time donated and dedicated "to the public use forever, a right-of-way for road purposes" a 66 foot strip of land that appears to align with 54th Avenue SE in its current location. A survey would be required to indicate exactly where this 66 foot strip of land is located, but assuming that it is centered on the current road surface it would place the proposed building 0-1 feet from the right-of-way line (typically the minimum setback from a platted road is 34 feet from the right-of-way line).

The Planning Commission Committee discussed the current road; dead end road; road orders; neighboring properties; the possibility of this road to become a private driveway with the property owners; storm water runoff and having the road surveyed.

After discussion on this, Robert Kolkman made a motion that the Planning Commission Committee give a recommendation to the Haven Township Board of a Positive comment for this variance request for a 66 foot variance to the road centerline of 54th Avenue SE to construct an accessory building on PID #25-00015-1410 even though the required setback to the road centerline for a township road in the Agricultural District is 100 feet. The Haven Board should also look at storm water runoff and gutters on the proposed building and also consider getting a survey on this road to make sure the road is in the proper place. James O'Donnell seconded the recommended motion. Role Call was taken; Kari Watkins – Aye; Collin Gau – Aye; Penny Weihrauch – Aye; James O'Donnell – Aye; Robert Kolkman - Aye. The motion carried.

Discussion – Zoning Ordinance Update and Options Relating to Future Orderly Annexation Agreement / Zoning Administration

The Planning Commission discussed the Zoning Districts for Haven Township. They briefly reviewed the spreadsheet that Ben Oleson had put together. This spreadsheet has side by side comparisons from Haven Township; Sherburne County and City of St. Cloud. The members talked about Comparisons of the Agricultural District Uses; Comparisons of the Commercial District Uses; Comparisons of the Industrial District Uses and Comparison of Rural Residential / General Rural District Uses. The committee discussed options and how to proceed with this.

After discussion on this, Collin Gau made the statement now that the Planning Commission has a comparison spreadsheet the members need more time to review this. The Planning Commission agreed that each member will take this home with them and review it on their own time. Each member will submit their review, changes and comments to Ben Oleson by April 28, 2026 and the committee will review the draft results at the May meeting.

Extension of Orderly Annexation Agreement with City of St. Cloud - No new Update

Zoning Administrator Report

Import Motors Incomplete Interim Use Permit & Enforcement – This has been turned over to Legal Counsel Enforcement – Still Working on the Interim Use Permit

Wiilo Event Center – No New Update

Sherco Solar 4 Projects – This is presented just as an informational piece for the Haven Township Planning Commission Committee. Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy, is developing a proposed utility-scale solar-energy project in Sherburne County, MN known as the Sherco Solar 4 Project. Xcel will be submitting a joint application to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) later in 2026 for the proposed 200-megawatt solar energy generation facility and the associated 345-kilovolt high voltage transmission line. The proposed Solar Facility would encompass approximately 1,180 acres of agricultural lands located in Clear Lake, Haven and Palmer Townships. This is a State and Federal project.

MPCA Ground Water Pollution – Is still investigating with well samples. Fifteen different wells have been tested. Results of reports hopefully will be available this summer.

Open Forum

Gary Kiffmeyer spoke with the Planning Commission members and told them that he is involved with the Sherco Solar 4 Project. He made the comment that agricultural acres involved in solar are taxed at a commercial rate. He also stated that the solar projects are usually a 25 year contract but can also get extensions.

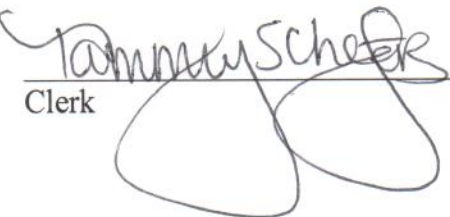
The next meeting of the Haven Township Planning Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, May 12, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. at the Haven Township Hall.

James O'Donnell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kari Watkins seconded the motion. Role Call was taken; Kari Watkins – Aye; Collin Gau – Aye; Penny Weihrauch – Aye; James O'Donnell – Aye; Robert Kolkman - Aye. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.



Chairperson

5-17-2026
Date



Clerk

5.12.2026
Date