

**Town of Somerset
Parks, Recreation & Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 18, 2026
(Unofficial Until Approved at Next Meeting)**

Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Plourde called the Parks, Rec & Planning Commission meeting to order at 7:00 pm. A quorum was established with the following members present Tabatha Hansen, Russ Hultman, Lenny Germain, Bill Lawson, Joe Jahnke, Jeri Koester, and Doug Plourde. Plourde announced all public commenters should go to the podium and will be given three minutes. Koester stated all the written comments and petitions have been provided to the Parks, Rec, and Planning Commission prior to tonight's meeting.

Approval of Agenda & Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion by Jahnke, seconded by Lawson to approve the agenda. Motion carried. Motion by Hansen, seconded by Hultman to approve the January 21, 2026, PRPC meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Old Business

None.

Public Input

Susan Sheridan, speaking on behalf of herself and Chris Carlson, 544-170th Avenue adjacent property owners. Sheridan requested respectfully opposing the self-storage units due to increased traffic, lighting, noise, safety, and quality of life of nearby residents. 170th Avenue is narrow road not suited for trucks/trailers. The site is visible from her home, and the lighting would impact her. The commercial use changes the character of the community.

John and Rose Telschow, 608-170th Avenue, residents for 54 years have seen a lot of changes. The intersection of County Road I and 170th Avenue has had numerous accidents and there is a blind intersection on that corner. John Telschow is also concerned about what would be stored in the units as there will be no inspections and possible hazardous stuff being stored.

Mark and Jennifer Dewall, 1526 Oak Ridge Lane, Houlton own the property at 575-170th Avenue directly across the road from the proposed facility. The property on 170th Avenue has been in the family for over 50 years. Mark Dewall stated the CUP would have a detrimental effect on his property and is concerned with stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces, affecting wildlife and ecosystems. The Dewall's respectfully submit that the 100' highway setback is not included in the impervious surface and note concerns with exterior lighting and after-hours traffic, noise, vehicle headlights, and general activities that impact enjoyment of surrounding properties. The absence of a speed limit posting with vehicles speeding was also noted. Dewall stated the use would be inconsistent with the surrounding area, diminishing visual appeal of the neighborhood and the storage facilities do not create jobs and there appears to be a surplus of commercial availability in the community.

Joshua Tavis, speaking on behalf of his parents Margaret & Robert Tavis, 569-170th Avenue, reading the written document that was submitted and distributed. Margaret & Robert Tavis built their forever home and are strongly proposed to the CUP project as it introduces a level of use intensity that exceeds what R2 Zoning anticipates, such as frequent vehicles, traffic, deliveries, theft, environmental and extended hours of access. Commercial use does not maintain the rural character. They are concerned about exterior lighting and spill over. The use is directly in conflict with the Town of Somerset's Comprehensive Plan of preserving rural character and protecting natural resources, encourage best management practices for responsible land use, supporting appropriate commercial siting which prioritizes major highway intersections and avoids proximity to residential areas or isolated spot commercial development.

Jenni Martin, area realtor representing client Sara Schulte, 596-170th Avenue. Schulte's notes mirror all the previous commenters tonight. Schulte's property is adjacent to the proposed facility. Martin questioned the 800 proposed units and questioned who is upgrading the roads for this traffic. Martin stated this will reduce Schulte's property values and there is a sand crane nest in the wetland. Martin referenced the soil map in the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Martin requested denial of the CUP.

Todd Myers, 1690-56th St., resident for 25 years concerned with the young children in the cul-de-sac and the amount of traffic with over 60-70 cars per day. 170th Avenue is the road used for concert traffic, with GPS bringing vehicles onto 170th Avenue. Myers added property values will be affected and stated there is plenty of commercial property in the industrial park. Andrea & Todd Myers requested the CUP be denied.

David Justmann, 1697-56th Street, resident and attorney but not representing anyone tonight. The petition has 76 signatures in opposition. Justmann stated he does not want his tax dollars to defend a lawsuit and cited nine grounds. Justmann questioned why it is not in the Village of Somerset business park. There are residents on each side of the parcel, and it could be divided into lots similar in size and character of the adjacent lots. The fair market value is more than double what the applicant paid for the property, so it is not a hardship. Justmann asked the Town to consider looking into buying it for a park. The parcel has six wetlands, and they have applied for a wetland artificial exemption and Justmann does not want to see wetlands filled in. Justmann submitted all his comments in writing, and it was provided to the PRPC prior to the meeting in their packet.

New Business

Spike Squire/Twin Springs Trust-Variance Request-1502 Twin Springs Road, Houlton, Parcel#032-2082-80-000:

Reason for variance is to add a small hallway onto the garage for safety. Squire stated NPS has been contacted and they have indicated a letter of support to St. Croix County. Squire stated the addition is on the road side, not the river side and adding permeability to the driveway. Requesting a variance to the Rule Limiting Square Footage for a Residence in Scenic Riverway Overlay District, St. Croix County Ordinance Chapter 17.36. Squire stated they are working with NPS, St. Croix County and the DNR on the project. All Croix Inspections requested applicant reach out to St. Croix County. *Motion by Germain, seconded by Lawson to recommend approval to the variance request to the rule limiting the square footage for a residence in the Scenic Riverway Overlay District for Spike Squire/Twin Springs Trust at 1502 Twin Springs Road, Parcel #032-2082-80-000. Motion carried.* Clerk will provide PRPC meeting minutes to Squire and St. Croix County and Squire to appear before the Town Board March 4.

Mark McClenathan Auth Consulting, 2125-40th Street, Parcel #032-1046-50-235: Germain asked why there was a setback on the joint driveway. Discussion. One Park fee is due for Lot #6, and a driveway permit is needed to install the driveway. David Berger questioned the 100' setback on his Lot #5 and asked if that could be removed. Berger stated he is in favor of the 2 lot CSM for Peterson and he is satisfied with the new driveway off 40th Street. McClenathan suggested Berger contact St. Croix County to go about the process to remove the 100' setback from Berger's Lot #5. *Motion by Germain, seconded by Lawson to approve the 2 Lot CSM for Scott & Joy Peterson with the shared driveway maintenance agreement with Lots #5 Berger & #7 Peterson, with park fee and driveway installation for Lot #6. Motion carried.*

Conditional Use Permit-Randy Sullwold/Nathan Gulden REI Engineering-Self Storage in R-2 District off 170th Avenue, Parcel #032-2016-50-300:

Plourde commented on the changes in St. Croix County's ordinance regarding allowing self-storage in R2 with Conditional Use Permit. Nate Gulden/REI Engineering spoke on behalf of the project, the phasing plan, landscaping, fencing and that the applicant must follow state guidelines regarding stormwater management and pollution control. Gulden stated the lighting will be downward facing and keeping it within the property. Plourde asked if there are any traffic count studies. Gulden stated research indicates once per month/per unit. Phasing Plan reflects four buildings to start the project before building out anything else. Lawson asked how to guarantee self-storage is the use and not running a commercial business. Lawson asked if there would be an on-site guard. Gulden replied with no plans for that. Hansen asked if bathrooms are in each unit. Gulden stated there will be a bathroom available just for the office and not the public or rental units. Hultman questioned the stormwater and asked if there was any perc testing. Hultman stated all the water flows to the south. Cory Schlosser/REI stated no water to absorb through the soil from the holding ponds. Schlosser stated they must follow DNR rules for 1-2 year event peak flow and water quality. Hultman stated that most of the water flows to the east with some to the west, but most of the flowage is to the east and into the big wetland on the eastern side. The neighboring property owns most of the large wetland and Hultman asked how they are going to stop it from flowing onto the neighboring property. Schlosser stated by DNR rules, we cannot have additional water flowing onto the neighbor's property but there is already water flowing. Hultman asked why it cannot percolate back into the ground. Schlosser answered that the soil on the site will not allow infiltration ponds. Lawson questioned how many units are planned as it appears up to 800 units. Hultman asked if bathrooms will be provided in the larger storage units. Gulden stated no. Jahnke asked what the timeline was for the different phases. Gulden stated based on demand-no timeline. Jahnke questioned the arrangement of the phases and asked if paving will be done all at once or in phases. Gulden stated the paving will be done in phases. Germain asked how the changes to the St. Croix County's Ordinance Chapter 17 applies. Schlosser replied

they must meet DNR requirements. Chris Johnson, 544-170th Avenue neighbor, stated everything from that ditch ends up in his pond with salt in it. The property to the east of Johnson's is a nesting site for sandhill cranes. Germain stated all the new development retention ponds are currently full as the ground is frozen. What happens when the ground is frozen? Hultman reiterated his concern about the stormwater pond being just a holding pond and draining to the east into the large pond. Jahnke asked what the liners are made of in the stormwater ponds. Schlosser stated a plastic or clay liner. Lawson asked if a flood situation occurs in a 10- or 20-year event, would this flood anyone's house. Gulden stated it is not part of the analysis. Hultman asked if there is any way to make it work to keep your water on your own property. The depth of ponds is 8.5.' Rose Telschow 608-170th Avenue neighbor asked if holding ponds would add to the mosquito population. Todd Myers, 1690-56th Street neighbor stated the lined ponds will not drain and the water is draining to the east property owner's land. Myers concerned with the change to the wetland. Jenni Martin commented the 8' pond flows over onto the adjacent property. John Telschow stated he had to install a mound system because it did not perc and he is concerned about the excess water. Hultman inquired about screening. Hansen inquired about the phasing plan. Some discussion with them turning into homes. Gulden stated St. Croix County can put conditions on the permit and if not complying the county can pull the permit. Hultman asked how the units would be policed or enforced. Gulden replied, security cameras will be installed, and applicant is applying for a variance to allow two driveways to the Town Board. Tavis stated his parents had a theft of belongings during their home building project. Martin is concerned with traffic, safety, security, and road not made for this kind of traffic. Resident at 563-170th Avenue stated there is a blind hill by his driveway. Germain stated concert GPS traffic uses 170th Avenue. More discussion on concerns over traffic and contractors' using storage units and possible residential use of storage units. Germain requested screening plan for highway, building heights and roof pitch and elevations, lighting and fencing-inset at the driveway so gate is not right at roadway, verify setbacks on the furthest east and west buildings with Town's commercial building ordinance, driveway(s) width widened to allow for trucks and trailers to turn in with ease and still concerned about stormwater retention ponds and runoff. Hultman asked if these would ever be rented to a big company to store appliances. Gulden stated no plan for that. Bill Field inquired about controlled access. Sullwold answered a key fob and hours would be set 10 pm and 6 am with controlled access. Rose Telschow is concerned with additional traffic and no shoulder on 170th Ave. Gulden reiterated they will be following DNR standards regarding stormwater and water quality. Sarah Schulte, 597-170th Avenue gives the Town permission to come onto her property to the east to inspect.

After much discussion, a motion was made by Hansen, seconded by Lawson to deny the Conditional Use Permit- Randy Sullwold/Nathan Gulden REI Engineering-Self Storage in R-2 District off 170th Avenue, Parcel #032-2016-50-300 Hansen, Hultman, Lawson, Germain, Koester, Jahnke voted yes to deny. Plourde abstained. Motion carried.

Announcements & Adjourn

Motion by Hansen, seconded by Hultman to adjourn. Motion carried and meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Jeri Koester,
Clerk