

**Summary of the  
MEEKER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
March 21, 2023 – MEETING MINUTES**  
*Audio Available*

The Meeker County Planning Commission held a meeting on **March 21, 2023 at 5:00pm** to consider the following Interim Use permit applications and other business before the Board. Present was Smith, Turck, Schreiber, Hempel, Salzl, Jans, Euerle and Zoning Administrator Schultz.

5:00pm

Jans calls the meeting to order. There is a quorum.

The Board states their names for voice recognition.

Jans asks the Board if they have any corrections or additions to the January 17, 2023 meeting minutes. None are noted.

Hempel makes a motion for approval.

Euerle seconds the motion.

Motion carried 7-0.

5:01pm

**Jans opens the rescheduled public hearing for Verizon Wireless (applicant), 10801 Bush Lake Rd, Bloomington, MN 55438 and Philip Rokala (owner), 29541 725<sup>th</sup> Ave, Dassel, MN 55325. Property located at the South Half (S ½) of the Northeast Quarter (NE ¼) of the Southwest Quarter (SW ¼), more fully described in the application. Section Twenty-Seven (27), Township One Hundred Twenty (120), Range Twenty-Nine (29), Kingston Township. An application for a Conditional Use permit for the construction of a commercial wireless telecommunications tower with a total proposed height of 250' plus a 9' lightning rod in the A-1 Agricultural Preservation District.**

Jeff Anderson, Cole Anderson and Blair Ransom are present for this hearing.

Schultz: This is a renewal of an expired Conditional Use Permit #15210 first issued November of 2019 with an extension until November of 2021. The location of the tower will be on a portion of a twenty (20) acre parcel of A-1 Agricultural Preservation District zoned land located in the NE ¼ of SW ¼ of Section 27 of Kingston Township. Currently this is a bare parcel of land. The majority of this property is grassland with small portions of woodland and wetland on the northeast corner of this parcel as per the Beacon GIS program.

Applicant Verizon wireless and the property owner have made application to construct a telecommunications tower on this site. The tower shall meet all required setbacks with the exception of the property line to the north. A 20-foot-wide access easement is proposed to extend east away from the lease area to 725th avenue. Philip Rokala, who also owns the property to the north, waived the required 259' setback to that north property boundary. The tower is proposed to be a 250' lattice design, self-supporting tower with a 9' lighting rod at the top and is designed to accommodate Verizon plus three additional co-locations.

The antenna will be licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Appropriate lighting shall be installed on this tower as per FAA regulations for a tower of this height. The tower site location is proposed to be between a 1049 to 1051 elevation. As per the elevations and directional arrows shown on the drawing, surface water shall run to the south and east of this property. A swale is proposed to be constructed on the south side of the proposed driveway to manage water runoff and to help filter pollutants. For reclamation of this site the county shall require financial assurance in an amount equal to

ten percent of the cost of the original dollar amount to construct the tower, sufficient to cover costs of removal of towers, buildings, concrete footings, anchors, supporting equipment, and antennae and the site shall be restored to the conditions that existed prior to the construction of the tower. The concrete footings and anchors shall be removed to a three-foot depth below ground surface. As per the applicant, there are no towers in the general vicinity that their infrastructure could be co-located upon.

Randy Celander commented - Reviewed and is Okay it appears to be the same tower as was planned for in 2019.

Schultz reads a letter from a neighbor to the south:

*Dear Mr. Schultz:*

*I am opposed to the construction of a tower in the location identified in the notice. I own the property at 28656 CSAH 4, north of Dassel. It seems that there would be an industrial or commercial property in or near Dassel or Kingston that would be better suited for this sort of installation. If I have any influence in this permit application, I would vote a solid no.*

*Sincerely,*

*Greg H Theisen*

Cole Anderson wants to know the location of the tower on the property. *Cole and Jeff both look at the maps with the Board.*

Cole states that it will be  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from his place.

Jans says that he has done some research and it should not interfere with a tractors GPS.

Ransom states that the goal of the tower is primarily for capacity as well as coverage. There are maps in the packets that show before and after of the service area received. This will give the area faster data speeds.

Jans asks for approximate start date of construction. *Hopefully summer of 2023.*

Smith asks if there are any more plans for Meeker County. *Not that he is aware of.*

Hempel asks what kind of security will be around this tower. *Fence and lock.*

Smith makes a motion to close the public hearing.

Turck seconds the motion.

Motion carried 7-0.

Schultz reads the possible conditions:

1. This tower shall not exceed 259' feet in height, including the lightning rod.
2. This tower shall have room to accommodate three (3) additional users.
3. The tower must meet or exceed all Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements and receive all required permits prior to commencing construction.
4. The tower must be constructed and maintained as per the plans submitted with this conditional use permit application.
5. The applicant shall receive all required permits prior to commencing construction.
6. The applicant shall submit evidence, prior to being issued a building permit and commencing construction, that the financial assurance submitted with this application is sufficient to meet the

ordinance requirement that the bond be a minimum of ten percent of the cost of the original dollar amount to construct the tower. This financial assurance shall be utilized in the event Meeker County is required to undertake demolition of the tower due to failure of the applicant to perform these tasks when, or if, required and shall cover the cost of removal of tower, buildings, concrete footings, anchors, supporting equipment, and antennae and to restore the site to the conditions that existed prior to the construction of the tower.

Ransom states that he believes that the bond is still in place.

Schultz says, yes, for \$25,0000, but we need a letter that states it takes \$250,000 for construction.

Hempel asks if there is a Certificate of Insurance for Liability.

Schultz says that he has it.

Smith makes a motion for approval.

Turck seconds the motion.

Motion carried 7-0.

5:18pm

**Jans opens the public hearing for Nate & Robin Hulstein (owners), 27789 668th Ave, Darwin, MN 55324 and Specialized Outdoor Services (applicant), PO Box 114, Cokato, MN 55321. Property located at 27789 668th Ave, Darwin, MN 55324. Lot Eight (8), Block One (1), Pollock's Addition, Dunns Lake, Darwin Township. An application for a Conditional Use Permit to move more than ten (10) cubic yards of material in the Shore and Bluff Impact Zone and more than fifty (50) cubic yards of material in the Shoreland District in the R-1 Suburban Residential District and within the Shoreland District.**

Cassandra Tvedt is present for this hearing.

Schultz: This property is an approximate 44,232 square foot Riparian R-1 zoned Lot 8/Block 1 Pollock Addition formed in 1975 lot with a property address 27789 668th Ave, Darwin, MN located in Section 3, Township 119, Range 30 in Darwin Township. Dunns Lake is considered a Recreational Development Lake.

Currently there is a house and utility shed on the property built in 1992. An addition was put on the house in 2017. The property owners are requesting to install 30 feet of boulder retaining wall, 50 feet of rip rap, a 10' x 20' paver area, 75' of steps and bring in 30 cubic yards of soil. Total materials brought on site for the project will be approximately 60 cubic yards. Septic system was compliant August 2017, so it will need a compliance check.

Ethan Jenzen DNR area hydrologist has not yet commented at the time of this meeting.

As per [Article 19A.04. C.2.d] Movement of more than 10 cubic yards of material in the shore impact zone and/or 50 cubic yards of material in the shore land district requires an approved conditional use permit from the County.

Jans says that he viewed the property with Salzl and Schultz. It was difficult to see much with all the snow. He states that it is quite a decline going to the lake. He feels this is a good project.

Tvedt says that the current stairs are not safe.

Smith asks if there is any landscaping there now. *Only wood stairs.*

Schultz reads the possible conditions:

1. The total cubic yardage moved and/or brought onto this site shall be a maximum of 69 cubic yards of material.
2. Engineering completed by a licensed structural engineer licensed in the State of Minnesota for any walls that are four feet or taller.
3. The project shall be completed as per the plans submitted with this application.
4. All required additional permits shall be obtained if needed prior to commencing the project or project extends beyond scope submitted.
5. A compliant septic certification will need to be completed before work starts on the project.
6. Erosion control shall be implemented and maintained on-site until permanent vegetative cover is established to prevent erosion of material into sensitive areas.
7. The applicant and/or property owner shall notify Meeker County Planning & Zoning within seven days of completion of this project.

Tvedt states that they have been in contact with a septic company, but need to wait until spring.

Salz makes a motion to close the public hearing.

Hempel seconds the motion.

Motion carried 7-0.

Hempel makes a motion for approval with the conditions.

Turck seconds the motion.

Motion carried 7-0.

5:25pm

**Jans opens the public hearing for Nathan & Christina Thompson (owners), 26353 733rd Ave, Dassel, MN 55325 and Specialized Outdoor Services (applicant), PO Box 114, Cokato, MN 55321. Property located at 26353 733rd Ave, Dassel, MN 55325. That part of Government Lot Four (4), commencing at the Southwest (SW) Corner, more fully described in the application. Section Eleven (11), Township One Hundred Nineteen (119), Range Twenty Nine (29), Little Swan Lake, Dassel Township. A Conditional Use permit application to move more than ten (10) cubic yards of material in the Shore Impact Zone and more than fifty (50) cubic yards of material in the Shoreland District in the R-1 Suburban Residential District and within the Shoreland District.**

Tina Thompson, Jessica Baker and Cassandra Tvedt are present for this hearing.

Schultz: This property is a 11,562 square foot riparian R-1 zoned metes and bounds property that is small in width and area. Located at 26353 733rd Ave, Dassel, MN, in Section 11, Township 119, Range 29 in Dassel Township. Little Swan Lake is considered a Recreational Development Lake.

Currently there is a house on the property built in 1946, a deck built in 2006 and a house addition in 2009. Septic compliance was last completed July of 2018. So, a septic compliance check will need to be done for the property.

The property owners are requesting to replace the block retaining walls with boulder walls. The wood steps will be replaced with 4' wide Belgard step units. The deck by the garage is being replaced with permeable paver patio. And the front timber wall is being replaced with a boulder wall.

The project is going to consist of 75' of riprap, 165' of boulder wall, 276 square feet of pavers, 50' of stairs, and 50 cubic yards of dirt. Total materials brought on site or moved on the property will be approximately 126 cubic yards. Total impervious for the site after the project will be approximately 23.5%.

Ethan Jenzen DNR area hydrologist has not yet commented at the time of this meeting.

As per [Article 19A.04. C.2.d] Movement of more than 10 cubic yards of material in the shore impact zone and/or 50 cubic yards of material in the shore land district requires an approved conditional use permit from the County.

Jans says that there is a wall that was starting to fall down and a rotted deck that was removed. This will be a good project.

Hempel appreciates all the permeable being used. It looks good.

Thompson says they did get their septic certified in Sept-Oct of 2022.

Schultz reads the possible conditions.

1. The total cubic yardage moved and/or brought onto this site shall be a maximum of 145 cubic yards of material.
2. Engineering completed by a licensed structural engineer licensed in the State of Minnesota for any walls that are four feet or taller.
3. The project shall be completed as per the plans submitted with this application.
4. All required additional permits shall be obtained if needed prior to commencing the project or project extends beyond scope submitted.
5. A compliant septic certification will need to be completed before work starts on the project.
6. Erosion control shall be implemented and maintained on-site until permanent vegetative cover is established to prevent erosion of material into sensitive areas.
7. The applicant and/or property owner shall notify Meeker County Planning & Zoning within seven days of completion of this project.

Turck makes a motion to close the public hearing.

Salzl seconds the motion.

Motion carried 7-0.

Salzl makes a motion for approval with the conditions.

Hempel seconds the motion.

Motion carried 7-0.

6:32pm

General Discussion:

Regarding solar gardens, Jans says that if we produce all the electricity in MN with renewable energy we will take away 30% of the agricultural production. That was researched by an ag group.

Hempel says she agrees with him.

Jans states that Meeker County has so much land that the solar gardens can be put on that isn't being used for agriculture. ie. DNR, CRP.

The Board discusses renewable energy, resources, land, moratoriums, possible ordinances, comprehensive plan, etc.

5:49pm

Jans makes a motion to adjourn.

Turck seconds the motion.

Motion carried 7-0.