

Joint Planning Board Meeting
October 28, 2025

The meeting of the Joint Planning Board of LeSauk Township and the City of Sartell was called to order by Chairman Dan Heim at 5:30 p.m. at the LeSauk Town Hall.

PRESENT: LeSauk Township Supervisors Dan Heim, Jeff Westerlund and Paul Wagner, City of Sartell Joint Planning Board members Ryan Fitzthum, Tim Elness and Rusty Deters, Recording Secretary Marlyce Plante and 24 interested parties.

AGENDA: DAN HEIM MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA CHANGING THE LAWN LENGTH & GRANNY POD PUBLIC HEARING TIME TO 5:40 SINCE THAT WAS THE TIME PUBLISHED, SECOND BY RUSTY DETERS, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

MINUTES APPROVAL: RYAN FITZTHUM MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 26, 2025 JOINT PLANNING BOARD MEETING AS PRESENTED, SECOND BY DAN HEIM, MOTION CARRIED 4-0. Rusty Deters and Tim Elness abstained since they were not in attendance at the meeting.

5:30 – James Gabrielson – Public Hearing – Variance – Chairman Dan Heim read the public hearing notice and opened the meeting to the floor. Mr. Gabrielson applied for a variance to place a 40 X 70 square foot accessory building in his front yard. Accessory buildings are only allowed in the rear yard per township zoning regulations, but since Mr. Gabrielson's parcel is located on the Mississippi River, his rear yard is considered his front yard, thus the need for a variance. The following comments were heard from the floor:

Nicole Blake-Bradley, DNR (Department of Natural Resources) - Dan Heim stated he received a call from Ms. Blake-Bradley, stating there were no concerns by their department. The DNR is notified of all variances, conditional use permits, shoreline alterations etc. which occur on the Mississippi River.

Chris Hauck, 1550 Riverside Ave., Sartell – Mr. Hauck an adjacent parcel owner, contacted Dan Heim, stating he had no objections to the building.

Anthony Meemken, 1680 Riverside Ave., Sartell – Mr. Meemken is an adjacent property owner to the north of the Gabrielson property and shares a driveway with the Gabrielson's. He has no objections to the construction of the accessory building.

Mike Hall, 1880 Riverside Ave., Sartell – Mr. Hall questioned the use of that large of a building. Mr. Gabrielson stated him and his father, Steve Gabrielson, have previously used a relative's building for storage which will no longer be accessible for them. They plan to store their boats, camper etc. in the building as well as the possible placement of a golf simulator in the building.

Ron Moran, 32286 County Road 1 – Mr. Moran questioned the legal description's plus or minus footage and asked whether the town board could clean up the legal description language. He did state he supports Mr. Gabrielson's construction of the building. Dan Heim, supervisor for LeSauk Township, stated Mr. Moran's question regarding the legal descriptions could be answered by a surveyor, and the township would have no involvement with the legal description language.

No further comments were heard from the floor or received via email, mail etc. **DAN HEIM MOTIONED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING, SECOND BY JEFF WESTERLUND, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.**

RYAN FITZTHUM MOTIONED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-15 RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF THE VARIANCE FILED BY JAMES GABRIELSON, 1660 RIVERSIDE AVE., SARTELL, TO PLACE A 40 X 70 SQUARE FEET ACCESSORY BUILDING IN THE FRONT YARD, SECOND BY PAUL WAGNER, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

5:40 Weeds, Lawn Length & Temporary Family Health Care Dwellings Ordinance 25-03 – Public Hearing – Dan Heim read the public hearing notice for an amendment to the LeSauk Town Regulations for Weeds, Lawn Length & Granny Pod (Temporary Family Health Care Dwellings) Ordinance. The hearing was open to the floor.

Dan Heim informed those in attendance the township would like to include a 10-inch height restriction on lawns within the township. Township Attorney Trou Gilchrist also recommended the township amend its ordinances regarding the use of granny pod's (Temporary Family Health Care Dwellings). He stated that if a jurisdiction does not have an ordinance against the use of granny pods, the pods are automatically allowed.

Mike Hall, 1880 Riverside Ave., Sartell – Mr. Hall questioned whether a person would be assessed for a large wooded lot where grass is not normally cut. Dan Heim stated this would only pertain to residential lawns in the township. He stated the township has several parcels the board have been dealing with regarding the maintenance of their lawn etc.

Ron Moran, 32286 County Road 1 – Mr. Moran questioned whether the regulation would include leaves that are not raked and picked up. The regulation would only pertain to the height of grass and possible noxious weeds.

No further comments were heard from the floor or received via email, mail etc. DAN HEIM MOTIONED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING, SECOND BY JEFF WESTERLUND, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Ryan Fitzthum questioned whether the ordinance would be for all zoning areas in the township. He noted that some people have pollinator garden's, would they be restricted? Kari Haakonsen, city of Sartell Economic Planner, stated residents must apply to have a native grass/pollinator area and there is a definition for these areas. Dan Heim, township supervisor, was appreciative of the information, but feels the township could redefine those areas in a future amendment to the township ordinances. For now, the township does not have an ordinance regarding maximum lawn height and hopes to be able to work with township residents who continually lack in the upkeep of their residential lawn.

TIM ELNESS MOTIONED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-17 RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 25-03, REGARDING WEEDS, LAWN LENGTH AND TEMPORARY FAMILY HEALTH CARE DWELLINGS (GRANNY PODS), SECOND BY JEFF WESTERLUND, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

5:45 – Erin Warren – Benjamin Wood Public Hearing – Variances – Dan Heim read the public hearing notice filed by Ms. Warren & Mr. Wood. They are requesting a variance from the side yard setback of 10 feet to 1.3 feet and a variance to retain the existing buildings and green house. The hearing was open to the floor.

Benjamin Wood, 32169 County Road 1, St. Cloud – Mr. Wood stated their garage burned down almost a year ago. They discovered when they had their property surveyed, the existing garage that burned is only 1.3 feet from the property line. They plan to construct the garage on the same foundation which has been reinforced and would like to keep the remaining small buildings and green house that have been on the property for many years. Township regulations only allow one utility building and an accessory building. Jill & James Zanardi, 32173 County Road 1, St. Cloud – The Zanardi's are adjacent property owners and are not opposed to the construction of the accessory building so close to their property line since it has essentially been there for years with no issues.

No further comments were heard from the floor or received via email, mail etc. DAN HEIM MOTIONED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING, SECOND BY RYAN FITZTHUM, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Ryan Fitzthum stated this is basically a non-conforming use but through no fault of their own. The utility buildings and green house have been located on the property for years and would also fall under a non-conforming use.

RUSTY DETERS MOTIONED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-20 RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF THE VARIANCE FOR ERIN WARREN AND BENJAMIN WOOD TO CONSTRUCT AN ACCESSORY BUILDING 1.3 FEET FROM THE PROPERTY LINE AND MAINTAIN THE UTILITY BUILDINGS AND GREENHOUSE ON THE PARCEL, SECOND BY TIM ELNESS, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

5:50 Margaret Traut Rev. Trust – Public Hearing – Rezone – Dan Heim read the public hearing notice for the rezoning of the 5-acre Margaret Traut parcel. The hearing was opened to the floor.

Dan Heim stated the owners of this parcel would like to rezone it from A20 (Agricultural 20 Acres) to RO1 (Residential Overlay 1 acre). Another public hearing is scheduled for 5:55 requesting to rezone a 119-acre parcel named Bluebird Hollow from A20 to RO1. The Margaret Traut 5-acre parcel and the Bluebird Hollow 119-acre parcel are owned by the same parties. Township Attorney Troy Gilchrist informed Dan Heim, since the two parcels have the same owners, he drafted a resolution which included both parcels.

Comments and questions will be discussed after the opening of the second public hearing. DAN HEIM MOTIONED TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING, SECOND BY PAUL WAGNER, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

5:55 Bluebird – Public Hearing – Rezone – Dan Heim read the public hearing notice for the rezoning of the 119-acre Bluebird Hollow parcel. The hearing was opened to the floor.

Ryan Fitzthum questioned the overall intent for these parcels. Sam DeLeo, surveyor for the parcel owners, stated as of right now, nothing definite has been planned. He discussed the wetlands on the property and possibly platting the area with lots from approximately 10 acres to 1 acre lots. Mr. Fitzthum stated that city water and sewer are stubbed in the south portion of the 119-acre parcel, which would require lots that border that area be annexed to the city of Sartell according to the orderly annexation agreement. Kari Haakonsen will email the area this would involve to Sam DeLeo so when drafting the plat for the property, he will be aware of those areas that would require annexation.

When the platting process begins, all information will need to come before the Joint Planning Board so they will be involved in future decisions.

RYAN FITZTHUM MOTIONED TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-22 RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF THE REZONING OF THE MARGARET TRAUT REV TRUST 5-ACRE PARCEL AND THE BLUEBIRD HOLLOW 119-ACRE PARCEL FROM A20 (AGRICULTURAL 20 ACRES) TO RO1 (RESIDENTIAL OVERLAY 1 ACRE), SECOND BY DAN HEIM, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Rob Klaphake, 2229 6th St. So. – Site Plan Approval – Mr. Klaphake's 20-acre parcel is zoned U-1 (Urban Service District) which requires a final approval by the Joint Planning Board. Mr. Klaphake would like to construct a 36 X 54 square foot detached garage. His site plan meets all setbacks and impervious coverage. JEFF WESTERLUND MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE KLAPHAKE SITE PLAN TO

CONSTRUCT A 36 X 54 DETACHED GARAGE, SECOND BY PAUL WAGNER, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

There being no further business, RYAN FITZTHUM MOTIONED TO ADJOURN, SECOND BY RUSTY DETERS, MOTION CARRIED 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Marlyce L. Plante
Joint Planning Board Recording Secretary