

CITY OF HAM LAKE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 28, 2025

The Ham Lake Planning Commission met for its regular meeting on Monday, July 28, 2025, in the Council Chambers at Ham Lake City Hall located at 15544 Central Avenue NE in Ham Lake, Minnesota.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Brian Pogalz, Dave Ringler, Jeff Entsminger, David Ross, and Erin Dixon

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioners Kyle Lejonvarn and Jonathan Fisher

OTHERS PRESENT: City Engineer Dave Krugler and Building and Zoning Clerk Jennifer Bohr

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Pogalz called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The pledge of allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Ross, seconded by Entsminger, to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2025, Planning Commission meeting as written. All present in favor, motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Jason Osberg, of JD Ham Lake Holdings, LLC, requesting revised Sketch Plan approval of Kohler Farms, a 43-lot single family residential development in Section 13

Mr. Darren Lazan, Mr. Jason Osberg and two members of the Kohler family were present. Mr. Lazan spoke on behalf of the project. Chair Pogalz stated the original sketch plan of 39 lots was reviewed in April. Chair Pogalz asked Engineer Krugler to provide an explanation as to why a sketch plan for this plat was being reviewed a second time. Engineer Krugler stated the farmstead was excluded from the original sketch plan; the developer has now decided to include the farmstead in the plat which changed the plat boundaries. Engineer Krugler stated by including the farmstead within the plat, the need for a lot line adjustment for the 15946 Lexington Avenue NE parcel, to make some other lots buildable, was eliminated. Chair Pogalz asked the applicant to inform the commissioners about what has changed in addition to the outer boundary of the development. Mr. Lazan stated it was determined that it would be simpler to include the

farmstead in the development to minimize the process of vacating and rededicating easements. Mr. Lazan stated the plat now contains 43 lots: 42 new lots plus the existing farmstead parcel. Mr. Lazan presented a rendering of the proposed plat to provide a visual of what he and his partner believe the final plat will look like. Mr. Lazan stated the number of lots within the project are driven by viable septic areas. Mr. Lazan stated after soil boring results were obtained, two cul-de-sacs were added in the west central and southern parts of the plat which allowed for lot reconfiguration and the addition of three additional lots. Mr. Lazan stated the project will involve significant earthwork and some deep ponds will be created. Mr. Lazan stated wetland areas will remain, and they intend to preserve a significant amount of trees. Mr. Lazan stated the four southernmost lots will likely be custom graded due to the lots being in a wooded, wetland area. Mr. Lazan stated they have been in contact with their builder pool and have most of the lots pre-sold. Chair Pogalz expressed concern with the cul-de-sac in the northeast area of the plat exceeding 1,100 feet in length. Chair Pogalz stated at the March meeting, Mr. Lazan had expressed concern about the viability of the development due to wetlands limiting the number of lots that could be created on the land; now three additional lots are being proposed. Chair Pogalz asked Engineer Krugler to comment. Engineer Krugler stated 124 acres will now be developed instead of 113 acres. Engineer Krugler stated the 15946 Lexington Avenue NE parcel is now included in the plat. Engineer Krugler stated a bike trail easement will need to be dedicated along the west side of Lexington Avenue NE; the entire bike trail easement will now be credited toward parkland dedication requirements. Engineer Krugler stated a trail is shown in the mid-section of the development to allow residents from the northeast area of the plat to access the park in the Enchanted Estates development. Engineer Krugler commented on the proposed cul-de-sac on Hupp Street NE and 160th Avenue NE. Engineer Krugler stated the temporary cul-de-sac created on Hupp Street NE with the Hamlet Estates development is 553 feet leaving for the allowance of a 547 feet extension into the Kohler Farms development. Engineer Krugler stated access points onto Lexington Avenue NE are not going to be permitted due to future road improvements by Anoka County on Lexington Avenue NE and other traffic obstacles created by an existing gas station, 161st Avenue and other residences in the area. Engineer Krugler stated due to driveway access point limitations onto Lexington Avenue NE, and wetlands within the proposed development, it seems that the proposed emergency access trail, with a limited-access fire lane from Lexington Avenue NE to 160th Avenue NE, seems like the best option to offset the exceedance of the cul-de-sac maximum length. Engineer Krugler stated there is one other limited-access fire lane in the city, in the Townhomes of Majestic Oaks Fourth Addition development. Commissioner Entsminger asked if certain criteria would need to be met if the city permitted the emergency access trail. Engineer Krugler stated the developer has presented multiple access options for the northeast area of the plat that did not work out and are at the point of proposing a limited-access fire lane. Engineer Krugler stated it is his opinion that the limited-access fire lane is a viable option, but the Planning Commission will need to determine if that is acceptable. Engineer Krugler stated reconfiguration of the roadway in the northeast corner could be done so that another cul-de-sac branches off from the proposed cul-de-sac. Engineer Krugler stated that when another cul-de-sac starts, the 1,100-foot measurement restarts, which is something else to consider. Mr. Lazan stated the emergency access trail, with a limited-access fire lane, will serve the nine lots in the northeast section of the plat as well as other parcels in

developments to the north. Mr. Lazan stated three options for access in the northeast section of the plat were presented the first time the sketch plan was reviewed which included a code compliant cul-de-sac with three driveways onto Lexington Avenue NE, one street access point from Lexington Avenue NE and this concept; the City Council approved this concept. Engineer Krugler stated it is a long distance, approximately 1,750 feet for emergency vehicles to travel within Hamlet Estates from the one access point on Constance Boulevard NE to the southernmost parcel of that development. There was discussion about emergency access to homes in the Hidden Forest East development. Commissioner Entsminger stated he is concerned that if the longer cul-de-sac is permitted in the northeast area of the plat, it will set precedence for future developments. Engineer Krugler reiterated that the revised sketch plan includes the fourth option presented by the developer for access to the northeast area of the plat; other options could have more wetland impact. Engineer Krugler stated Coon Creek Watershed District and the Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP), the agency in charge of reviewing plans to determine if wetland impacts are warranted, will choose plans that have the least wetland impact. Engineer Krugler stated the City Council will need to determine if what is being presented is acceptable. Commissioner Entsminger asked if Public Works would plow the lane. Engineer Krugler stated Public Works would plow the lane if there is a significant snowfall. Chair Pogalz stated Engineer Krugler provided examples related to lengthy access points within developments, particularly the Hidden Forest East development. Chair Pogalz stated although the access to the Hidden Forest East developments is very long, additional access points will be provided in the future. Engineer Krugler stated that was correct. Chair Pogalz stated the proposed access for the northeast area of this plat will not be expanded. Chair Pogalz asked how long the proposed cul-de-sac is. Mr. Lazan stated the cul-de-sac is approximately 1,400 feet long or 300 feet longer than allowed by Code. Mr. Lazan stated the cul-de-sac as presented allows them to develop two additional lots. Chair Pogalz asked if wetlands were being mitigated, regardless of the length of the cul-de-sac. Mr. Lazan stated the wetlands that would be mitigated by this concept are at a De minimis point which does not require them to go through the full wetland impact permitting process. Mr. Lazan estimated that wetland impacts would be quadrupled if a roadway connection needed to be made between 158th Lane NE and Hupp Street. Mr. Lazan stated the proposed trail just fits in the area shown on the plans. Chair Pogalz asked if a wetland delineation had been finalized. Mr. Lazan stated it is very close to being finalized. Chair Pogalz asked what Mr. Lazan predicts what the outcome of the wetland delineation will be. Mr. Lazan stated the path in the middle of the proposed development should be approved; what is currently being reviewed by the TEP panel is the two lots west of Hupp Street NE; those two lots will not have any impact on roadways. Chair Pogalz stated this situation seems to be like the discussion that was had on creating an access point in the southwest area of the proposed Elwell Farms development in that the TEP could deny a proposed roadway crossing wetlands that did not include adjacent buildable lots. Engineer Krugler stated several options are often presented to the TEP before the TEP provides a decision on what alternative would be allowed; the decision is generally based on the option that is reasonable for the work (building) that will be done in the area and that has the least possible impact to wetlands. Mr. Lazan stated the objective of their wetland impact application is to avoid, minimize and mitigate. Mr. Lazan stated the TEP has asked them many questions about a trail over the wetland area. Mr. Lazan stated he feels the TEP would be critical of a revised proposal that would propose

a roadway, instead of a trail, through the wetlands. Chair Pogalz stated the topography of the land in Ham Lake does present challenges for development but he is still concerned about the cul-de-sac exceeding the 1,100-foot allowance. Chair Pogalz stated the revised sketch plan being reviewed has not changed much; it has been refined, a few lots have been added, and it now includes the farmstead. Chair Pogalz stated that because the original sketch plan was approved, and there have been limited changes to the revised sketch plan, there are not enough substantial changes to require a road where the trail is proposed in the central area of the plat. Commissioner Dixon asked if the City Attorney has reviewed the plat. Commissioner Dixon asked if the City Council discussed the potential impacts of allowing a cul-de-sac more than 1,100 feet long in addition to the proposed emergency access trail. Chair Pogalz stated he understands the road and trail configuration presented in the revised sketch plan is one of three options, and variances, are sometimes granted for hardship situations. Chair Pogalz stated his concern, and question for the City Council and City Attorney, is, will approving the 1,400 foot cul-de-sac create issues in the future. Chair Pogalz stated he would like the City Council and City Attorney to review and discuss the proposed 1,400-foot cul-de-sac and determine if by approving the plans, as presented, will set an unfavorable precedence. Commissioner Entsminger stated he agreed with Chair Pogalz's comments. Engineer Krugler stated the City Council has approved variances for other unique situations. Engineer Krugler stated there has to be a hardship to allow a variance from city requirements. Engineer Krugler stated he will talk with the City Attorney about this situation. Chair Pogalz asked Mr. Lazan if he had read Engineer Krugler's memo and understood parkland dedication requirements. Mr. Lazan stated he had read the memo and did understand the requirements. **Motion by Pogalz, seconded by Entsminger, to recommend approval of the revised Sketch Plan, presented by Jason Osberg of JD Ham Lake Holdings, LLC, for a 43-lot single family residential development in Section 13 subject to submitting a septic compliance inspection report to the city for the 15946 Lexington Avenue NE parcel with soil borings that indicate a suitable secondary septic location on the parcel, maintaining proper building setbacks on the 15945 Lexington Avenue NE parcel, obtaining approval from the Anoka County Highway Department for the proposed paved, emergency access trail in the northeast section of the plat, constructing a paved trail between 158th Lane NE and Hupp Street NE/160th Avenue NE, dedicating a 20-foot-wide bike trail easement west of Lexington Avenue NE along the eastern border of the plat, paying monies in lieu of parkland for parkland dedication with credit granted for trails and trail easements, modifying street names as directed by the City Engineer, completing a wetland delineation, obtaining Coon Creek Watershed District approval, completing a review by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Natural Heritage Information System, meeting the requirements of the City Engineer and meeting all City, State and County requirements. All present in favor, motion carried. *This application will be placed on the City Council's Monday, August 4, 2025, agenda.***

COMMISSION BUSINESS:

City Council Update

Chair Pogalz stated the City Council concurred with the Planning Commission's recommendation to approve the preliminary plat and rezoning for Elwell Farms. Chair Pogalz stated the City Council agreed with the Planning Commission that the city cannot

require a private landowner to dedicate land for a snowmobile trail and agreed that the developer should not be required to pave 138th Avenue NE, Frazier Street NE and 139th Lane NE due to it being outside of the Elwell Farms plat boundary.

Engineer Krugler stated he will speak with Attorney Berglund about the concerns related to the cul-de-sac exceeding 1,100 feet. Chair Pogalz will speak with Mayor Kirkham about the concern the Planning Commissioners have related to the Hupp Street NE and 160th Avenue NE cul-de-sac to determine if a planning commissioner should be present at the August 4, 2025 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Dixon, seconded by Entsminger, to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 6:38 p.m. All present in favor, motion carried.

Jennifer Bohr
Building and Zoning Clerk