

Memorandum

To: Sunfish Lake Mayor Dan O'Leary and City Council Members

From: Lori Johnson, City Planner

Date: September 4, 2024

Re: Sunfish Lake – Planner's Report for the September 10, 2024, City Council Meeting
WSB Project No. 024343-000

Planning Commission Meeting: A Planning Commission meeting was held in August and there will not be a meeting in September.

1. Solar proposal: St. Anne's Church has proposed a ground mounted solar system on their property. The Zoning Ordinance requires a conditional use permit for ground mounted solar projects. St. Anne's has made the appropriate land use application and the public hearing for this item was held on August 15th at the Planning Commission meeting. Steve Kleist, Inspectron, was present at the meeting on August 15th and commented that the solar array (structure) must meet state statute requirements regarding setbacks from the existing septic system and drainfield. The arrays (structures) would need to be at least 10 feet from the septic system and 20 feet from the drainfield. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the solar array, with the condition that the applicant locate the septic system and the drainfield on the plan set, and that the array meet required setbacks prescribed by the state. Since the public hearing, the applicant has informed staff that the arrays can meet the 10-foot setback from the septic system but not the 20-foot setback from the drainfield. The applicant has sent an email stating they would like to delay this item until October so they can work on a new plan. This item will not be on the agenda for the September 10th City Council meeting.
2. 205 Salem Church Road/145 Salem Church Road: Mark and Katherine Sullivan are the property owners of both lots, and they are proposing to realign the property line between the two properties as there are improvements associated with 205 Salem Church Road that are over the property line between the two properties. This request may also include a variance but that will be vetted once the application is submitted—no application has been submitted yet. The applicant has indicated he would like to be on the October Planning Commission agenda. UPDATE: no applications have been received at this time.
3. Ordinance Updates: The City Attorney and I have monthly meetings on the calendar to discuss proposed ordinance changes. The goal is to have a work session at the Planning Commission meeting in October to go over the first few proposed chapters. You will be updated on this work and invited to the Planning Commission meeting for discussion. Staff will ensure that the meetings are properly notified so all City Council members can attend if they choose.
4. Septic System Overlay District Ordinance: Staff presented proposed ordinance changes to the Planning Commission at their meeting on August 15. The proposed changes included creating a septic system overlay district, adding a definition of "riparian lots",

changing the minor variance administration section and reducing the septic system setback in the Shoreland Overlay District to 75 feet. The Planning Commission reviewed the ordinance and suggested a few changes. Additionally, the City Engineer would like to add some language in the ordinance pertaining to engineering review of septic sites within this overlay district. The Planning Commission tabled the discussion and directed that the ordinance changes come back to them at their October meeting, along with the above referenced draft zoning chapters.

5. Land Use Application Revisions: The City Engineer and I will be working to revise the land use application that is currently in use to ensure that applicants can easily understand the approval process and submittal requirements. UPDATE: I propose that this be done simultaneously with ordinance changes as application requirements will be clearly referenced in the new zoning ordinance. Staff will continue to work with applicants to make sure application requirements are very clear.