

Avon Township News

Prepared by Cliff Borgerding
Avon Township Zoning Administrator

Construction Season

The season is nearing the end for the year... at least the major part is over. But there will still be many projects completed yet before the snow flies!

I need to correct a statement I made earlier in one of my articles concerning small storage buildings and the need for permits. **Buildings under 150 square feet that are located within the shoreland overlay district will require a building permit and must meet setback requirements contrary to what I said earlier this year.** These smaller building, if they qualify as water accessory buildings, may have less restrictive setback requirements. You will need to review your situation with the county to see how your project is affected.

Section 6.2.1. (D) Accessory Buildings – Residential Performance Standards states that buildings of 150SF or less outside of shoreland don't require permits but the inference is that similar buildings within the shoreland district do require a construction permit.

You can find out what is required by contacting the staff at Environmental Services at 320-656-3613 or by checking out the Stearns County website at www.co.stearns.mn.us. If you need a permit for a driveway or if you are building an accessory building (i.e. garage, storage building, etc.) contact the township zoning administrator, Cliff Borgerding, at 320-356-7191 or by email at Cliffborgerding@aol.com.

Here's a summary of the construction related activities in the township so far this year:

18	Township Accessory Building Permits Issued
12	Township Driveway Permits Issued
5	Township Plats/Splits approved
4	Township Variances Granted
2	Township Certificates of Compliance Issued
1	Township Rezoning Requests Approved
2	Township City Annexation Requests Presented
9	County New Home Permits Issued
7	County Home Addition Permits Issued
1	County Mining Permits Issued in Township

Road Construction Update

The overlay project for 160th Avenue has been completed along all other major road repair for the season.

The Board of Supervisors contact for road related issues is Leroy Gondringer. If you have any question or issues related the roads in the township please feel free to contact Leroy (phone 320-845-4580) and he will be glad to try to answer any questions for you.

Growth Planning Data Update

I am still working on the final versions of the planning data we compiled earlier this year and expect to finish by the end of September. Copies will then be available at City Hall and the Albany Library. Each member of the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Board will also have copies for their use.

The Proposed Growth Boundary map will be reviewed in a public hearing on September 3rd at the Board of Supervisors meeting held at Avon City Hall. The review will begin at 9pm and continue until all comments have been heard.

If you can't make the meeting you can send your comments to any township board member to have your comments heard. Board members are Ken Stommes, Jim Yurczyk and Leroy Gondringer.

Upper Spunk Lake Road Safety Issue

Residents along Upper Spunk Lake Road raised concerns about safety along Pelican Lake Road. May indicated that drivers fail to obey the speed limits on the road and also tend not to stay in the proper lane of traffic on the road. The Board of Supervisors asked the Stearns County Sheriff and the Avon City Police Chief to attend a meeting in July to hear citizen concerns and to help identify ways to deal with the excessive speed and general safety concerns.

Robert Dickhaus, a sergeant with the Stearns County Sheriff's Department, indicated that citizens reporting incidents will help them identify and prosecute violators. A citizen watch group would be helpful to increase the impact of the citizen reports to the county. Some residents indicated interest in establishing such a group.

Corey Nellis, Avon City Police Chief, indicated the city does patrol a portion of the road that is within the city limits as well. Avon City Mayor Marge Evens indicated the city would consider extending their patrols to include the areas of concern under a contract with the Township.

A number suggestions were made by citizens and officials including installing speed bumps or dips, lowering the speed limit, forming a citizen watch group, painting lines on the road to allow enforcement of lane violations and more patrols by officers.

The bottom line is that the situation won't change without citizens becoming more involved to help solve the problem. Reporting violators to the county is important to solving the problem. People are asked to try to get license numbers of violators and the make, model and color of the car and time of the incident.

Individuals attending the meeting indicated they would like to establish a watch group for the area and they were going to contact the county sheriff's department and may look to the Avon Area Lakes Association to solicit people to help in the surveillance and reporting of violations. If you are interested in becoming involved check with your neighbors or the Lake association for more information.

It was decided that the township Board of Supervisors would review options discussed and try to find a way to address citizens concerns in the most effective manner.

Winter is coming!!

I know it's too early to really be thinking about white stuff already but here are some guidelines to remember concerning snow plowing of township roads. Since the next newsletter will most likely be published after we have had our first snow I thought I'd include them in this newsletter.

1. No parking on any road right-of-way during winter months.
2. Plows will be dispatched according to snow conditions.
3. Widening and sanding roads will be done after all roads have been plowed at least once to allow use of the road.
4. Plows are not liable for any damage to fences on township property or mailboxes that are not up to US Postal Standards.
5. Cleaning snow away from mailboxes is the responsibility of the property owner.
6. Snow from private driveways may not be dumped on the township right-of-way. Adjacent land owners will be held liable for all damages and injuries incurred by snow piles pushed on the road right-of-way.

General Interest:

Fall is right around the corner and I would encourage everyone to get out and enjoy the beauty of our area and take advantage of seeing the fall colors that will soon be here.

The Lake Wobegon Trail extension from Avon to St. Joseph should be completed yet this fall. The work has

been progressing for a few weeks now and the new trail should be a wonderful hiking, biking and snowmobiling experience. We are very fortunate to have this trail available for us to use so get out and enjoy it! St John's will be plowing the trail from the old Collegeville Station east into St Joseph so walkers and runners can use the trail during the winter as well.

Also check out the St John's Arboretum and the trails available there as well. Check it out on the web at www.csbsju.edu/arboretum. There are tours scheduled on various dates throughout the fall.

Enjoy the season's colors! Maybe this could be the push you need to start an exercise program as well. It's a great time to use the trail. The bugs will be gone, the crisp fall temps will make it a very enjoyable experience and the colors are always sensational!