

AVON TOWNSHIP

LAND USE and
ZONING ORDINANCE

NUMBER 6

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THE AVON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ORDAINS:

SECTION 1 PURPOSE, AUTHORITY AND JURISDICTION

1.1 Title

This Ordinance shall be known, cited, and referred to as the "Avon Township Land Use and Zoning Ordinance". When referred to herein, it shall be known as "this Ordinance".

1.2 Statement of Purpose

This Ordinance is adopted for the purpose of:

- A. Protecting and promoting the public health, safety, welfare and morals.
- B. Promoting and providing for the orderly development of agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and public areas and land uses.
- C. Preserving agricultural land and animal agriculture.
- D. Conserving natural and scenic areas of the Township.
- E. Conserving natural resources and open space.
- F. Providing official controls to implement the goals and policies included in the Avon Township Comprehensive Plan and/or the Stearns County Comprehensive Plan.

1.3 Statutory Authorization

This Ordinance is adopted pursuant to the authorization and policies contained in *Minnesota Statutes, chapter 366; or successor statutes and Minnesota Statutes, chapter 462; or successor statutes*. In the event the provisions of Chapter 462 and Chapter 366 are in conflict or are inconsistent as applied to the terms of this Ordinance, the provisions of Chapter 462 shall prevail.

1.4 Jurisdiction

This Ordinance shall apply to all areas in Avon Township, Minnesota:

- A. Except areas within the incorporated limits of any city, however organized, except as provided by law; and
- B. Except as otherwise provided by law.

SECTION 2 GENERAL PROVISIONS

2.1 Abrogation and Greater Restrictions

It is not intended by this Ordinance to repeal, abrogate, or impair any existing easements, covenants or deed restrictions. However, where this Ordinance imposes greater restrictions, the provisions of this Ordinance shall prevail.

2.2 Severability

If any section, clause, provision or portion of this Ordinance is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Ordinance shall not be affected thereby.

2.3 Interpretation

In their interpretation and application, the provisions of this Ordinance shall be held to be minimum requirements and shall be liberally construed in favor of the Township and shall not be deemed a limitation or repeal of any other powers granted by State Statute.

2.4 Compliance

No structure shall be erected, converted, enlarged, reconstructed or altered, and no structure or land shall be used, for any purpose or in any manner, which is not in conformity with this Ordinance.

SECTION 3 DEFINITIONS

3.1 Adoption by Reference

That *Section 3 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance*, is hereby adopted by reference except that “Board or Town Board” shall mean the Township Board of Supervisors, “Planning Commission” shall mean the Township Planning Commission and “Board of Adjustment” shall mean the Township Board of Adjustment.

SECTION 4 ADMINISTRATION

4.1 Purpose

The following sections outline the major zoning procedures for implementation of the Zoning Ordinance.

4.2 Zoning Administrator

The office of the Zoning Administrator is hereby established, for which the Town Board may appoint such staff as it may deem proper. The term of office of the Zoning Administrator shall be indefinite and shall terminate at the pleasure of the Town Board.

4.2.1 Duties The Zoning Administrator shall:

- (a) Enforce and administer the provisions of this Ordinance.
- (b) Issue permits and maintain records thereof.
- (c) Receive, and forward to the Township Planning Commission, applications for conditional use permits, subdivision plats, and petitions for ordinance amendments, including rezoning.
- (d) Receive and forward applications and petitions for matters to come before the Board of Adjustment.
- (e) Maintain the township zoning map

- (f) Conduct inspections to determine compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance.
- (g) Serve as an ex-officio member of the planning commission.
- (h) Such other matters and responsibilities as the Town Board may assign from time to time.
- (i) Collect all fees required by this Ordinance; and
- (j) File for record with the Stearns County Recorder or Registrar of Titles all documents required to be filed by law.

4.3 Site Permit Required

4.3.1 Scope. From and after the effective date of this Ordinance, it shall be unlawful to proceed with the construction, placement or enlargement of any building or structure without first obtaining a site permit.

4.3.2 Application. Requests for a site permit shall be filed with the Zoning Administrator on an official application form. Each application for a permit shall be accompanied by a site and floor plan drawn to scale showing the dimensions of the lot to be built upon, the size and location of all principal and accessory buildings and parking areas and such additional information deemed necessary for the proper review and enforcement of this Ordinance and any other applicable building codes.

4.3.3 Issuance of Permit. The Zoning Administrator shall issue the site permit only when the plans comply with this Ordinance and other applicable laws, regulations and ordinances. The Zoning Administrator may deny a permit for the construction of any building upon grounds which, according to the information furnished, is too low for proper drainage, or otherwise deemed unsuitable for building through provisions of this Ordinance.

4.3.4 Normal Maintenance. No land use permit shall be required for normal maintenance.

4.3.5 Completion of Work. The work for which a land use permit is issued shall commence within six (6) months after the date thereof unless an application for an extension has been submitted and approved. The work shall be completed within one year unless an application for an extension has been submitted and approved by the Zoning Administrator.

4.4 Fees

4.4.1 Base Fee To defray administrative costs of processing requests for site permits, conditional uses, interim uses, amendments, variances or appeals, a base fee per application shall be paid by all applicants in accordance with a fee schedule adopted by resolution of the Town Board.

4.4.2 Other Fees In order to defray any additional cost of processing applications (site permit, amendment, conditional use, interim use, variance, appeal) for developments, all applicants shall pay the total cost and/or consulting time spent exclusively in producing materials for the applicant's request, and all materials

for said request. Fees that are established pursuant to *Section 4.4.2 of this Ordinance* shall be adopted by resolution of the Town Board.

- (a) “Materials” shall include but are not limited to maps, graphs, charts, drawings, developers agreement, etc., and all printing or reproduction of same.
- (b) “Staff and/or consulting time” shall include any time spent in either researching for or actual production of materials, either by Township staff, Township legal, engineering, or planning consultants or the Township Attorney.
- (c) The hourly rate for “staff and/or consulting time” shall be established and made available to the applicant by the Zoning Administrator prior to the production of any materials and the applicant shall be given a reasonable estimate of project time and/or material costs.

4.5 Planning Commission.

4.5.1 Establishment of Planning Commission. The Avon Township Planning Commission, as currently established, is hereby re-established by the Town Board’s adoption of this Ordinance.

4.5.2 Conflict of Interest. Any planning commission member who has a conflict of interest on any issue before the commission shall not be allowed to participate as a commission member on that issue. Any question of whether the particular issue involves a conflict of interest sufficient to disqualify a commission member from acting thereon, shall be decided by majority vote of all commission members present except the member who is being challenged.

4.6 Board of Adjustment and Appeals

4.6.1 Establishment of the Board of Adjustment and Appeals. The Town Board shall act as the Board of Adjustment and Appeals “Board of Adjustment”.

4.6.2 Powers and Duties.

- (a) To hear and decide appeals where it is alleged that there is an error in any order, requirement decision or determination made by an administrative officer in the enforcement of this Ordinance.
 - 1. Actions of the Planning Commission and the Town Board shall not be appealable to the Board of Adjustment.
 - 2. An appeal from any order requirement, decision or determination of any administrative official relating to this Ordinance shall be taken within 14 days after receipt of notice of the order, requirement, decision or determination by filing a notice of appeal.
 - 3. The notice of appeal shall be in writing and shall specify the grounds thereof.
 - 4. The filing fee established by the Town Board shall be paid to the Zoning Administrator at the time of filing the notice of appeal.
- (b) To hear requests for variances from the literal provisions of this Ordinance in instances where their strict enforcement would cause undue hardship because of circumstances unique to the individual property under consideration.

- 4.6.3 **Application.** Application for variance shall be made to the Board of Adjustment on forms provided by the Zoning Administrator by filing such application and paying the filing fee to the Zoning Administrator. The Zoning Administrator shall fix a reasonable time for the hearing on the application and give notice thereof as required by law.
- 4.6.4 **Other Powers.** The Board of Adjustment shall have such other powers and duties as are assigned to it by law.
- 4.6.5 **Findings of Fact.** Separate written findings of fact shall be made by the Board of Adjustment for each variance granted or denied and for each appellate decision made.

4.7 Variances

4.7.1 **Criteria for Granting Variances.** The following criteria shall be used when considering a variance application:

- (a) The variance shall not allow a use that is prohibited in the zoning district in which the subject property is located.
- (b) The variance must be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of this Ordinance.
- (c) The terms of the variance must be consistent with the comprehensive plan.
- (d) The landowner must show that the variance is necessary to alleviate practical difficulties or particular hardship resulting from strict application of the ordinance.

“Hardship” as used in connection with the granting of a variance means:

- 1. The property in question cannot be put to a reasonable use if used under the conditions allowed by this Ordinance;
- 2. The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property, not created by the landowner or a previous landowner;
- 3. The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.

If the variance request meets all of the conditions cited above, the variance may be granted. Economic considerations alone shall not constitute a hardship if a reasonable use for the property exists under the terms of this Ordinance. Access to direct sunlight in the case of solar energy systems shall constitute grounds for granting a variance.

4.7.2 Procedure.

- (a) The person applying for a variance shall fill out and submit to the Zoning Administrator a variance application which shall include a statement of the difficulties or particular hardships claimed, along with the filing fee.
- (b) The Zoning Administrator shall refer the application along with all related information to the Planning Commission which shall act in an advisory role to the Board of Adjustment.
- (c) The Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing on the request for variance. Notice of the time, place and purpose of the public hearing shall

be according to *Minnesota Statutes, section 462.354 Subd. 2; or successor statute.*

- (d) The applicant(s) or their representative shall appear before the Planning Commission at the public hearing in order to present evidence concerning the proposed variance.
- (e) The Planning Commission may recommend the imposing of conditions on the granting of variances to insure compliance and to protect adjacent properties and the public interest. The Board of Adjustment may place additional conditions upon the issuance of a variance.
- (f) The Planning Commission shall make a finding of facts and recommend to the Town Board (acting as the Board of Adjustment) such actions or conditions relating to the request. Such findings shall be entered in and made a part of the written record of the Board of Adjustment.
- (g) Upon receiving the report and recommendation of the Planning Commission, the Town Board, acting as the Board of Adjustment, shall place the request on the agenda for the next regular meeting.
- (h) Upon receiving the report and recommendation of the Planning Commission, the Town Board acting as the Board of Adjustment shall either:
 - 1. Approve or deny the request as recommended by the Planning Commission; and
 - 2. Concur or not concur with the Planning Commission with regard to modifications, alterations or conditions that differ from those recommended by the Planning Commission. Such modifications, alterations or conditions that differ from the Planning Commission shall be in writing and made part of the Town Board's records; or
 - 3. Refer the recommendation back to the Planning Commission for further consideration. This procedure shall be followed only one time for each variance request. If the request is referred back to the Planning Commission, the applicant shall be notified of the extension of time line for action on the request.
- (i) Approval of any variance or appeal shall require passage by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the full Town Board. The Zoning Administrator or Town Clerk shall give the applicant written notice of the Town Board's action. The written notice shall include the findings of fact.
- (j) Decisions of the Planning Commission shall be advisory to the Town Board. The decisions of the Town Board acting as the Board of Adjustment shall be subject to judicial review.
- (k) No resubmission of a variance application shall be allowed for six (6) months without new evidence related to the variance.
- (l) Granted variances become void if the applicant does not proceed substantially on the work within one (1) year. To proceed substantially means to make visible improvement to the property. One or more extensions of not more than six (6) months each may be granted by the Board of Adjustment for good cause.

- (m) An application for variance will not be accepted from anyone who is not an owner of land for which the application is made.
- (n) A certified copy of all variances that are granted by the Town Board shall be filed at the office of the Stearns County Recorder.

4.8 Conditional Use Permits

4.8.1 Criteria for Granting Conditional Use Permits. In granting a conditional use permit, the Planning Commission and Town Board shall consider the effect of the proposed use upon the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of occupants of surrounding lands and water bodies. Among other things, the Planning Commission and Town Board shall make the following findings where applicable:

- (a) The use will not create an excessive burden on existing parks, schools, streets and other public facilities and utilities which serve or are proposed to serve the area.
- (b) The use will be sufficiently compatible or separated by distance or screening from adjacent agriculturally or residentially zoned or used land so that existing property will not be depreciated in value and there will be no deterrence to development of vacant land.
- (c) The structure and site shall have an appearance that will not have an adverse effect upon adjacent properties.
- (d) The use in the opinion of the Planning Commission and Town Board is reasonably related to the existing land use.
- (e) The use is consistent with the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance and the purposes of the zoning district in which the applicant intends to locate the proposed use.
- (f) The use is not in conflict with the Land Use Plan of the Township and County, including the Natural Resources Overlay Plan.
- (g) The use will not cause traffic hazards or congestion.

4.8.2 Conditions of Approval. In permitting a new conditional use or the amendment of an existing conditional use, the Planning Commission and Town Board may impose, in addition to these standards and requirements specified by this Ordinance, additional conditions which the Planning Commission and Town Board consider necessary to protect the best interest of the surrounding area or the community as a whole. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Increasing the required lot size or yard dimension;
- (b) Limiting the height, size or location of buildings;
- (c) Controlling the location and number of vehicle access points;
- (d) Increasing the street width;
- (e) Increasing the number of required off-street parking spaces;
- (f) Limiting the number, size, location or lighting of signs;
- (g) Requiring diking, fencing, screening landscaping or other facilities to protect adjacent or nearby property; and
- (h) Designation of open space.

- (i) Annual review if deemed appropriate by the Town Board.

Any change involving structural alterations, enlargement, intensification of use, or similar change not specifically permitted by the conditional use permit issued, shall require an amended conditional use permit and all procedures shall apply as if a new conditional use permit was being considered. The Zoning Administrator shall maintain a record of all conditional use permits issued including information on the use, location, and conditions imposed by the Planning Commission and Town Board, time limits, review dates, and such other information as may be appropriate.

Procedure.

- (a) An application for a conditional use permit will not be accepted from anyone who is not an owner of land for which the application is made.
- (b) The person applying for a conditional use permit shall fill out and submit to the Zoning Administrator a conditional use permit application form and filing fee.
- (c) The Zoning Administrator shall refer the application to the Planning Commission for review.
- (d) The Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing on the proposal. Notice of the public hearing shall be as provided by *Minnesota Statute, section 462.3595; or successor statute*. The Planning Commission shall forward its recommendation to either deny or approve the Conditional Use Permit to the Town Board. The Town Board will take final action on the request.
- (e) The applicant(s) or their representative shall appear before the Planning Commission in order to present evidence concerning the proposed conditional use.
- (f) If the Planning Commission recommends granting the conditional use permit, it may recommend conditions it considers necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare.
- (g) A conditional use permit application to amend an existing conditional use permit shall be administered in the same manner to that required for a new conditional use permit.
- (h) No application for a conditional use permit shall be resubmitted for a period of six (6) months from the date of any order of denial.
- (i) Granted conditional use permits shall become void if applicant does not proceed substantially on the work within one (1) year. To proceed substantially means to make visible improvements to the property. One or more extensions for not more than six (6) months each may be granted by the Town Board for good cause.
- (j) A violation of any condition set forth in a conditional use permit shall be a violation of both the permit and this Ordinance. Failure to correct a violation within thirty(30) days of written notice from the Zoning Administrator shall be grounds to revoke a conditional use permit through the following procedure:

- (1) The Zoning Administrator shall give written notice to the permit holder, advising that the conditional use permit may be revoked upon the conclusion of a public hearing. The written notice shall also contain the nature of the violation and the facts that support the conclusions that a violation exists.
 - (2) The Town Board shall hold a public hearing in the same manner to that required for a new conditional use permit.
 - (3) Within 30 days of the closing of the public hearing the Town Board shall revoke the conditional use permit, make a finding that a violation does not exist, or modify the conditions of the conditional use permit so that a violation no longer exists.
 - (4) The Zoning Administrator shall give written notice of the Town Board's decision to the permit holder.
- (k) All Conditional Use Permits that are granted by the Town Board shall be recorded at the office of the Stearns County Recorder.

4.9 Interim Use Permits.

4.9.1 Criteria For Granting Interim Use Permits.

In granting an interim use permit, the Planning Commission and Town Board shall consider the effect of the proposed use upon the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of occupants of surrounding lands and water bodies. Among other things, the Planning Commission and Town Board shall make the following findings where applicable:

- (a) The proposed use meets the applicable standards set forth for conditional use permits;
- (b) The proposed use will terminate upon a date or event that can be identified with certainty;
- (c) The proposed use will not impose additional costs on the public if it is necessary for the public to take the property in the future;
- (d) The proposed use will be subjected to, by agreement with the owner, any conditions that the Town Board deems appropriate for permission of the proposed use, including a condition that the owner will provide an appropriate financial surety to cover the cost of removing the interim use and any interim structures upon the expiration of the interim use permit; and
- (e) The interim use will be a subject to review by the Town upon change of ownership.

4.9.2 Termination. An interim use permit shall terminate upon the occurrence of any of the following events, whichever comes first:

- (a) The date or event stated in the permit; or
- (b) A violation of the conditions under which the permit was issued; or
- (c) The use has been discontinued for a minimum of one (1) year.

If it is believed that an interim use has terminated, the Planning Commission

and Town Board shall take action to revoke the permit, including notification to the property owner of the Town's intent to revoke the permit.

4.9.3 Conditions of Approval. In permitting a new interim use or the amendment of an existing use, the Planning Commission or Town Board may impose, in addition to these standards and requirements expressly specified by this Ordinance, additional conditions which the Planning Commission or Town Board consider necessary to protect the best interest of the surrounding area or the community as a whole. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Increasing the required lot size or yard dimension;
- (b) Limiting the height, size or location of buildings;
- (c) Controlling the location and number of vehicle access points;
- (d) Increasing the street width;
- (e) Increasing the number of required off-street parking spaces;
- (f) Limiting the number, size, location or lighting of signs;
- (g) Requiring diking, fencing, screening, landscaping or other facilities to protect adjacent or nearby property; and
- (h) Designation of open space, and
- (i) Annual review if deemed appropriate by the Town Board.

Any change involving structural alterations, enlargement, intensification of use, or similar change not specifically permitted by the interim use permit issued, shall require an amended interim use permit and all procedures shall apply as if a new interim use permit was being issued. The Zoning Administrator shall maintain a record of all interim use permits issued including information on the use, location, and conditions imposed by the Planning Commission or Town Board, time limits, review dates, and such other information as may be appropriate.

4.9.4 Procedure.

- (a) Applications for interim use permits will not be accepted from anyone who is not an owner of land for which the application is made.
- (b) The person applying for an interim use permit shall fill out and submit to the Zoning Administrator an interim use application form and filing fee.
- (c) The Zoning Administrator shall refer the application to the Planning Commission for review.
- (d) The Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing on the proposal. Notice of the public hearing shall be as provided by *Minnesota Statute, section 462.3595; or successor statute*. The Planning Commission shall forward its recommendation to either deny or approve the Interim Use Permit to the Town Board. The Town Board shall take final action on the request.
- (e) The applicant(s) or their representative shall appear before the Planning Commission in order to present evidence concerning the proposed interim use.

- (f) If the Planning Commission recommends granting the interim use permit, it may recommend conditions it considers necessary to protect the public health, safety and welfare.
- (g) An amended interim use permit application shall be administered in the same manner to that required for a new interim use permit. The fee shall be as set by separate action of the Town Board. Amended interim use permits shall include requests for changes in conditions and as otherwise described in this Ordinance.
- (h) No application for an interim use permit shall be resubmitted for a period of six (6) months from the date of said order of denial.
- (i) Granted interim use permits shall become void if applicant does not proceed substantially on the work within one (1) year. To proceed substantially means to make visible improvement to the property. On or more extensions for not more than six (6) months each may be granted by the Town Board for good cause.
- (j) If the land use does not conform to the conditions of the permit, the interim use permit may be revoked in the same manner as provided for in *Section 4.8.3 j of this Ordinance*.

4.10 Zoning Ordinance Amendments

4.10.1 Public Hearings

- A. Public hearings regarding any amendment to the zoning map shall be held by the Stearns County Planning Commission. Upon completion of the public hearing, the Stearns County Planning Commission shall forward the application for final action together with their findings and recommendation of either approval or non-approval to the Stearns County Board of Commissioners.
- B. Public hearings regarding any amendment to the text of this Ordinance shall be held by the Board. Amendments shall be consistent with *Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance*, and the Stearns County Comprehensive Plan.

4.10.2 Application for Change of Text

An application to change the wording of this Ordinance shall be consistent with, as restrictive or more restrictive than the language contained in *Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance*, and shall include:

- A. Reason for the requested change;
- B. Statement regarding compatibility with the County Comprehensive Plan; and County Zoning Ordinance;
- C. Text portion of the existing language to be amended; and
- D. Proposed amended text.
- E. Notice to the Stearns County Environmental Services Department of all proposed text amendments.

4.10.3 Application for Change in District Boundary (Rezoning)

Changes to District Boundaries may only be enacted by the Stearns County Board of Commissioners and only upon review and recommendation by the Township Board. Any changes to the District Boundaries enacted by the Stearns County Board of Commissioners shall be considered to be enacted by reference as an official change to the Township Zoning Map.

4.10.4 Notice of Hearing

Notice of hearing for all amendments to the text of this Ordinance shall be given in accordance with *Minnesota Statutes, chapter 462; or successor statutes.*

4.11 Subsurface Sewage Treatment System Permit

In areas without public sewer facilities, no construction site permit, conditional use permit, interim use permit or provisional use permit for any use requiring on site sewage treatment shall be issued until a subsurface sewage treatment system permit has first been issued.

4.12 County Driveway Access Permit

Accesses onto County roads shall require an access permit from the County Public Works Department. This permit shall be issued prior to the issuance of any construction site permit, conditional use permit, interim use permit or provisional use permit when the proposed use involves the installation of a new or additional access onto a County Road. The Public Works Director shall determine the appropriate location, size and design of such accesses and may limit the number of accesses in the interest of public safety and efficient traffic flow.

4.13 Township Driveway Access

Accesses on any township road shall require a permit from the Township Board of Supervisors.

4.14 Feedlot Permit

No person shall operate a new animal feedlot, or modify or expand an existing animal feedlot without first securing either a Feedlot Construction Site Permit or Conditional Use Permit for such Animal Feedlot from the Stearns County Environmental Services Department. A manure storage facility shall be considered a part of any animal feedlot.

4.15 Sign, Off-Premise (Billboard) Permits

A permit shall be required whenever an off-premise sign (billboard) is erected, altered or relocated. Specific requirements, application procedures and exceptions are set forth in *Section 7.25 of this Ordinance.*

4.16 Essential Service, Transmission Service, and Utility Substation Permits

Specific requirements, application procedures and exceptions are set forth in *Section 7.11 of this Ordinance.*

4.17 Compliance

4.17.1 Construction

No structure shall be erected, moved or altered unless in conformity with the standards set forth in this Ordinance.

4.17.2 Use

No structure or land shall be used or occupied for any purpose or in any manner that is not in conformity with the standards set forth in this Ordinance.

4.17.3 Compliance with Approved Plans

Construction and use shall be in accordance with the application, plans, permit, and any applicable variance. Permits, conditional use permits, interim use permits, provisional use permits and certificates of compliance issued on the basis of approved plans and applications authorize only the use and construction set forth in such approved plans and applications and no other use or construction. Any use or construction not in conformance with that authorized shall be deemed a violation of this Ordinance.

4.18 Registration of Provisional Uses

Registration shall be required for any use listed as a provisional use in the primary zoning districts. A copy of the registration shall be forwarded to the Stearns County Environmental Services Department within 30 days of the registration.

4.19 Abatement Orders

An abatement order may be issued by the Director when the Director refuses to issue a permit or when the Board refuses to issue a conditional or interim use permit or when the Board of Adjustment refuses to grant a variance for a project that was started or completed prior to consideration of the application. An abatement order may also be issued by the Director to correct or abate any violation of the provisions of this Ordinance. The abatement order shall be delivered personally or by certified mail to the owner of record of the property on which the violation exists and shall specify the following:

- A. A date by which the landowner shall complete abatement and obtain a letter of satisfaction from the Department.
- B. The action on the part of the property owner required to eliminate or resolve the violation.
- C. Advise the landowner that the failure to comply with the abatement order is a violation of this Ordinance.
- D. Advise the property owner of their right to appeal the abatement order to the Board of Adjustment within ten (10) business days of receipt of the abatement order.

4.20 Intergovernmental Communication

To facilitate the joint Township/County permitting process, the following, when issued or granted by the Township, shall be submitted to Stearns County Environmental Services:

- A. A copy of all construction site permits.
- B. A copy of all interim use permits.
- C. A copy of all conditional use permits.
- D. A copy of all variances.
- E. A copy of all off premise sign permits.
- F. A copy of all amendments to the text of this Ordinance.
- G. A copy of all public hearing notices regarding variances, conditional use permits and interim uses a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the public hearing.

SECTION 5 NONCONFORMITIES

That *Section 5 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor Ordinance*, is hereby adopted by reference.

SECTION 6 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

That *Section 6 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor Ordinance*, is hereby adopted by reference except for the following:

6.2.1B One garage of up to nine hundred (900) square feet, whether detached or attached to the principal residential structure, shall not be considered in the calculation of the cumulative residential accessory building area. However, in the RT, R-1 and T-20 zoning districts, the total cumulative attached garage floor area shall not exceed the area of the outside dimension of the principal residential structure.

SECTION 7 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

That *Section 7 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor Ordinance*, is hereby adopted by reference, except for the following:

7.5 Conservation Design Overlay, Agricultural

That the provisions of Section 7.5 Conservation Design Overlay, Agricultural as presently enacted is hereby repealed.

7.6 Conservation Design Overlay, Natural Resources

That the provisions of Section 7.6 Conservation Design Overlay, Natural Resources shall apply in Avon Township except as modified by language in *Section 10 of this Ordinance*, and except for:

- A. Avon Township shall not participate in the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, so the provisions of *Section 7.6.3C(2) of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance shall not apply.*

- B. The following modification to Section 7.6.4A(1):
 Identify Natural Resource Conservation Design Goals. The applicant must identify specific natural resource conservation goals for the subdivision and provide a general description of conservation areas on the proposed site. Conservation areas must include land on the *County Biological Survey* or the *Areas of Biological Significance Map*, shore and bluff impact zones, wetlands, floodplains, woodlands, and slopes over fifteen percent (15%), and must, to the greatest extent possible be contiguous with protected resources adjacent to the site.

- C. The following modification to Section 7.6.4A(2):
 Designate Conservation Areas. Based on the conservation areas identified in the first step, the second step in developing a yield plan is to identify primary and secondary resources and designate protected conservation areas. The primary and secondary resources and conservation areas must be consistent with the County's and the Township's natural resource protection goals, including the following:
 - (a) Primary conservation areas must include land on the *County Biological Survey* or the *Areas of Biological Significance Map*, wetlands, floodplains, shore and bluff impact zones and all priority natural resources identified in the Township's natural resource overlay plan
 - (b) Primary conservation areas must include connections to open space located on adjacent sites.
 - (c) The applicant may designate other possible resources as primary or secondary conservation areas including mature woodlands, restoration areas, plant or animal communities or habitat and greenway corridors. Agricultural resources may be designated for protection, including tillable farmland, pasture lands, wind energy resource areas and rural viewsheds.
 - (d) Areas that have potential for restoration of natural resource areas and systems may be designated as primary or secondary conservation areas, including restoration of drained wetlands.

- D. The following modification to Section 7.6.10 A:
 - 1) Individual lots, buildings and streets shall be designed and located to minimize impact on the protected natural resources or systems, to maximize opportunities for uses consistent with the natural resource priorities of the township's overlay plan, and to encourage restoration of natural resource areas and systems including restoration of drained wetlands.
 - 8) The design shall identify and accommodate potential restoration of natural resource areas and systems including restoration of drained wetlands.

7.28 Telecommunication Equipment, Towers and Support Structures

That the following is hereby enacted as Section 7.27.2 E:

- E. Antennas shall not be artificially illuminated. Guy wires or guy wire anchors shall not be erected within public or private utility and drainage easements, and shall be set back a minimum of five (5) feet from all lot lines. Guy wires within ten (10) feet of the ground surface shall be fenced within an enclosure or maintained with a cover of highly reflective material to prevent accidental collision.

SECTION 8 GENERAL ZONING DISTRICT RULES OF APPLICATION

8.1 Establishment of Zoning Districts

The zoning districts shall apply as designated on the Zoning Map or as defined within this Ordinance. All land under the jurisdiction of this Ordinance shall be designated as lying within one, and only one, primary zoning district. In addition, one or more overlay districts may apply.

PRIMARY DISTRICTS

| | |
|-------|--|
| A-160 | Agricultural District A-160 |
| A-80 | Agricultural District A-80 |
| A-40 | Agricultural District A-40 |
| T-20 | Transition District T-20 (closed) |
| R-20 | Residential District R-20 (closed) |
| R-5 | Residential District R-5 |
| RT | Rural Townsite |
| R-1 | Residential District R-1 |
| C | Commercial District |
| I | Industrial District |
| EE | Educational/Ecclesiastical District |
| SR | Scenic River District |
| RMH | Residential Manufactured Home District |
| UE | Urban Expansion District |

OVERLAY DISTRICTS

| | |
|----|---------------------|
| CD | Conservation Design |
| AP | Airport |

8.2 Official Zoning Map

The locations and boundaries of the primary districts established by this Ordinance are set forth on the zoning maps which are hereby incorporated by reference as though a part of this Ordinance. It shall be the responsibility of the County to maintain and update the zoning maps and any amendments thereto.

8.3 District Regulations

8.3.1 Application of Standards

Unless specified otherwise in this Ordinance, when one or more zoning district standards are in conflict, then the more restrictive standard shall apply.

8.3.2 Appeal of District Boundary

Appeals from any determination of the exact location of district boundary lines shall be heard by the Stearns County Board of Adjustment.

8.3.3 Closed Districts

No request for rezoning into closed districts shall be allowed. The R-20 and T-20 are closed districts.

8.3.4 Prohibited Uses

Whenever, in any zoning district, a use is neither specifically permitted nor prohibited, the use shall be prohibited.

8.3.5 Zoning Upon Detachment

Any tract of land that is part of a statutory or charter city shall be zoned A-40 District if said tract of land is detached and becomes part of an adjoining township at any time on or after the effective date of this Ordinance.

8.3.6 Overlay District Administration

- A. The provisions of the Floodplain Overlay District contained in *Section 10.1 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance*, shall be administered by the Stearns County Environmental Services Department.
- B. The provisions of the Shoreland Overlay District contained in *Section 10.2 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance*, shall be administered by the Stearns County Environmental Services Department.
- C. The provisions of the Natural Resource Conservation Design Overlay District contained in *Section 10.3 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance, as modified in Section 10 of this Ordinance* shall be administered by the Stearns County Environmental Services Department.

SECTION 9 PRIMARY DISTRICT PROVISIONS

That Section 9 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance, is hereby adopted by reference, except for the following:

That all structures shall be setback 60 feet from the right-of-way of all township roads, County roads, minor collectors and major collectors, except in the R-1 zoning district.

9.1 Agricultural District A-160 (A-160 District)

Permitted Uses

9.1.2 N ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.~~
This section is hereby repealed.

Provisional Uses

9.1.3 B ~~Agricultural Employee Housing.~~ This section is hereby repealed.

Permitted Accessory Uses and Structures

9.1.4 H Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

Interim Uses

9.1.6 G ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.~~
This section is hereby repealed.

That Section 9.1.10 B(1) is hereby amended to read as follows:

The minimum lot size requirement shall be one acre in all zoning districts, except in the Conservation Design Overlay District where the minimum lot size may be smaller than one acre, but never less than 20,000 square feet, if community subsurface sewage treatment systems meeting the provisions of *Section 7.6.10 E, Conservation Design Overlay District of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439, or successor Ordinance* are constructed.

That Section 9.1.11 A(3) is hereby amended to read as follows:

That all structures shall be setback 60 feet from the right-of-way of all township roads, County roads, minor collectors and major collectors. If the right-of-way cannot be determined, all structures shall be setback 93 feet from the centerline of all township roads, County road, minor collectors and major collectors.

9.2 Agricultural District A-80 (A-80 District)

Permitted Uses

9.2.2 N ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.~~
This section is hereby repealed.

Provisional Uses

9.2.3 B ~~Agricultural Employee Housing.~~ This section is hereby repealed.

Permitted Accessory Uses and Structures

9.2.4 H Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

Interim Uses

9.2.6 F ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.~~
This section is hereby repealed.

That Section 9.2.10 B(1) is hereby amended to read as follows:

The minimum lot size requirement shall be one acre in all zoning districts, except in the Conservation Design Overlay District where the minimum lot size may be smaller than one acre, but never less than 20,000 square feet, if community subsurface sewage treatment systems meeting the provisions of *Section 7.6.10 E, Conservation Design Overlay District of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439, or successor Ordinance* are constructed.

That Section 9.2.11 A(3) is hereby amended to read as follows:

That all structures shall be setback 60 feet from the right-of-way of all township roads, County roads, minor collectors and major collectors. If the right-of-way cannot be determined, all structures shall be setback 93 feet from the centerline of all township roads, County road, minor collectors and major collectors.

9.3 Agricultural District A-40 (A-40 District)

Permitted Uses

9.3.2 N ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.~~
This section is hereby repealed.

Provisional Uses

9.3.3 B ~~Agricultural Employee Housing.~~ This section is hereby repealed.

Permitted Accessory Uses and Structures

9.3.4 H Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

Interim Uses

9.3.6 F ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.~~
This section is hereby repealed.

That Section 9.3.10 B(1) is hereby amended to read as follows:

The minimum lot size requirement shall be one acre in all zoning districts, except in the Conservation Design Overlay District where the minimum lot size may be smaller than one acre, but never less than 20,000 square feet, if community subsurface sewage treatment systems meeting the provisions of *Section 7.6.10 E, Conservation Design*

Overlay District of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439, or successor Ordinance are constructed.

That Section 9.3.11 A(3) is hereby amended to read as follows:

That all structures shall be setback 60 feet from the right-of-way of all township roads, County roads, minor collectors and major collectors. If the right-of-way cannot be determined, all structures shall be setback 93 feet from the centerline of all township roads, County road, minor collectors and major collectors.

9.6 Residential District R-10 (R-10 District)

That Section 9.6 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439 is hereby repealed.

9.7 Residential District R-5 (R-5 District)

Permitted Accessory Uses and Structures

9.7.4 D Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

That Section 9.7.10B(1) is hereby amended to read as follows:

The minimum lot size requirement shall be one acre in all zoning districts, except in the Conservation Design Overlay District where the minimum lot size may be smaller than one acre, but never less than 20,000 square feet, if community subsurface sewage treatment systems meeting the provisions of *Section 7.6.10 E, Conservation Design Overlay District of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439, or successor Ordinance* are constructed.

That Section 9.7.11A(3) is hereby amended to read as follows:

That all structures shall be setback 60 feet from the right-of-way of all township roads, County roads, minor collectors and major collectors. If the right-of-way cannot be determined, all structures shall be setback 93 feet from the centerline of all township roads, County road, minor collectors and major collectors.

9.8 Rural Townsite District (RT District)

Permitted Accessory Uses and Structures

9.8.4 E Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

That Section 9.8.8B(1) is hereby added to read as follows:

The minimum lot size requirement shall be one acre in all zoning districts, except in the Conservation Design Overlay District where the minimum lot size may be smaller than one acre, but never less than 20,000 square feet, if community subsurface sewage treatment systems meeting the provisions of *Section 7.6.10 E, Conservation Design*

Overlay District of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439, or successor Ordinance are constructed.

That Section 9.8.9A(3) is hereby amended to read as follows:

That all structures shall be setback 60 feet from the right-of-way of all township roads, County roads, minor collectors and major collectors. If the right-of-way cannot be determined, all structures shall be setback 93 feet from the centerline of all township roads, County road, minor collectors and major collectors.

9.9 Residential District R-1 (R-1 District)

Permitted Accessory Uses and Structures

9.9.4 C Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

That Section 9.9.8B(1) is hereby added to read as follows:

The minimum lot size requirement shall be one acre in all zoning districts, except in the Conservation Design Overlay District where the minimum lot size may be smaller than one acre, but never less than 20,000 square feet, if community subsurface sewage treatment systems meeting the provisions of *Section 7.6.10 E, Conservation Design Overlay District of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439, or successor Ordinance* are constructed.

That Section 9.9.9A(3) is hereby amended to read as follows:

That all structures shall be setback 30 feet from the right-of-way of all township roads, County roads, minor collectors and major collectors. If the right-of-way cannot be determined, all structures shall be setback 63 feet from the centerline of all township roads, County road, minor collectors and major collectors.

9.10 Commercial District (C District)

Permitted Uses

9.10.2 U ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of *Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.*~~
This section is hereby repealed.

Permitted Accessory Uses and Structures

9.10.4 E Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

Interim Uses

9.10.6 B ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of *Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.*~~
This section is hereby repealed.

That Section 9.10.7 is hereby added to read as follows:

The minimum lot size requirement shall be one acre in all zoning districts, except in the Conservation Design Overlay District where the minimum lot size may be smaller than one acre, but never less than 20,000 square feet, if community subsurface sewage treatment systems meeting the provisions of *Section 7.6.10 E, Conservation Design Overlay District of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439, or successor Ordinance* are constructed.

That Section 9.10.8A(3) is hereby amended to read as follows:

That all structures shall be setback 60 feet from the right-of-way of all township roads, County roads, minor collectors and major collectors. If the right-of-way cannot be determined, all structures shall be setback 93 feet from the centerline of all township roads, County road, minor collectors and major collectors.

9.11 Industrial District (I District)

Permitted Uses

9.11.2 H ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.~~
This section is hereby repealed.

Permitted Accessory Uses and Structures

9.11.4 E Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

Interim Uses

9.11.6 D ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.~~
This section is hereby repealed.

That Section 9.11.7 is hereby added to read as follows:

The minimum lot size requirement shall be one acre in all zoning districts, except in the Conservation Design Overlay District where the minimum lot size may be smaller than one acre, but never less than 20,000 square feet, if community subsurface sewage treatment systems meeting the provisions of *Section 4.10 E, Conservation Design Overlay District of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439, or successor Ordinance* are constructed.

That Section 9.11.8A(3) is hereby amended to read as follows:

That all structures shall be setback 60 feet from the right-of-way of all township roads, County roads, minor collectors and major collectors. If the right-of-way cannot be determined, all structures shall be setback 93 feet from the centerline of all township roads, County road, minor collectors and major collectors.

9.12 Educational/Ecclesiastical District (EE District)

Permitted Uses

9.12.2 K ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.~~
This section is hereby repealed.

Permitted Accessory Uses and Structures

9.12.3 B Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

Interim Uses

9.12.6 B ~~Solar Farms subject to the provisions of Section 6.54 of this Ordinance.~~
This section is hereby repealed.

That Section 9.12.7A(3) is hereby amended to read as follows:

That all structures shall be setback 60 feet from the right-of-way of all township roads, County roads, minor collectors and major collectors. If the right-of-way cannot be determined, all structures shall be setback 93 feet from the centerline of all township roads, County road, minor collectors and major collectors.

9.14 Residential Manufactured Home District (RMH)

9.14.4 F Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

That Section 9.14.9A(3) is hereby amended to read as follows:

That all structures shall be setback 60 feet from the right-of-way of all township roads, County roads, minor collectors and major collectors. If the right-of-way cannot be determined, all structures shall be setback 93 feet from the centerline of all township roads, County road, minor collectors and major collectors.

9.15 Urban Expansion District (UE)

9.15.5 D Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

9.16 Island Preservation District (IP)

9.16.4 B Solar energy systems-accessory, provided such systems have a nameplate capacity of 100 kilowatts or less.

SECTION 10 OVERLAY DISTRICT STANDARDS

That the following is hereby enacted as Section 10.3:

10.3 Natural Resource Conservation Design Overlay District

10.3.1. Purpose

The Avon Township conservation design is intended to protect areas of high value natural resources within Avon Township by allowing development flexibility not allowed under the base zoning districts. Lands within this

District shall be subject to a primary zoning district and, if applicable, the Shoreland Overlay District and the Floodplain Overlay District.

10.3.2. District Application

The Conservation Design Overlay District shall be applied in those areas of Avon Township designated as “Avon Hills Conservation Area” on the Stearns County Comprehensive Plan map.

10.3.3. Permitted Uses

Uses permitted in the Conservation Design Overlay District shall be those uses allowed as permitted, provisional, accessory, conditional or interim in the primary zoning district or any applicable overlay district, except that conventional subdivisions shall require a conditional use permit as identified in *Section 7.6.5 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance.*

10.3.4. Residential Density Requirements

The number of residential dwelling units allowed shall not exceed the total number permitted under the residential density requirements of the primary zoning district or any applicable overlay district, whichever is more restrictive, except as provided in *Section 7.6.3 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance.* Avon Township shall not participate in the Natural Resources Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, so the provisions of *Section 7.6.3C(2) of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance* shall not apply.

10.3.5. Residential Subdivision Requirements

All residential subdivisions of land that meet the minimum size thresholds of *Section 7.6.3A of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance* shall meet the conservation design subdivision design and conservation area requirements of *Sections 7.6.4, 7.6.6, 7.6.7, 7.6.8, and 7.6.9 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance,* except when approved as a conventional subdivision conditional use under the provisions of *Section 7.6.5 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439.*

10.3.6. Residential Density Bonus

Residential density bonuses are offered for natural resource conservation design subdivisions as described in *Section 7.6.3C(1) of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance.* Residential density bonuses as described in *Section 7.6.3C(2) of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439; or successor ordinance* shall not apply (bonuses for TDR).

10.4 Airport Overlay District

That Section 10.4, Airport Overlay District of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439, or successor Ordinance is hereby adopted by reference.

SECTION 11 TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS PROGRAM

That Section 11 of Stearns County Ordinance Number 439 or successor Ordinance is hereby adopted by reference to establish a Transfer of Development Rights program for Avon Township as modified below:

11.1.5 C. Receiving Areas Defined. Residential development rights may be transferred to the following districts only if the Township or Municipality containing the receiving area has met the requirements of *Section 11.1.3 of this Ordinance*:

- 1) Urban Expansion District
- 2) Avon Township's designated growth area

11.2 Transfer of Development Rights- Natural Resource Conservation Design Overlay
That the provisions of Section 11.2 Transfer of Development Rights- Natural Resource Conservation Design Overlay as presently enacted are hereby repealed.

SECTION 12 ENFORCEMENT

12.1 Any person, firm or corporation who violates any of the provisions of this Ordinance, or who fails, neglects or refuses to comply with the provisions of this Ordinance (including violations of conditions and safeguards established in connection with the granting of variances and conditional and interim use permits or failures to comply with abatement orders), or who knowingly makes any false statement in any document required to be submitted under the provisions hereof, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine not to exceed \$1,000 or by imprisonment not to exceed 90 days or both. Each day that a violation continues shall constitute a separate offense.

12.2 In the event of a violation or a threatened violation of this ordinance, the Town Board, in addition to other remedies, may institute appropriate civil actions or proceedings to prevent, prosecute, restore, restrain, correct or abate such violations or threatened violations.

SECTION 13 FEES

To defray the administrative costs of processing requests of this Ordinance, a fee not exceeding administrative costs shall be paid by the applicant. Such fee shall be determined by the Town Board.

SECTION 14 EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon publication.

SECTION 15 REPEALER

15.1 The Avon Township Zoning Ordinance and any amending Ordinances as presently enacted are hereby repealed.

PASSED BY THE Avon Township Board of Supervisors THIS 3rd
DAY OF January, 2024.

APPROVED:

LeRoy Gondringer
Chair LeRoy Gondringer

ATTEST:

Stephen G. Saupe
Clerk
Stephen G. Saupe



drafted by Stearns County Environmental Services
3301 Co Rd 138, Waite Park, MN 5
Avon Township, 16781 Queens Road, Avon ²⁷ MN 56310