

City of Stewartville
Planning & Zoning Commission
October 6, 2026
Minutes

Members Present: Tony Lehrman, Brian Poss, Jon Bernhardt, Terry Timmerman, Mike Wiginton, Maren Schroeder, and Councilmember Anderson

Staff Present: City Clerk Jefferson

Public Present: Former City Clerk - Cheryl Roeder, Michael Tonn, Mr. Demasky

I. Public Hearing - Lot Split 519 5th Ave SE

Chair Lehrman opened a public hearing to consider the lot split of 519 5th Ave SE.

During the 2019 CIP Project, the City acquired right-of-way through condemnation from Lot 14, Block 1, Robbin Addition, to allow 4th Avenue SE to continue through the area rather than dead-end at the Ware property. As part of the agreement, the City installed water and sewer connections on each side of 4th Avenue SE to accommodate two future single-family homes.

Chet Finley, the current property owner, is requesting to split Lot 14 into three separate parcels. At the time of the condemnation and utility installation, the City acknowledged that the two lots would be buildable, even though they did not meet the City's 70-foot minimum lot frontage requirement.

Finley explained the progress he's made on the property and made note of potential buyers for the lot. Councilmember Anderson stated that he saw no issues with this split as it would be a benefit to the community. Discussion took place on stub outs for utilities.

As there were no questions from the audience, Lehrman closed the public hearing.

Motion made by Schroeder, second by Anderson to recommend approval of the lot split for 519 5th Ave SE. Unanimously approved.

II. Public Hearing - Variance Request; Lot 003, Block 004

Chair Lehrman opened a public hearing to consider a variance request for lot 003, block 004 - Halls Addition.

The applicant, Finley, requested a 25-foot variance from the required 70-foot lot frontage, as the property currently has 45 feet of frontage.

Finley explained that the variance would allow him to build a small home on the property. He noted that all required setbacks could be met and that the frontage variance was the only variance needed. He also stated that he planned to remove several trees to help address drainage concerns and would not begin construction until next year to allow time to arrange for water and sewer utilities.

Staff noted that a similar home had recently been built on a 50-foot-wide lot on 2nd Street, where utilities were already available. Staff considered the request reasonable given the City's need for additional housing, particularly affordable housing. Two letters from neighboring property owners were also provided for consideration.

Mr. Demasky, who resides at 516 1st Avenue SE, spoke in opposition to the request, expressing concerns about the limited space in the neighborhood, fire department access, and existing drainage issues.

Michael Tonn, who resides at 500 1st Avenue SE, also spoke regarding ongoing water issues on his property. He reported four water-related incidents in the past two years, including water entering his building, and stated that there is limited space for water to drain.

Jefferson noted that Public Works Director Hale had reviewed the property and suggested that neighboring property owners work together to explore drainage tile connections and access to sewer and water utilities. Tonn expressed concerns about relying on neighbors to maintain their gutters. Finley stated that he cleans his gutters at least once a year and noted that the existing building on the property had previously been a house dating back to the 1890s.

Discussion took place regarding site plans, the process for developing the property, and the need for engineering to address drainage concerns. Tonn encouraged Commission members to view the property in person. Timmerman stated that he was not opposed to development but wanted the water issues addressed first. Anderson agreed that there was no need to rush the decision and emphasized the importance of resolving drainage concerns.

The Commission asked Roeder whether similar variance requests had been made previously. Roeder stated that this type of request had not been brought forward before but noted the City's housing demand as a reason for considering the proposal.

Chair Lehrman closed the public hearing.

Maren suggested tabling the variance request to allow neighboring property owners to work together on a drainage solution before the request returned to the Commission. Timmerman noted that Commission members were not engineers and that a site visit would not necessarily resolve the known drainage concerns.

Wiginton expressed concern that denying the variance could leave the property undeveloped and the existing drainage issues unresolved. Poss stated that the proposal presented an opportunity to create a buildable lot while addressing drainage concerns. Schroeder raised concerns about setting a precedent for future variance requests.

Jefferson noted that, through her work with the EDA, she had met with several developers and builders interested in smaller lots. She stated that requests for smaller lots may become more common with the growing interest in tiny homes and smaller housing options. Discussion followed regarding whether these types of homes may be better suited for R-2 zoning rather than R-1 zoning.

Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Bernhard, to table the variance request and ask the affected property owners to work together to develop a plan to address drainage issues. Unanimously approved.

III. Public Hearing - Lot Split - Stewartville/Adamsons

Chair Lehrman opened a public hearing to consider the lot split of three parcels owned by the City of Stewartville near Adamson's Golf Course.

Discussion took place regarding the three parcels, including the existing golf course holes, the intended use of each parcel, and the potential benefits of splitting the parcels. It was noted that the parcels currently consist of land mowed by the City.

Adamson stated that he purchased the land approximately two years ago and expressed his desire to expand the golf course to make it eligible for high school golf play. Discussion also included the purpose of each parcel and how the proposed division would benefit the Adamsons and support the planned golf course expansion.

As there were no questions from the audience, Lehrman closed the public hearing.

Motion made by Anderson, second by Bernhardt to recommend approval of the lot split between the City of Stewartville and Adamsons at Meadow Park North. Unanimously Approved.

IV. Meeting Minutes of August 4, 2026

Motion by Timmerman, seconded by Wiginton to approve the meeting minutes. Schroeder abstained. Motion carried.

V. Adjourn

Motion by Anderson, second by Schroeder to adjourn. Unanimously approved.

Submitted Respectfully,

*Cassandra Jefferson
City Clerk*