

Houston County Planning Commission
August 27, 2026

Approved September 24, 2026 by Josh Gran and Richard Schild.

The Houston County Planning Commission met at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 27, 2026. A summary of the meeting follows.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Franklin Hahn. Roll call was taken. Members present were Larry Gaustad, Johnathon Glasspoole, Josh Gran, Franklin Hahn, Chase Munson, and Richard Schild. Eric Johnson, County Commissioner, was present. Amelia Meiners and Michelle Burt were present for Environmental Services.

Chase Munson made a motion to approve the minutes of May 28, 2026. Johnathon Glasspoole seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Notice of Public Hearing No. 1020 was read for applicants, **Charles and Sharon Wiegrefe Revocable Trusts**, 15626 State 76, Caledonia, MN 55921.

The petitioner is requesting to rezone an area from Agricultural Protection District to Residential (Section 8.2, Subdivision 2) in Caledonia Township.

- This site is located north of the City of Caledonia off County 1 near the intersection with State 76. The property is currently zoned agricultural protection and the applicants are requesting the rezone to allow them to build a dwelling in this quarter-quarter since there is a dwelling on PID 03.0120.001 already. PID 03.0119.000 is currently a 40-acre parcel, but the landowners have identified only two acres they wish to rezone (see Fig. 1). This is a single lot, so a plat is not required. The applicant owns 118.58 acres at this location and has property within two unoccupied quarter-quarters, the NE ¼ NE ¼ of Section 11 and SW ¼ SW ¼ of Section 12 (see Fig. 2). It is the understanding of staff that the applicant's desire to be away from the hustle and bustle of State 76 and building closer to County 1 also reduces the number of acres removed from production.
- Below are relevant sections of the Houston County Zoning Ordinance (HCZO):

Buildable Lot. *A lot of record, or other lot, tract, or parcel legally recorded with the County Recorder that meets the requirements of this Ordinance. Buildings or structures shall not be permitted on land which has a slope of twenty-four (24) percent or greater. The buildable lot shall have the minimum lot area required for the district in which it is located, and which not more than ten (10) percent of the required lot area is collectively comprised of:*

- *Area of a slope of twenty-four (24) percent or greater.*
- *A shoreland impact zone as defined by this Ordinance.*
- *Protected waters as defined in this Ordinance.*
- *Wetlands as classified in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Circular No. 39.*

All access roads that service a new building site or dwelling shall be constructed with a final slope of less than 12%. All finished driveways shall be constructed in conformity with Section 29.19.

SECTION 15 – RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

15.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Residential District is to allow a continuation and limited expansion of existing residential development in the small unincorporated urban communities of the County as well as areas adjacent to existing cities where services can be easily extended in the future.

15.9 LOT AREA STANDARDS

Subdivision 1. Minimum Lot Area. *All new dwellings shall be located on a Buildable Lot as defined in this Ordinance and have a minimum lot area as set forth below:*

- (1) *Lots with Individual Sewage Treatment Systems and Water Wells. Dwelling units with individual sewage treatment systems and water wells shall have a minimum lot area of forty-three thousand five hundred sixty (43,560) square feet. Individual sewage treatment systems and water wells must conform to the standards in this Ordinance.*

15.10 LOT WIDTH AND DEPTH STANDARDS

Subdivision 1. Minimum Lot Width and Depth Standards. *Every lot or plat of land on which a single family dwelling is constructed shall have the minimum standards as set forth below:*

- (1) *Lots with Individual Sewage Treatment Systems and Water Wells. Lots with individual sewage treatment systems and water wells shall have a lot width of not less than one hundred (100) feet and lot depth of not less than one hundred fifty (150) feet.*

- Site Characteristics:
 - This property is located off County 1 just outside of Caledonia. The south boundary of the property abuts city limits (separated by the highway). Currently, the northwest corner of the city is zoned agricultural (see Fig. 3), but the city's Comprehensive Plan identifies the future land use as low density residential (see Fig. 4). The Frank Addition, Sunset Drive Estates and Sunset Drive Estates Second Addition are residential subdivisions outside of city limits and are 0.4-acre east of this proposal. Between these subdivisions and Doering Estates, within city limits, the City will be working to develop the vacant property. That is the closest residential area within the city to this proposal but with proximity to the Caledonia Middle School/High School it is likely a highly desirable area for future development.
 - There is no bluff in the vicinity and no slope, floodplain, wetland or shoreland concerns. There is a mine about a half mile south of the parcel and a feedlot approximately a half mile to the west. Both meet required setback standards.
 - The proposed parcel meets the lot area standards set forth in Section 15.9 and 15.10 of the Zoning Ordinance and buildable lot requirements. The access to County 1 will need to be approved by the Highway Engineer. Landowners have worked with a septic designer to complete preliminary work, and it was determined that two, type I septic systems can be located on the lot as required by the septic rules.
 - Houston County's Future Land Use Map identifies areas for growth, considered urban expansion areas, due to close proximity to incorporated cities. The Plan states that property owners who have prime agricultural land are encouraged to continue to use their land for agricultural purposes. The soils are 285A, a class I silt loam and 401B, a class II silt loam. Class I-III are considered prime. The remaining land on the larger parcels will remain agricultural in nature.
- Caledonia Township and the City of Caledonia were notified along with the ten nearest property owners. A few questions were fielded by staff, but no written comments were received.

Charles and Sharon Wiegrefe and Andy Allen were present to answer questions. Chairman Hahn asked the applicants if they had anything to add. Andy Allen explained that the property owners are wanting to build a new house to accommodate their needs as they age. Allen stated that they looked at multiple locations and most of their land is on the edge of city limits. This specific location best fits the needs of Charles and Sharon Wiegrefe for their own safety, the safety of their grandchildren, and future great grandchildren.

Franklin Hahn informed the applicants of the current zoning rules for new dwellings proposed in the Agricultural Protection District. Hahn stated that there are two open quarter-quarter sections owned by the applicants. Andy Allen stated that the open quarter-quarters are located off State 76 and provided concerns

with building there. Allen further stated that the property is less than 2 miles from the city limits of Caledonia. Franklin Hahn stated that the Ordinance is trying to protect the prime agricultural land. Hahn asked, "If we start, where are we going to stop?"

Josh Gran stated that the 2-mile requirement is not a concern with this proposal because the city limits of Caledonia are right there.

Environmental Services Director, Amelia Meiners stated that in a perfect world a development this close would be annexed into the city but cities are also strapped for extending services. Meiners explained that the City of Caledonia is looking to move northward. This would be another option of a similar development to what you would see within the city but right on the edge.

Andy Allen stated that there is a lot of money invested in this request, but the property owners are not intending to take anymore land as they understand the value of acknowledging prime agricultural land.

Eric Johnson pointed out the recommended condition, if the proposal were to be approved, which states that no additional houses can be built on this quarter-quarter unless it is platted. Amelia Meiners confirmed and explained that the Board has reviewed single lot subdivision which can be rezoned without a plat. However, if it were to become a two-lot subdivision then a plat is required.

Sharon Wiegrefe mentioned the neighboring property owners to the west closing their feedlot registration to help this request move forward.

Josh Gran stated that if this is going to be done this is the spot to do it as it borders city property and there is a big development down the road that is not considered city limits.

Chase Munson agreed that the property off County 1 would be a better approach for a dwelling compared to State 76.

Larry Gaustad asked how far the house would be from the road. Eric Johnson stated that the required setback is 100 feet. Andy Allen explained how the house will sit on the property.

Larry Gaustad stated that if there was not any existing house in this quarter-quarter section there would be no problem. Amelia Meiners explained the one dwelling per quarter-quarter rule in the Agricultural Protection District. Meiners stated that currently the Schroeder's dwelling occupies this quarter-quarter which is the reason for the Rezone request. Andy Allen stated that the request is to rezone 2 acres not the whole parcel. Meiners stated that it was advertised with the whole parcel because that is how the parcel exists now but the 2-acre parcel would be created if request is approved.

Chairman Hahn asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

Chairman Hahn asked that the Findings be read if there were no additional comments or questions.

EVALUATION

Section 8.6 of the Houston County Zoning Ordinance requires that the Board make findings in support of a decision but does not prescribe specific criteria. The following findings are proposed by staff for your consideration. As each application is unique, the standards cited below have been interpreted to find reasonable connections. Section 8.1 states that amendments shall not be issued indiscriminately but shall only be used to reflect changes in the goals and policies of the community as reflected in the Policies Plan or changes in conditions in the County. Further, the Comprehensive Land Use Plan provides the following criteria on page 29 for reviewing a request to amend the map.

- *The proposed amendment would permit a use or uses that are compatible with adjacent uses.*

- *The proposed amendment would permit a use or uses that are compatible with and will not adversely impact natural resources (such as wetlands, waterbodies, bluffs) on, or adjacent or adjoining to, the subject property.*
 - *The proposed amendment would permit a use or uses that do not require an expansion of county facilities, infrastructure or services to the extent that an unreasonable financial burden would be placed on the County.*
 - *The proposed amendment would be consistent with and help the County meet the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan.*
1. Goal 1.3 of the Goals and Policies section in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) encourages location of urban development near the major cities where services can easily be provided and extended. This property runs to the middle of County 1 which is also the northern extent of city limits. At this point city services do not extend to the property.
 2. Policy 1 under Agriculture Goals and Policies calls for protection of prime agricultural land by limiting development in agricultural areas. Allowing this rezone will keep development closer to existing development and the public road which will minimize impact on the land.
 3. This parcel is currently 40 acres, but the applicants have chosen to only rezone two acres in an effort to restrict future development. If additional lots are desired, another rezone will need to be completed along with a plat approved under Section 36 of the Ordinance.
 4. Policy 1 of Goal 3.2 of the CLUP discourages development in areas where on-site sewer systems are likely to malfunction due to poor soil characteristics. Preliminary soils work has been completed for this proposal and meets state requirements for septic systems.
 5. The parcels meet buildable lot and lot area standards identified in the Houston County Zoning Ordinance.

Prior to making a motion to accept the findings, the Planning Commission had additional comments.

Eric Johnson highlighted finding #1 that is a goal in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan to encourage development from close to our cities and out. Johnson stated, in his opinion, if the request was 2 miles out it would not happen especially if there was an open quarter-quarter. Seeing as it is right across the highway from city limits and near a development area, Johnson feels the request complied with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Josh Gran stated that the 40 acres next to the developed area could lead right into further development at some point in the future.

Eric Johnson stated that he understands protecting prime agricultural land as it is very important in our Comprehensive Land Use Plan and it is what we need to do. Johnson stated this request is for 2 acres and if they were to build in the other parcel (open quarter-quarter) they would be taking up prime agricultural land there too. Amelia Meiners explained that this is why these requests are reviewed site specifically.

Chairman Hahn asked for a motion on the findings if there were no additional comments or questions.

Josh Gran made a motion to accept the findings as presented. Johnathon Glasspoole seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Chairman Hahn asked for a motion on the conditional use request if there were no additional comments or questions.

Josh Gran made a motion to recommend the Houston County Board approve an amendment to the zoning map for the two acres identified by G-Cubed Survey No. 26-217 of PID 03.0119.000 from Agricultural Protection to Residential with one condition in Caledonia Township:

1. The rezoned area shall only contain one buildable lot unless a plat is approved under Section 36 of the Houston County Zoning Ordinance.

Johnathon Glasspoole seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried six to one.

Board Member	Yes	No	Comment
Larry Gaustad	X		
Johnathon Glasspoole	X		
Josh Gran	X		
Franklin Hahn		X	Stickler on the Zoning Ordinance and by going with two houses on the same quarter-quarter we could be setting a precedence for what's going to happen in the County. Also stated another reason was the prime agricultural land.
Eric Johnson	X		It does comply with our Comprehensive Land Use Plan on where we want to see orderly development and it is close to city limits. Understands the concern with a second house in a quarter-quarter section. The rule is in place to help density in the Agricultural Protection District, which we try to adhere to but this is a different situation being close to the city and this is our exception from that.
Chase Munson	X		
Richard Schild	X		

The application, with the conditions, will be presented to the Houston County Board of Commissioners for final action.

Notice of Public Hearing No. 1021 was read for applicant, **David Kingsley**, 3784 Christianson Hill Road, Houston, MN 55943.

The petitioners are requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to operate a wedding and event venue in the Agricultural Protection District (Section 14-14.3, Sub. 1, Subs. 25) in Money Creek Township.

- The applicant would like to utilize an existing 76ft x 34ft barn and farmyard area to operate an indoor and outdoor wedding and event venue. The indoor venue is a one-story structure that is handicapped accessible and equipped with air conditioning and heating systems while the outdoor venue would offer a scenic view of the Root River Valley and provide wedding arbor and guest seating. There is a designated parking lot that has access from the public road.
- The applicant would provide and maintain the facility and portable restrooms to guests, who would be responsible for all other needed amenities (e.g. food & drink, tents, entertainment, and liability insurance). The facility will be offered for rent during the months of May through mid-October with an indoor seating capacity of 175 guests. The applicant has implied that the premises may be occupied from 9:00 a.m. and vacated by midnight.
- The Houston County Zoning Ordinance does not have a specific set of parameters for places of public accommodation such as wedding and event venues. However, the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) have rules and standards set forth for occupant load, permitting, accessibility, noise, etc.
- Below are relevant sections of the Houston County Zoning Ordinance (HCZO):

SECTION 14 - AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION DISTRICT

14.1 PURPOSE AND PUBLIC NOTICE

Subdivision 1. Purpose. *The purpose of the Agricultural Protection District is to provide a district that will:*

- (1) Retain, conserve, and enhance agricultural land in the County for agricultural uses.*
- (2) Protect and preserve natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas.*
- (3) Restrict scattered non-farm residential development in order to minimize incompatibility between agricultural uses and residential use, and to conserve the expenditure of public funds for new roads, road maintenance, schools, police and fire protection necessary to service scattered residential development.*

Subdivision 2. Public Notice. *Persons choosing to reside in the Agricultural Protection District are hereby notified that the agricultural district is a zoning district in which land is used principally and foremost for agricultural production.*

Subdivision 3. Discomfort Resulting From Agricultural Uses. *Owners, residents, and other uses of property in the Agricultural Protection District or neighboring properties may be subjected to inconvenience or discomfort arising from normal and accepted agricultural practices and operation, including but not limited to the following:*

- (1) Noise, odors, dust, and hours of operation.*
- (2) The operation of machinery, including aircraft.*
- (3) The production, storage and land application of animal manure.*
- (4) The application of fertilizers, soil amendments, herbicides, and pesticides.*

Owners, residents, and users of property in the Agricultural Protection District, or neighboring property should be prepared to accept such inconveniences or discomfort as they occur from agricultural uses and are hereby notified that this declaration may prevent them from obtaining a legal judgment against such agricultural uses.

14.3 CONDITIONAL USES

Subdivision 1. Conditional Uses. *In the Agricultural Protection District, the following uses may be allowed only after obtaining a Conditional Use Permit in accordance with the provision of this Ordinance.*

- (25) Other Uses. Other uses as determined by the Planning Commission and the Houston County Board of Commissioners that are similar to those uses listed above and are found to be compatible with other uses already permitted in the district.*

- Site Characteristics:
 - This is a 60.74-acre parcel located on Christianson Hill Road in Money Creek Township about four miles northwest of Houston. The existing 76ft x 34ft barn was rebuilt in 2023 after it had been destroyed by a storm the previous year. Since then, the applicant added a handicap ramp and a deck that wraps around the north and east side of the barn.
 - Since the applicant will be modifying the interior of this existing structure, many of the standards are not applicable. There are no bluff impacts, floodplain, shoreland, slope, feedlot, or mine concerns. Aside from the applicants dwelling that is located on the property, there is one dwelling in the vicinity which is approximately 1,200 feet from the proposed venue.
- Money Creek Township and the ten nearest property owners were notified. There were a few inquiries but no written comments were received.

David Kinglsey and Tammy Adcock were present to answer questions. Chairman Hahn asked the applicants if they had anything to add. David Kingsley explained the history of the barn that was destroyed by a storm in 2022. The structure has since been rebuilt on the existing foundation. Kinglsey stated they

wanted to make something of the barn instead of it sitting idle. Kinglsey stated they remodeled the barn and installed a deck and ramp. Tammy Adcock stated that it is a steel building with a wooden floor.

Franklin Hahn asked what had to be done through the State for an event venue. Tammy Adcock explained that they had to apply for an LLC through the State. They also had to post it in the newspaper for two consecutive weeks. Adcock further stated that they were not required to get a license for the venue but they had to set up the LLC then go through the County for the Conditional Use Permit. David Kingsley was in attendance for the Money Creek Township meeting on August 6th and presented the information and details to the Township. Eric Johnson asked if Money Creek Township had any issues with the proposal. Richard Schild stated he was present at the meeting and there were no issues.

Tammy Adcock stated that porta potties and handwashing stations are rented from a company in Iowa, so there is no septic involved at this point. There is a future goal to install a bathroom. Adcock stated there is a handicapped accessible ramp. Environmental Services Director, Amelia Meiners stated that Houston County is a non-code enforced county which means we do not enforce building code but we are obligated to ensure that the accessibility code is met. Tammy Adcock stated this was all discussed at the Township meeting as well. Richard Schild stated that the one concern the Township had was putting signs up to warn the public of people crossing the road.

Tammy Adcock stated, in addition to the building, there is an area across the road that will be utilized as the wedding ceremony location. It overlooks the Root River Valley and the bluff country.

Eric Johnson asked if there was enough space for people to park. Tammy Adcock stated that there is parking available for at least 200 cars.

Chase Munson asked if the venue would have a specific end time set for events. Tammy Adcock stated they have a contract setup which has the end time set for midnight.

Amelia Meiners confirmed that David Kingsley lives on site and Tammy Adcock mentioned she is one half mile down the road, so one of them will be available in case of emergency.

General discussion was held regarding a potential septic system and bathroom in the future.

Chairman Hahn asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

Chairman Hahn asked that the Findings be read if there were no additional comments or questions.

Josh Gran made a motion to bypass questions 5 and 13 that are not applicable. Chase Munson seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Section 11.05 of the Houston County Zoning Ordinance requires the following:

Subdivision 1. Findings. The Planning Commission shall not recommend a conditional use permit unless they find the following:

1. That the proposed use conforms to the County Land Use Plan.

Staff Analysis: Goal 1.4 of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan encourages the implementation of economic development strategies that reflect local values and supports agriculture, while attracting compatible new businesses. The Lazy K Wedding and Event Venue will bring guests to the area who will utilize local services, accommodations, and businesses thereby contributing to the economic vitality of the County.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

2. That the applicant demonstrates a need for the proposed use.

Staff Analysis: This wedding and event venue will act as a secondary income for the applicant and their family while also allowing the applicant to stimulate local commerce within Houston County.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

3. That the proposed use will not degrade the water quality of the County.

Staff Analysis: While septic is a potential threat to groundwater, the applicants intend to provide portable toilets and handwashing stations for guests during events.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

4. That the proposed use will not adversely increase the quantity of water runoff.

Staff Analysis: The quantity of water runoff will not increase as the modifications to the existing structure will not substantially increase the site's impermeable surface area.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

5. That soil conditions are adequate to accommodate the proposed use.

Staff Analysis: N/A

6. That potential pollution hazards have been addressed and that standards have been met.

Staff Analysis: The applicant has implied that the proposed venue will operate as a low-impact event space as there will be no industrial processes, hazardous materials, or waste disposal activities associated with hosting weddings and events.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

7. That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and other necessary facilities have been or are being provided.

Staff Analysis: The venue will provide portable toilets and handwashing stations with the goal of installing a bathroom in the future. The proposed parking lot has access to the public road and ADA requirements will be implemented for parking and access.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

8. That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide sufficient off-street parking and loading space to serve the proposed use.

Staff Analysis: The large parking lot will provide sufficient off-street space for guest parking, which will ensure convenient access for all visitors and designated handicap-accessible parking will be provided.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

9. That facilities are provided to eliminate any traffic congestion or traffic hazard which may result from the proposed use.

Staff Analysis: There is an area designated for parking that will provide sufficient off-street parking to eliminate any potential traffic congestion. In addition, the applicants have identified an area on the east side of Christianson Hill Road that can be utilized for overflow parking.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

10. That the Conditional Use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted.

Staff Analysis: The primary use of the surrounding acreage is agricultural and recreational in nature. There is one dwelling in the vicinity which is approximately 1,200 feet to the southwest of the proposed venue site.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

11. That the establishment of the Conditional Use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding vacant property for predominant uses in the area.

Staff Analysis: The establishment of a wedding and event venue should not impede orderly development in the agricultural district. The surrounding properties are primarily agricultural and recreational with wooded hillsides and steep slopes.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

12. That adequate measures have been or will be taken to prevent or control offensive odor, fumes, dust, noise and vibration, so that none of these will constitute a nuisance, and to control lighted signs and other lights in such a manner that no disturbance to neighboring properties will result.

Staff Analysis: The wedding and event venue will not generate any offensive odors, fumes, or dust. The applicant has indicated that noise levels will be kept to a minimum and lighting will be managed to ensure no disturbance to neighboring properties will occur. The business plan indicates that the venue will be available to rent 6 months out of the year (May – October) with venue occupation times starting at 9:00a.m. and ending at midnight.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

13. That the density of any proposed residential development is not greater than the density of the surrounding neighborhood or not greater than the density indicated by the applicable Zoning District.

Staff Analysis: N/A

14. That the intensity of any proposed commercial or industrial development is not greater than the intensity of the surrounding uses or not greater than the intensity characteristic of the applicable Zoning District.

Staff Analysis: The proposed use of the property is limited in scope as there are no intentions for future development or expansion to ensure that the site remains consistent with its current footprint and existing land use pattern.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

15. That site specific conditions and such other conditions are established as required for the protection of the public's health, safety, morals, and general welfare.

Staff Analysis: The applicant is required to follow all county, state, and federal guidelines for the operation of their wedding and event venue, which should result in the protection of the public's health, safety, morals, and general welfare.

Board agreed to the finding by a unanimous vote.

Chairman Hahn asked for a motion on the findings if there were no additional comments or questions.

Johnathon Glasspoole made a motion to accept the findings as presented. Chase Munson seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Chairman Hahn asked for a motion on the Conditional Use request if there were no additional comments or questions.

Chase Munson made a motion to recommend the Houston County Board approve a Conditional Use Permit to operate a wedding and event venue in the Agricultural Protection District with four conditions in Money Creek Township:

1. The Permittee shall comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
2. The County may enter onto the premises at reasonable times and in a reasonable manner to ensure the permitholder is in compliance with the conditions and all other applicable statutes, rules, and ordinances.
3. No parking is allowed on Christianson Hill Road.
4. Maximum amplified music/speaking volume shall be 100 decibels outside of the venue, with music ending no later than:
 - 12:00 a.m. (midnight) on Fridays and Saturdays
 - 10:00 p.m. on Sundays – Thursdays

Richard Schild seconded. A roll call vote was taken. All were in favor. Motion carried.

The application, with the conditions, will be presented to the Houston County Board of Commissioners for final action.

Eric Johnson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chase Munson seconded. Motion carried.

Submitted by the Planning Commission Clerk on August 28, 2026.