

City of Columbus
Public Hearing –8503 178th Lane Variance (PC-13-105)
(Gary and Colleen Orde – owners)
June 19, 2013

The June 19, 2013 Public Hearing to receive testimony regarding the request for a variance at 8503 178th Lane, Columbus, MN (owners Gray and Colleen Orde) was called to order at 7:39 p.m. by Chair Barbara Hvass at the City Hall. Present were Commission members Andy Anderson, Myron Organ, Pam Wolowski, Jesse Preiner, and Jody Krebs; City Administrator Elizabeth Mursko; City Council members Bill Krebs, Jeff Duraine, Jessie Messina, Denny Peterson, and Mayor Dave Povolny (7:10); and Recording Secretary Karen Boland.

Also in attendance were Pat Preiner, Mary Preiner, Kevin Dunaway, Susan and Roger Nelson, Brian Hansen, and Colleen Orde.

Hvass: Next we will have a Public Hearing and discussion of 8503 178th Lane variance application, pages 7 through 13 in our packet of enclosures. Next I'll have our recording secretary read the notice as it appeared in the newspaper.

Notice was read at this time.

Hvass: Okay. Do you want to come forward Kevin?

Dunaway: Colleen Orde is here also if she... You don't have to.

Hvass: Okay. State your name and address.

Dunaway: Kevin Dunaway. 17149 Notre Dame Street, Columbus, Minnesota.

Hvass: Okay. And what is it that you're requesting?

Dunaway: We're requesting a variance to construct a mound system of "other construction" for the property owners on 178th Lane.

Hvass: So it's failed now?

Dunaway: The existing system is non-compliant in a failing condition.

Hvass: So is it just being pumped regularly or...?

Dunaway: Yes.

Hvass: Okay.

Mursko: And at this time a standard or a trench system cannot be constructed nor can a standard mound system, and because it's an existing lot of record and there's already a house on the property, um, the Code requires us to go through a variance procedure in order to put an "other" system on the property.

Hvass: We've had these before.

Organ: Basically the same.

Dunaway: It's similar to one we did back around Christmas time, the, uh, just a lack of separation because of soil conditions. In this case the lots even smaller, so it's harder to find a, an area to put a system. Some of the background on this lot: just to build their garage they had to work two-feet of fill under the basement floor, which is an indication that they had about eight inches of separation at that time. At one point they even raised the house and raised the basement floor three feet so they could take care of water problems in their basement. So, it's, it's a lot that has...

Orde: Four feet.

Dunaway: So it's a lot that's had on-going high-water conditions.

Krebs J.: How old is the system? Current system?

Dunaway: Uh, the current system is the original system...

Orde: 1974. The home was built by Lawrence Urman. (Unintelligible)

Mursko: On page 10 you did receive a memo from the building official. And he is recommending that the City Council and/or Planning Commission recommend approval for the requested variance to install an "other" system to treat the septic effluent.

Hvass: Okay. Are there further questions? Planning Commission members? Okay, I'm going to open this up to the public and to the City Council if they have questions at this time regarding this application. Anybody from the public? You, sir. State your name and address.

Hansen: My name is Brian Hansen. I live at 17908 Notre Dame. And I'm the existing property to the, um, north. And my concern is, where will the system be and will it encroach my property line?

Dunaway: Well, that's part of the reason why we're asking for this variance. It's going to be on the east side of the homeowner's...

Mursko: This is where you live sir? (referring to projected map)

Hansen: Correct.

Mursko: (referring to map) And this is the property that...?

Dunaway: Correct. And the, the proposed system will be on the east side along that row of evergreens

Mursko: Over here?

Dunaway: The east side. That'd be to the right. You see kind of an asterisk there in the middle? That's kind of where the existing system is. So it would be to the right of that, and there's a kind of a blotchy area that's a fire ring, so it's to the south of that. So it, uh, I'm trying to see, there's a, there's a power pole that is the southernmost area, but you don't see that in that picture there so... But it, you know, we're not asking for a setback variance, just, because the lack of separation. So, there's plenty of setback from all the property lines.

Hvass: Okay.

Anderson: I have a question. The man that made...?

Mursko: Brian.

Anderson: Your property is at the top of the map: 17908?

Hansen: Right.

Anderson: Okay.

Mursko: And he's on Notre Dame. His house faces Notre Dame.

Anderson: And so your concern is, would this new septic system cross...?

Hansen: Cause me any problems. I have a shallow well, and the existing property on the corner had a, uh, a septic system that was built, um, 53 feet from my shallow well, and from what I understand it should've been a hundred. And when I talked to, uh, Nick, I got this explanation: 'Oops.' So I'm drinking a lot of bottled water until I get around to putting in a deep well. So I'm just a little bit concerned with where another septic is going to be. If you see where my current house is right there? Okay. My well is—take your pointer and go, just go due south. My well is right there. The drainfield for Pete, which is on the corner, is right there on the property line. In fact I...

Mursko: Here?

Hansen: Yup. Fifty-three feet away. So, I'm just concerned. I don't know where the drainfield would be. Would it be stuck in the back corner? How far away is that actually going to be from

mine? It probably looks like it's far enough away. I didn't know. I'm not afforded this view very often, let me tell you. (referring to aerial view map)

Anderson: Okay, so Mr. Dunaway, where are you proposing to put the, the new mound system or "other" system?

Mursko: Yeah, I'm going to pull up a different map Kevin.

Hansen: Based on that previous map, it did look like it was well beyond a hundred feet.

Anderson: I, I would like to have Mr. Dunaway testify to that effect.

Mursko: Okay. So, this is the property at 8503. This is the property at 179. So this is, um, you said your well is here—and, and Kevin, you can kind of tell me if I'm in the right area—but, is it right in this area?

Dunaway: That is correct.

Mursko: So if you look at the bottom of the screen, and, it's approximate, um, but it's 273 feet, as the bird...

Hansen: Yeah. That's a lot better than my neighbor's.

Mursko: And to your property line, I'm showing it's in the 60-foot area, but it depends exactly where the, it is, as far as your shallow well goes. Um, I'm showing 65 feet to the property line.

Dunaway: Do you know where your mound system is?

Hansen: Yeah. My mound system is, um, you see that little square there, to the...Okay, go south, and go back, to the left. Keep going.

Dunaway: There's a greenish area right about there.

Hansen: That, that little bit of a lush area there is my mound system. Actually, it's to the right. To the right a little bit. There's my mound system.

Dunaway: So, your mound is within (unintelligible)

Anderson: Are you saying that your, presently your water is contaminated? Your well?

Hansen: Um, we've had tests done by Anoka County, and, basically, we're not drinking it. We're drinking bottled water or filtered water at this point.

Anderson: Because of the potential contamination...

Hansen: Correct.

Anderson: ...from...

Hansen: From the property...south

Anderson: ...where 'D', where the, where the mark is?

Hansen: Yup.

Krebs B.: Is that a mound? Right?

Hansen: What's that?

Krebs B.: Is that a mound system?

Hansen: Um, yeah it is. Part...Yeah. Not much of a mound, but, you know, it's a drainfield, and, I'm downhill. You know the old saying about what goes downhill?

Hvass: Okay. Are there other questions? Anyone else from the public or the Council? Bill.

Krebs B.: Madam Chair. Kevin, it's gonna be a mound system right? So most of the evaporation...the reason they're mound systems is so you get evaporation through the sides, correct?

Dunaway: Well that's if you were in the southern half of the country that works, but it's, uh, here it's really so that you have three feet of soil that is dry below the rock bed. And being that it's dry it also has oxygen in it, and a lot of your treatment comes from oxygenated soil, and that's what kills the pathogens. So, in this case, it's three feet of sand underneath the rock bed.

Krebs B.: Okay, so, like the neighbors, this is the different system than what the neighbor has. The neighbor sounds like it's in the ground. This has got to be getting on top of the ground.

Dunaway: Correct.

Hvass: Okay. Any other questions?

Messina: I, I was just wondering, are you using, are you still able to flush the toilets, use the sink?

Orde: Oh, oh, of course. No. We have three drainfields, like, they're, it's like an arm. No. Anyway, it works.

Dunaway: Yeah. And I was going to say, one of the hints where is the, you know, Olsen's pumped the system several years ago and they said they have a 1000-gallon septic tank. And the

next two pumpers after that said that they pumped 1250 gallons of water. That's an indication that when they pump, they're getting drain back from the drainfield as they're pumping. And drainfields could be totally saturated and still continue to function, but they're not treating that water as they're functioning. The water's just going away hydraulically. So...

Hvass: Anything else?

Anderson: I have one more question for Mr. Dunaway. So, by putting in this septic system at 80—8503, in your opinion, this is not going to contaminate the well at 17908.

Dunaway: That is correct.

Anderson: I mean the distance would be-- what did you tell, say it was?

Mursko: It's about 270 feet.

Anderson: 273 feet, so...so there's enough distance there?

Dunaway: Correct.

Anderson: So it's not going to, it's not going to add to his, his...

Dunaway: Ongoing issue. Correct.

Anderson: Okay. Thank you.

Hvass: Okay, if there are no further questions, I'm going to close the meeting with the right to reopen it if it becomes necessary.

Hearing closed at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Karen Boland, Recording Secretary