

Royalton Township Working Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
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14 April 2026
Approved

6:32 p.m., 14 April 2026, Chair Jeff Schlaeger convened the Royalton Township working planning commission meeting with Members Pete Belland and Jan Patterson and Clerk Duane Swanson present and Member Barb Dreyer absent. Zoning Administrator John Kemen, Septic Administrator Amy Thompson, Supervisor John Graham, and members of the public also attended.

Clerk Swanson presented a draft of a letter to the new owners of 110 Greeley Road (PID 290374000) notifying them that the interim use permit granted to the previous owner had expired upon change of ownership. Zoning Administrator Kemen recommended holding off until August when the current owners vacate the property.

Zoning Administrator Kemen presented subdivision certificates of survey by Kroschel Land Surveyors, Inc., dated 9 April 2026, for PID 290292000 and 290234000 on behalf of Wendy Tchida, Roxanne Orvis, and Kay Johnson. Neither survey had the required PID numbers. Per decision of Pine County Administrator Kelly Schroeder all parcels will require soil borings except for Parcel B of 290234000 (which already has a residence on it). None is shown on the surveys. Parcel B of 290234000 will require a septic abandonment for the existing septic system on that parcel within three months. Parcel B of 290292000 requires confirmation that an existing septic system does not exist at the former residence on the parcel. Parcel B, which would be currently landlocked, requires legal documentation of its connection to an existing parcel with access to road frontage because Parcel B remains in the Pine City School District while the adjoining parcel remains in the Braham School District. If the above provisions are met, the commission will recommend approval of both proposed subdivisions.

Clerk Swanson reported that Legal Counsel Kevin Hofstad has informed the town of his pending retirement. The commission recommended contacting Attorney Hofstad for recommendations of potential counsel. Clerk Swanson also reported that, with the approval of Board Chair Graham, Joe Pates had rented the town hall for five Sundays in May.

Chair Schlaeger opined that the current 10-acre minimum lot size is not working, in part because it leaves farmland acreage unusable. He recommended that a 40-acre parcel could be split twice with five acres being the smallest permitted and the remainder not be split again. Discussion followed with opinions differing widely. No recommendations were reached.

Clerk Swanson reminded members of the Minnesota Association of Townships rescheduled Spring Short Course in Carlton on 17 April. No supervisors are able to go. Clerk Swanson will ask Member Patterson and Deputy Treasurer Brenda Belland if they wish to attend.

Commission members reviewed eight formal citizen complaints filed by John DeGray against Erba, Inc./Trawa LLC and the town board of supervisors. The complaints related to: 1) requiring a conditional use permit for the facility at 7440 Cabin Drive to operate; 2) noncompliance with the town's solar ordinance because the facility does not have a permit, does not meet the required setbacks, and has no tree screening; 3) one of the greenhouses is being changed into a drying and support building without a permit; 4) the towers do not meet the setback requirements and require

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a conditional use permit; 5) no environmental impact statement was completed; 6) the requirements of the town's fencing ordinance have not been met; 7) the township ordinance does not allow federally-illegal businesses (like cannabis) to operate within the township; and 8) no action was taken by the planning commission and no public hearing was held, thereby no cannabis operation should be permitted in the township.

Patrice DeGray then read a complaint, dated 4 April, noting the lack of a town ordinance based on studies by the planning commission. She urged the township to take control of the cannabis issues.

The commission acknowledged receipt of these citizen complaints and recommended discussion with the county on responses.

Denise Weis reported that continuing complaints have been made to Pine County regarding both the lighting situation and the security alarm setoffs at 7440 Cabin Drive. She asked if a formal request needed to be made to the town if one had been submitted to the county. Mrs. Weis was told that the town needed a request before it would respond.

Clerk Swanson reported that Member Dreyer could not be in attendance but that she wished her opinion made known that the zoning ordinance update include provisions regulating both data centers and solar farms. The commission concurred with Mrs. Dreyer's recommendation.

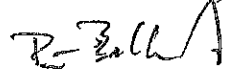
Patrice DeGray urged the commission to prioritize updating the comprehensive plan and also to attend the Pine County public hearing on its proposed update to the county cannabis ordinance.

At 7:30 p.m., Chair Schlaeger concluded the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Duane P. Swanson, Clerk/Member



Pete Belland, Supervisor/Member

Barb Dreyer, Member

Jan Patterson, Member



Jeff Schlaeger, Chair/Member

