

**CARVER COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Regular Meeting – May 19, 2026**  
**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Matthew Kerber, Scott Wakefield, Greg Grazzini, Scott Hoese, Andy Steinhagen, Joe Polunc, John Fahey

**Members Late:** None

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Jason Mielke, Lauren Whetstone, Donovan Hart

Pursuant to due call and published notice thereof, the May 19, 2026, regular meeting of the Carver County Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Kerber at 7:02 p.m.

Chairman Kerber acknowledged all seven board members are present at this meeting.

**Agenda** – A motion was made by Hoese to approve the agenda as printed. Steinhagen seconded the motion. Chairman Kerber called for a vote on the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

**Minutes** – Wakefield noted a correction on page 6 of 67, paragraph 3, of the packet, citing the second to a motion made by Steinhagen should be credited to Hoese. Hoese made a motion to accept the minutes with the noted correction. Wakefield seconded the motion for the corrected minutes. Chairman Kerber called for a vote on the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

**File #PZ20260011 – Christians, Inc** – Chairman Kerber called the public hearing to order at 7:03 p.m. to consider a request by Andy Olson, representing Chad & Kris Christians. The purpose of the public hearing was to consider a request for a contractor's yard pursuant to Chapter 152 of the County Zoning Code. The property is in Section 29 of Waconia Township.

The following were present: Andy Olson, Chad Christians, Kris Christians, Dave Grandy

The following items were entered into the record:

Exhibit A – Legal Description

Exhibit B – Proof of Publication of the Hearing Notice

Exhibit C – Proof of Mailing of the Hearing Notice

Exhibit D – Site Plan

Exhibit E – Letter from the applicant dated April 2, 2026

Exhibit F – Staff Report addressed to the Planning Commission and Waconia Township dated May 11, 2026, and all attachments.

Whetstone stated Chad & Kris Christians as under contract to purchase an approximate 5.58-acre parcel improved with a house and detached pole shed. Andy Olson, on behalf of the Christians, is requesting a CUP to operate an insurance restoration and remodeling business on the subject property as a

contractor's yard. Christians, Inc. has been serving Carver County and the surrounding area for over 35 years and is currently located in Chanhassen. The company intends to downsize from its current operation. The business has sixteen employees, with six employees reporting to the site daily and four family members working as part of the business. Operations run year-round, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. There will be three personal employee vehicles, two fleet pickups, one 16-foot cut-away van and one 12-foot box truck, generating an average of 12 daily trips. The applicant is proposing to provide 12 parking spaces on the south and east sides of the existing pole shed. Site access will continue to utilize the existing driveway access from 102<sup>nd</sup> St. The site plan illustrates the existing 40-foot by 48-foot pole shed will be used for storing building materials and for office space. The applicant proposed constructing a 48-foot by 70-foot heated pole shed addition northwest of the existing structure. The addition will include a small cleaning area, break room, restroom and storage space for equipment. Outdoor storage will be in a 30-foot by 45-foot area located southeast of the existing pole shed and would contain two 8-foot by 20-foot cargo containers for temporary storage of customers' personal belongings, two dump trailers and one enclosed trailer. The outdoor storage area would be screened by existing spruce trees along the southeast perimeter of the property. No public access or retail activity is proposed. Only customers who have a signed contract with Christians, Inc. would access the site. No signage is proposed at this time. The proposed contractor's yard meets all the applicable Zoning Code requirements for an activity centered around a home and also the requirements for a contractor's yard. Senior Environmentalist, Lori Brinkman, reviewed the request and stated that the existing household SSTS is compliance and noted that wastewater management for the proposed commercial structures must comply with MN Rule 7080 and Chapter 52 of the Carver County Code. Abigail Ernst, Water Resources Program Analyst, reviewed the submitted materials and stated: *"CCWMO rules require that if there is any construction activity (building construction, grading, etc.) within 50 feet of a sensitive area, an erosion and sediment control permit is required. In this case, the sensitive area is the ditch (which extends from bank to bank). The pole structure and any grading that may need to occur for placement, appears to be within 50ft of the bank of the ditch. Therefore, it is recommended that the pole structure be moved so that it, and any grading, is greater than 50 ft away from the bank of the ditch."* Lane Braaten, City of Waconia Community Development Director, did not have any comments about the proposed land-use application. The Waconia Town Board reviewed the request at their March 23, 2026, meeting and recommended approval, stating, *"The property owner agrees to escrow \$3,000 to the Waconia Township for existing road maintenance also visit neighbors within 1/2 mile to explain property use."* In response to the Township's recommendation, the applicant submitted a letter, table, and maps (dated April 1, 2026) documenting outreach to property owners within a half-mile radius. The applicant contacted seventeen properties, dropping off letters at five houses where owners were not present. Two parcels did not contain houses, nine property owners provided positive feedback and one expressed negative feedback. Whetstone read the proposed conditions for consideration if the request is recommended for approval. If the Planning Commission recommends denial of the request, the deficiencies found in Section 152.251 of the County Zoning Code should be clearly referenced.

Chairman Kerber asked the applicant if he had any comments to add to the staff report.

Christians said that he is planning on retiring in the next five years and is downsizing his company. He stated that this property would be suitable for his business.

Chairman Kerber asked the applicant if he agrees with the proposed conditions of the permit.

Olson confirmed that he agrees with the proposed conditions for the permit.

Dave Grandy, Waconia Township supervisor, confirmed the Town Board's discussion and agreement with the applicant to put \$3,000 into escrow for road maintenance for operating a business on a gravel road. The Town Board unanimously voted to approve the request.

No one was present for public comment on this request.

Wakefield made a motion to close the public hearing. Grazzini seconded the motion. Chairman Kerber called for a vote on the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried. The public hearing was closed at 7:12 p.m.

A motion was made by Steinhagen to **approve and adopt Resolution #26-09** incorporating the findings of fact and staff recommendations and including the Waconia Township recommendation for escrow in allowing a Contractor's Yard. Wakefield seconded the motion for approval. All voted aye. Motion carried.

**File #PZ20260009 – Joel Buttenhoff** – Chairman Kerber called the public hearing to order at 7:14 p.m. to consider a request by Joel Buttenhoff. The purpose of the public hearing was to consider a request for a Preliminary Plat (Sweet Farm Woods) pursuant to Chapter 151 of the County Zoning Code. The property is in Section 15 of Watertown Township.

The following were present: Joel Buttenhoff

The following items were entered into the record:

Exhibit A – Legal Description

Exhibit B – Proof of Publication of the Hearing Notice

Exhibit C – Proof of Mailing of the Hearing Notice

Exhibit D – Site Plan

Exhibit E – Letter from the applicant dated April 24, 2026

Exhibit F – Staff Report addressed to the Planning Commission and Watertown Township dated May 8, 2026, and all attachments.

Whetstone stated the applicant owns an approximate 54.27-acre parcel in Watertown Township consisting of crop production land, wetlands and wooded land. On April 27, 2026, a Conditional Use Permit was issued to the subject property allowing the creation of three residential lots pursuant to the Additional Density (High Amenity) provision of the County Zoning Code. Following approval of that application, the applicant is now requesting approval of the preliminary plat "Sweet Farm Woods" consisting of the three 'high amenity' lots and two 'one per forty' lots, for single-family residences. Copies of the preliminary plat were sent to the Township, various County offices, and other area agencies for review and comments. At the time of this report, comments have been received from Carver County Environmental Services and Carver County Water Management Organization. The preliminary plat illustrates the lots arranged in a manner that there are no more than four homes per quarter-quarter, aligning with the Carver County density requirements. The proposed lots range in size from 3.66 acres to 19.33 acres. Each lot meets the Zoning Code requirement of a minimum 1-acre

building site. Wetlands have been delineated and drainage easements and required wetland buffers are included as part of the plat. No construction of a new road is necessary as each lot will have existing road access from Swede Lake Rd or Oxford Av. Soil borings for primary and alternate septic sites on each lot have been reviewed and approved by Senior Environmentalist, Lori Brinkman. CCWMO Water Resources Program Analyst, Abigail Ernst, reviewed the proposed plat regarding stormwater management and erosion control requirements and stated, *“The hardcover on these lots combined will likely go over an acre. Therefore, stormwater water treatment will be required. It is recommended that the landowner/developer come up with a concept plan rather than relying on each individual homeowner. ESC plan will be needed for each home construction.”* The Carver Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) typically reviews projects for compliance with CCWMO Water Management Rules. All lots will undergo erosion and sediment control review during the building permit process and SWCD will also participate in reviewing the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), where applicable, and Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) requirements. Draft covenants have been submitted and are being finalized prior to the final plat approval. The proposed plat meets the applicable sections of the Carver County Zoning Code. The Watertown Town Board reviewed the preliminary plat during their April 6, 2026, meeting and recommended approval. Whetstone read the proposed conditions for consideration if the preliminary plat is recommended for approval. If the Planning Commission recommends denial of the request, the deficiencies found in Section 152.251 of the County Zoning Code should be clearly referenced.

Chairman Kerber asked the applicant if he had additional comments and read and agrees with the proposed conditions of the permit.

Buttenhoff did not have further comments and responded that he agrees with the proposed conditions of the permit.

Scott Hoese, speaking as Watertown Town board supervisor, confirmed the township board’s recommendation for approval and noted the applicant has been working with the Township for some time to get the plat completed.

Chairman Kerber opened the public hearing for public comments.

No one was present for public comments on this request.

A motion was made by Steinhagen to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Grazzini. Chairman Kerber called for a vote on the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried. The public hearing was closed at 7:18 p.m.

Hoese made a motion to **approve and adopt Resolution #26-10** incorporating the findings of fact and staff recommendations allowing a Preliminary Plat. Wakefield seconded the motion for approval. All voted aye. Motion carried.

**File #PZ20260010 – Crown College** – Chairman Kerber called the public hearing to order at 7:20 p.m. to consider a request by Tim Gillet of HMA Architects, representing Crown College. The purpose of the public hearing was to consider a CUP amendment to the Master Plan and expansion for a Large-Scale Activity (Educational) & Public/Quasi Public Facility pursuant to Chapter 152 of the County

Zoning Code. The property is in Government Lots 7 & 8 of Section 5 & the Northeast Quarter of Section 6 of Laketown Township.

The following were present: Tim Gillet, Brian Schwarz

The following items were entered into the record:

Exhibit A – Legal Description

Exhibit B – Proof of Publication of the Hearing Notice

Exhibit C – Proof of Mailing of the Hearing Notice

Exhibit D – Site Plan

Exhibit E – Letter from the applicant dated April 1, 2026

Exhibit F – Staff Report addressed to the Planning Commission and Laketown Township dated May 8, 2026, and all attachments.

Hart stated Crown College is an educational institution located on approximately 171 acres and improved with multiple administration, classroom and maintenance buildings, as well as athletic facilities and parking lots that occupy approximately 72 acres. This CUP request is to amend the master plan and construct a Worship and Student Life Center with a 744-person assembly space. The proposed approximately 30,200 square foot building would be located near the campus entrance adjacent to the administration building along West Crown Court. The amended Master Plan also includes a Signage Plan. Over the years, several CUP's have been issued to Crown College, with the most recent involving the construction of a 144-suite residential dormitory for college students. The college campus is classified as a Large-Scale Activity with Unique Land or Location Needs and is designed as Public/Quasi-Public Facilities, consistent with previous CUP's and recognizing the college's educational purpose. There are about 1,800 students enrolled at the college in a combination of on-site and online undergraduate and graduate programs. The college employs about 151 full- and part-time staff, with an anticipated annual staffing increase of approximately five percent. Typical administrative hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. 4:30 p.m. daily, with residential dormitories and proposed facilities, including the proposed Worship and Student Life Center, operating 24 hours per day. The proposed structure is not expected to increase average daily vehicle trips as its regular programming consists of activities currently held in the college's gymnasium. The submitted narrative outlines the rationale for construction and the proposed use of the new facility. For the past 25 years, campus worship activities have been held in a shared space which presents operational challenges. The College identifies a need that can accommodate the student population. The proposed two-level structure includes a worship lobby with coffee counter, worship space, catering kitchen, toilet rooms, green room, storage rooms, student lounge areas, administrative offices and conference rooms. The building will house administrative functions already in use today and anticipate the need for no more than three additional employees over the next 5-10 years, depending upon enrollment growth. The college hosts a range of sporting events, prospective student events and occasional external events each year that collectively generate up to 4,000 trips, many of which occur internally on the campus roadway system during large fall sporting events. Daily vehicle activity totals approximately 500 trips to and from campus, consisting of roughly 300 employee-related trips and 200 trips by off-campus students. The proposed worship and student life center will utilize existing parking lots and will not increase the number of people on campus. The college access is from County Rd 92, which is improved with a right-turn lane and bypass lane to service the college traffic. No changes to the intersection or access are proposed as

part of this application. The campus appears to have adequate parking space according to the Zoning Code standards for this type of facility. The proposal includes six additional parking spaces adjacent to the building, two of which will be ADA-compliant. Hart used an aerial photo from the proposed Master Plan to illustrate the campus layout and the location for the proposed structure. He explained additional drawings depicting the overall campus layout and elevations of the proposed new structure. The Master Sign Plan identifies 20 building and facility identification signs and various wayfinding signs located along internal campus roads. No signage, other than the existing entrance monument sign near County Rd 92, is visible from the road. Staff find the signage plan appropriate for a CUP, due to the unique nature of the campus within Carver County, and compliant with the intent of the County sign regulations. A CUP for this type of land use requires specification of the maximum number of people that may use the facility at one time. The narrative reports that the largest sporting events on campus can attract up to 2,000 attendees. Carver County Public Works made no comments concerning this CUP amendment. Staff sent application materials for review to four surrounding cities, receiving one response from the City of Victoria, stating, "Looks like a great addition." The property is located within the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District jurisdiction. Currently, preliminary plans are being reviewed with the project team responding to comments from MCWD. The college campus is connected to a metropolitan Council interceptor sewer line, and any required sanitary sewer permits will be administered by the Metropolitan Council. The Laketown Town Board reviewed the request and recommend approval with the following comment: *"On 4-30-2026 Board passed motion 3-0 to recommend approval based on documents and answers to questions posed related to intent of use to reflect no increase in/out of site as it is to be limited for use by existing staff and students for activities that are already part of their schedule and annual calendar. Board requires additional review if building use is desired to change. Follow recommendations re: Met Council, Metro West, Carver Co."* Hart explained that if the Planning Commission recommends approval of the request, the existing CUP will be terminated upon the approval and recording of the new CUP. Hart read the proposed conditions for consideration if the request is recommended for approval. If the Planning Commission recommends denial of the request, the deficiencies found in Section 152.251 of the County Zoning Code should be clearly referenced.

Chairman Kerber asked the applicant if he had any comments to add to the report.

Mr. Gillet said he had no further information to add.

Chairman Kerber asked if he read and agreed with the proposed conditions.

Mr. Gillet stated that he accepted the proposed conditions.

Linda Mullen-Wessale, Laketown Township supervisor, confirmed the Laketown Town Board recommendation for approval of the CUP amendment.

Chairman Kerber opened the public hearing for public comments.

No one was present for public comments on this request.

A motion was made by Wakefield to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Hoese. Chairman Kerber called for a vote on the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried. The public hearing was closed at 7:31 p.m.

Wakefield commented on the nice design and clarified that the new structure will be sprinkled and have an elevator near the door.

Mr. Gillet acknowledged the compliment.

Steinhagen stated it was good to note that the project will not increase traffic to the site and will fulfill a need for space that has been inconveniently shared.

Wakefield asked for a timeline for the construction and completion.

Mr. Gillet said the college hoped to start construction in July and have the building completed by late summer 2027.

Wakefield made a motion to **approve and adopt Resolution #26-11** incorporating the findings of fact and staff recommendations allowing for a CUP amendment and expansion with construction of a new worship and student life facility. Polunc seconded the motion for approval. All voted aye. Motion carried.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Hoese and seconded by Fahey to adjourn the meeting. All voted aye. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.