

Town of Crystal Bay

Regular Meeting of the PLANNING COMMISSION

Clair Nelson Community Center
6866 Cramer Road Finland, MN 55603

Minutes

July 7th, 2025

I. Attendance:

- A. Chair Breden called the Planning Commission Meeting to order at 5:05 pm with the Pledge of allegiance.
- B. MOTION: To approve 7/7/25 Agenda. Motioned by board member Peterson, Seconded by board member Abazs, Passed by unanimous consent.
- C. MOTION to approve June 30th meeting minutes: Motioned by board member Abazs, Seconded by board member Peterson, Passed by unanimous consent.

II. Old Business Updating Comprehensive Plan "

- A. View draft copy edits of "Natural and Cultural History"
- B. View draft copy edits of "Overarching Strategies"
- C. View draft copy of "Community- History, Culture, Values"
- D. View draft copy of "Community - Gathering Places"
- E. View draft copy of "Infrastructure- Housing & Wastewater
 - 1. MOTION to approve the following edits to last week's draft
 - B.1. Housing, Strategy 1. (remove the word "subdivisions" from the end of the sentence)
 - B.2. Water & Wastewater, Strategy 1. ... including (add) Lake County, MN PCA....,and sustainable planning and (add) funding options. Strategy 2. (change the second graywater to greywater.) Strategy 4.and explore alternative affordable (add) funding solutions. Motioned by board member Peterson, Seconded by board member Abazs, passed by unanimous consent
 - 2. MOTION to move *As the Town Board makes its recommendations, they will take into account both the needs of the community and an individual's rights for development, and the costs and benefits to the community.* from Appendix to Infrastructure:Housing ias #6. Motioned by board member Abazs, Seconded by board member Peterson, passed by unanimous consent
- F. Appendix A Review:
Board removed The following from working document Appendix A: *The Town Board will conduct a natural resource inventory to identify areas within the Township of particular historical, cultural and ecological value. They will use the inventory to identify, define, and prioritize viewsheds, environmentally sensitive areas, places with unique community or cultural identity and economic assets. The Town Board will also use the natural resources inventory to identify areas in which to proactively encourage development while discouraging development in those identified as critical to preserving the cultural, historical and environmental heritage of the Township.*
- G. Planning Commission discussion re: "Infrastructure- Energy"
 - 1. MOTION to accept the following changes to the 2015 "Infrastructure- Energy"
GOAL: The Township, recognizing the importance of self-sufficiency, will

explore ways to reduce their energy consumption and to promote alternative energy production in ways which respect the local natural environment while taking into account efficiency and economics.

STRATEGIES:

Crystal Bay Township, recognizing the vastness of their township and the need to maintain economic sources of energy production, will emphasize alternative energy sources for areas that are off the grid and will be a model of energy efficiency for sparsely populated rural areas.

~~“Downtown Finland”, in southern Crystal Bay Township, will be a model for sustainable energy production based on its energy cooperative and is self sufficient in electric energy production.~~

~~Utility lines in Crystal Bay Township will be buried underground and non obtrusive wherever possible.~~

~~* The Township will encourage the development and use of renewable energy resources including, but not limited to, solar, wind, biomass, methane (landfill gas), micro hydro, and other similar sources. The energy efficient Community Center and fire hall solar panels are community role models.~~

~~* The Township will provide education on renewable energy methods and tools to local residents to encourage their adoption.~~

~~* The Township will develop incentives to promote home owners and builders to include renewable energy generation in their projects.~~

~~* As wind technology advances, the Township will look into ways to take advantage of the possibilities for community wind projects, especially up at the Air Base which is an area where there are already towers.~~

~~* The Township will address conservation issues within their purview, such as installing energy efficient bulbs in their own structures which can help to cut long-term costs.~~

~~* The Township will work with Coop Cooperative Light and Power to encourage the burying of lines wherever feasible.~~

~~* In all of these efforts, the Township will work with other government entities, including Such as Lake County and The Friends of Finland Community Center and the new relevant programs to provide education and opportunities to promote renewable energy.~~

Motioned by board member Peterson , Seconded by board member Abazs , passed by unanimous consent

H. Planning Commission discussion re: “Infrastructure- Roads”

1. MOTION to accept the following changes to the 2015 “Infrastructure- Roads”

GOAL: The Crystal Bay Township infrastructure is designed, built and maintained to: enable people to move around on safe roads and trails; to be in contact with each other; and to enhance the local commerce while respecting/protecting the natural resources and the rural feeling of the area.

Strategies:

Roads in Crystal Bay Township are designed, built, and maintained to reflect the rural qualities associated with the Township.

The few new roads that are built in Crystal Bay Township are built to standards that reflect the use that they receive, as well as to standards that best protect the natural

resources and provide safe travel.

~~In the future, "Downtown Finland" will be connected with the Shore by a cost efficient public transportation system. The township will continue to work with the county regarding maintenance of the airbase road~~

~~* The Township will explore ways to decrease right of ways to keep the rural feel of the community while still maintaining them as safe roads. This will keep the shoulders adequate to the needs of drivers but also minimize the spreading out of the clear cut area.~~

* For new and existing roads, the Township will (add new language) strive to build and maintain them so that they remain only as wide as required by statute, in order to minimize encroachment on private property and cost to the Township. (end of new language) ~~look for ways to build them so that they do not need to be as wide.~~

~~* The Town Board will develop paths of communication about roads with homeowners.~~

* The Town Board will work with homeowners to plant ~~trees~~ vegetation to minimize block the dust from the roads.

Addition of: The Township will initiate a cost comparison study of public road maintenance versus contracted road maintenance of the Township Roads.

Motioned by board member Abazs , Seconded by board member Peterson , passed by unanimous consent

I. Planning Commission discussion re: "Infrastructure- Trails & Recreation"

1. MOTION to accept the following changes to the 2015 "Infrastructure- Trails & Recreation"

GOAL: Crystal Bay is a place for motorized and non-motorized travel to co-exist in peace where people can step outside their doors to a comprehensive trail system linking key community places as well as local area businesses with each other.

Strategies

Through active participation with State, County and Federal resource managers, Crystal Bay Township will maintain and enhance its recreational trail system for all users continuing the broad base of activities for residents as well as tourists.

As has been the history for Crystal Bay Township, the rural heritage of leaving your doorstep and connecting with trails will still be possible through citizens actively engaged in planning, and maintaining a trail system.

~~The residents and visitors in the southern part of Crystal Bay Township will have a well-connected trails system that connects Finland and its residents to the trails near Tax Lake, Tettegouche Park, Beaver Bay, Little Marais and points on the North Shore. This trail system will be used for commuting amongst communities as well as a trail for tourists to come and enjoy. There will also be a network of trails within the township which connects the various community gathering places such as the new Community Center, the Finland Historic Site, and the "downtown area".~~

Reworded to say (The residents and visitors in the southern part of Crystal Bay Township will have a well connected trail system that connects Finland and its surrounding communities. There will also be a network of trails within the township connecting various community gathering places.)

The new recreation/community/trail center in Finland will be a trail hub and will provide the opportunity for many recreational pursuits with both indoor and outdoor activities.

~~* The Township will explore ways to build walking and bike trails linking the Finland~~

~~Business district to the various community gathering places such as the community center, the parks, the historical site and the Gitchee Gamee trail. This trail system will be an inviting one with directional and interpretive signage located in the southernmost township block around the “downtown Finland” area.~~ Reworded to say (The Township will encourage directional signage located in teh southernmost township block and the “downtown Finland” area.

* The Town Board will encourage the Department of Transportation to put in a wide shoulder up State Hwy. 1 ~~and down County 6~~ so that the roads will be bike-friendly and riders on the Gitchee Gamee trail can come up into Finland.

* The Township ensures that local trail system maps will be available at the Community Center, the community trail hub..

*The Township will ~~partner~~ (strive to work with) with state, county, local government jurisdictions and private interests in comprehensive trail planning.

* The Township will promote and encourage the construction of multiple use trails when practical while recognizing the need to separate certain activities and user groups.

* The Township will support the construction and maintenance of a trail system using best management practices and current erosion control and vegetation management Techniques. Motioned by board member Peterson , Seconded by board member Abazs , passed by unanimous consent

J. Planning Commission discussion re: “Infrastructure- Communications”

1. MOTION to accept the following changes to the 2015 “Infrastructure- Communications” GOAL: A communication system is developed so that all forms are available for individuals and local businesses while protecting natural resources and taking into account efficiency and economics.

Strategies:

The telecommunication system in Crystal Bay Township will provide for public safety while maintaining the quality of its view corridors and other aesthetic considerations.

~~“Downtown Finland”~~ Crystal Bay will have high speed internet connections and will be a vibrant participant in internet business and commerce.

~~The telecommunications system is efficient in that it, as a first priority, uses already existing sites suitable for communication towers and space is fully utilized on towers.~~

~~* The Township will support the Lake County Broadband Project to ensure high speed connectivity for the Township..~~

~~* The Township will work with Wolf Ridge and the air base to see if antennas can be placed on existing towers.~~

~~* The Township will review the County Tower ordinance and if necessary, work with Lake County to adopt a model telecommunications tower ordinance.~~

Motioned by board member Peterson , Seconded by board member Abazs , passed by unanimous consent

H. Planning Commission discussion Infrastructure:

1. MOTION to accept the following changes to 2015’s Infrastructure GOAL: Investment in public facilities and services will aim to enhance the health of the community and its citizens.

Strategies:

The Township will invest in facilities and services that bring people and functions of a community together to make it a more efficient, safe, and desirable place to live.

The Township will consider the public services needed to support specific developments before they are approved. Ask developers and users to pay for the share of public services they require.

~~*The Township will educate developers and home owners on the difficulty of providing public services (e.g. emergency services, transportation infrastructure, and school access to isolated rural areas). They will work with other entities in this effort.~~

~~*The Township will define a downtown area to encourage development where services can be provided most cost effectively.~~

~~*The Township will encourage Lake County to look into a no service zone for parts of the northern five township blocks.~~

(Addition of the following wording from working document Appendix A)

Crystal Bay Township recognizes the opportunity to provide a cross section of rural life -ranging from the wilds of the northern part of the township to the rural areas around downtown Finland and to the small town developments in "Downtown Finland." Having recognized this opportunity, Crystal Bay Township will encourage development in areas that have existing infrastructure, maintain its ruralness in the southern part of Crystal Bay Township as well as support the development of a small commercial center around "Downtown Finland".

III. New Business: Updating Comprehensive Plan

- A. "Infrastructure- Energy" - Tabled
- B. "Infrastructure- Roads" - Tabled
- C. "Infrastructure- Trails & Recreation" -Tabled
- D. "Infrastructure- Communications" -Tabled

VI. CLOSE MEETING: MOTION: to adjourn at 6:23 pm until our next scheduled meeting on Monday July 14th, 2025 at 5:00pm at the Clair Nelson Community Center. Motioned by board member Abazs, Seconded by board member Peterson , Passed by unanimous consent.

date: _____

Stacy Breden- Board Chair

date: _____

Lise Abazs- Board Member

date: _____

Roger Peterson- Board Member

Attested to this 7th day of July, 2025

Stacy Breden - Town Clerk

