
To: Board of Adjustment
From: Megan Smith, Land Use Management Director
Mtg. Date: April 27, 2026
Re: Tabled variance review for Brian Mandelkow

Agenda Item:

Consider a variance application by Brian Mandelkow to allow construction of a new shed addition that will be less than the required 30-foot setback from a bluff and less than the required 30-foot setback from the side yard property line in an A1 District.

Application Information:

Applicant: Brian Mandelkow

Address of zoning request: 13000 322nd Street Way, Cannon Falls MN, 55009

Parcel: 42.0290.503

Abbreviated Legal Description: The SW1/4 of the NW1/4 of section 29, Township 112, Range 16

Township Information: Vasa Township signed the acknowledged on the application

Zoning District: A-1 (Agricultural Protection District) with bluffs, shoreland, and floodplain

Attachments and Links:

1. Application and submitted project summary
2. Site Maps prepared by staff

Background:

The Board of Adjustment held a public hearing at the March meeting to consider this request and tabled the item. Brian Mandelkow is requesting approval to build an addition onto his existing pole shed. The addition is proposed to be 68 feet long and 44 feet wide. They intend to house their agricultural equipment in the addition. It is proposed to be 7 feet from the side yard property line and 18 feet from the toe of the Bluff. The existing shed is about 24 feet from the toe of the Bluff. It appears that the existing shed has been in this spot since around the 1950's.

The property consists of two parcels, approximately 5 and 35 acres. The minimum lot size in the A-1 District is 2 acres. The home is on the 5-acre parcel with the remaining land being used for primarily agricultural purposes.

Variance Standards:

Variances shall only be permitted when they are in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the Goodhue County Zoning Ordinance and when consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan. Variances may be granted when the applicant establishes that "practical difficulties" exist in complying with the existing official controls. Practical difficulties mean the applicant proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by an official control, the plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner, and the

variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality. Economic considerations alone do not constitute practical difficulties.

Draft Findings of Fact:

1. Property Line Setback Variance

- The side yard setback variance is harmonious with the general purposes and intent of the official control. The applicant owns land on both sides of the property line and it is considered his homesite, with no adverse effect on neighboring property.
- The side yard setback variance is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, with the plan, which supports the individual use of rural property in the unincorporated areas of Goodhue County.
- Practical Difficulties exist.
 - a. Unique circumstances apply that were not created by the landowner, with the site being split into parcels prior to most of the buildings being constructed on the site, separating the homestead from the agricultural land.
 - b. Issuance of the variance will not alter the character of the neighborhood, with the applicant's property being rural and set off of any public road and not near any existing homes.
 - c. The proposal to place a shed in an area of the site that is already developed, and between two other existing sheds, is a reasonable request.

2. Bluff setback Variance

- The purpose and intent of the Bluff Land Protection cited in Article 12, Section 1 is to protect and preserve the sensitive physical features of the bluffs by regulating development, preventing erosion and controlling the cutting of timber on slopes and tops of the bluffs. Encroaching into the bluff when non bluff land property is available is not in harmony with the purpose of the ordinance.
- The variance request is consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan, with the plan supporting the individual use of rural property in the unincorporated areas of Goodhue County.
- Practical difficulties do not exist.
 - a. Unique circumstances that were not created by the landowner are present, with the existing buildings being constructed by the previous owner. However, the proposed size of the building was created by the owner, and options to achieve the square footage desired can be achieved by moving the building approximately 10 feet to the south, thereby meeting the 30-foot toe of bluff setback requirement.

- b. Issuance of the variance will not alter the character of the neighborhood, with the applicant's property being rural and set off of any public road and not near any existing homes.
- c. The proposal to place a shed in an area of the site that is already developed, and between two other existing sheds, is a reasonable request.

The draft Findings of Fact shall be amended to reflect concerns conveyed at the Board of Adjustment meeting and public hearing. The Board should specify the facts and reasons that are the basis of the Board's determination. In granting of a variance, the Board of Adjustment may impose conditions directly related to and bearing a rough proportionality with the impact(s) created by the variance.

Staff Recommendation:

- adopt the staff report into the record;
- adopt the findings of fact;
- accept the application, testimony, exhibits, and other evidence presented into the record; and

Approve the side yard setback variance and **deny** the bluff setback variance, for construction of a shed addition that will be less than the required 30-foot setback from the side yard property line but must be at least 30 feet from the toe of bluff.



For Staff Use Only	
Permit #	226-0015
\$450 Receipt #	18789
DATE:	2/17/26

Variance Application

SITE ADDRESS, CITY, AND STATE 13000 322 nd St Way Cannon Falls MN			ZIP CODE: 55009
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Sect -29 TWP-112 Range-016 SW 1/4 of NW 1/4 Sec 29-112-16 Bx 5ac			
PROJ: RP 42.029.0503	ZONING DISTRICT A1	LOT AREA (S/F ACRES): 35 acres	STRUCTURE DIMENSIONS (if applicable): 44x68

APPLICANT OR AUTHORIZED AGENT'S NAME: Brian Mandelkow	
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS: 13000 322 nd St Way Cannon Falls MN 55009	TELEPHONE:
	EMAIL:

PROPERTY OWNER'S NAME: Same as Above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
PROPERTY OWNER'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
	EMAIL:

CONTACT FOR PROJECT INFORMATION: Same as Above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
	EMAIL:

VARIANCE REQUESTED TO: (check all that apply) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Property Line Setbacks <input type="checkbox"/> % Lot Coverage <input type="checkbox"/> Height Limits <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shoreland or Bluff Setbacks <input type="checkbox"/> Lot Width &/or Area <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision Regulations	CURRENT OR PREVIOUS USE: Farm w/outbuilding
	PROPOSED USE: Construct Farm Shop
	BUILDING APPLICATION PERMIT NO.: (if filed)

TOWNSHIP SIGNATURE: By signing this form, the Township acknowledges they are aware of the Applicant's variance request. In no way does signing this application indicate the Township's position on the variance request.			Attached <input type="checkbox"/>
TOWNSHIP OFFICIAL'S SIGNATURE: [Signature]	TOWNSHIP OFFICIAL'S PRINTED NAME AND TITLE: RICK SAMUELSON - VASA TWP CHAIRMAN	DATE: 2-12-2026	

By signing below, the applicant acknowledges they are the owner or authorized agent of the owner of this property, and the information presented is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant's Signature: [Signature]

Date: 2-12-26

REQUEST SUMMARY

Cite the Ordinance Article(s) and Section(s) you are requesting a variance from:

Article: 12 Section: 4 Subd. 2 Title: General Regulations Bluff setback
Article: _____ Section: _____ Title: Property Line Setback

The property owner bears the burden of providing information to convince the Board to rule in their favor. Please provide answers to the following questions or attach a document.

Discuss your current use of the property and the reason for your variance request:

See Attachment

Describe the effects on the property if the variance is not granted:

Describe any unique physical limitations that exist on your property, not generally found on others, which prevent you from complying with the provisions of the current ordinance:

Discuss alternatives you considered that comply with existing standards. If compliant alternatives exist, provide your reasoning for rejecting them:

Discuss alternatives you considered which would require a lesser variance. If you rejected such alternatives, provide your reasoning:

Discuss your current use of the property and the reason for your variance request:

We own a square 40 acres in Vasa township, comprised of two separate parcels: a 5 acre parcel consisting of our house and one outbuilding, and a 35 acre adjoining parcel with one outbuilding and 21 tillable acres. Current use of the property is corn and soybean crop rotation, with the existing outbuildings used for machinery storage. A variance is requested to get a building permit to construct an addition to the outbuilding which lies on the 35 acre parcel.

Describe the effects on the property if the variance is not granted:

If variance is not granted the use of the property will remain the same. No construction will be done.

Describe any unique physical limitations that exist on your property, not generally found on others, which prevent you from complying with the provisions of the current ordinance:

Space for an addition to our existing outbuilding is limited due to a tillable field along the Belle Creek to the south, the existing building to the east, a bluff to the north, and a property line (which we own both sides) to the west.

Discuss alternatives you considered that comply with existing standards. If compliant alternatives exist, provide your reasoning for rejecting them:

An alternative would be to build above the bluff on tillable farm land. We reject this option because we would be using tillable farm land that we would no longer be able to farm to attempt to make a profit from. The other alternative would be to tear down the existing pole shed and rebuild, but that would cost extra money to tear down and start over.

Discuss alternatives you considered which would require a lesser variance. If you rejected such alternatives, provide your reasoning:

The proposed addition to our outbuilding would be used as a farm shop. The simplest alternative to a lesser variance would be to make the proposed addition smaller. But, to comply with the current setback measurements, the addition would be too small to accommodate the size of modern day farm equipment. We would still be working on equipment outside, which completely defeats the purpose of constructing a usable shop.

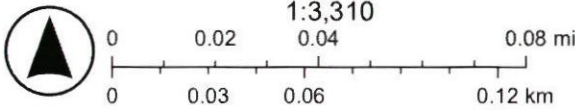
ArcGIS Web Map



2/12/2026, 1:55:43 PM

- GoodhueCo_PLSS Goodhue County Roads
- Municipal Boundary
- CEM; ; OCTY; OCRLN; CTRLN
- House Number

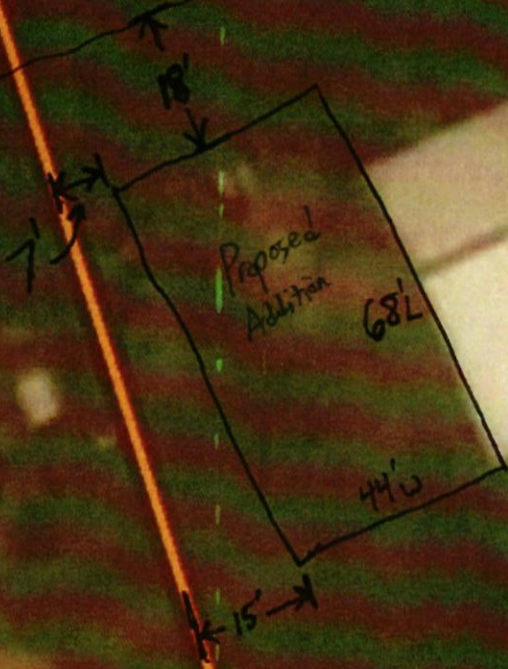
- PIN
- Full Name
- Parcels
- Imagery2025 Red: Band_1
- Imagery2025 Green: Band_2
- Imagery2025 Blue: Band_3



Property Line

Mandelkow Site Plan

Hill / Bluff



Existing Pole Building

Brian Mandelkow
 13000 322nd St Way
 Cannon Falls MN 55009
 651-380-4064
 bmandelkow79@gmail.com



North

5 acre property

RP 42.029.0501

Property Line

35 acre property

RP 42.029.0503

MAP 01: PROPERTY OVERVIEW

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Public Hearing
March 23, 2026

Brian Mandelkow (Owner)
A-1 Zoned District.

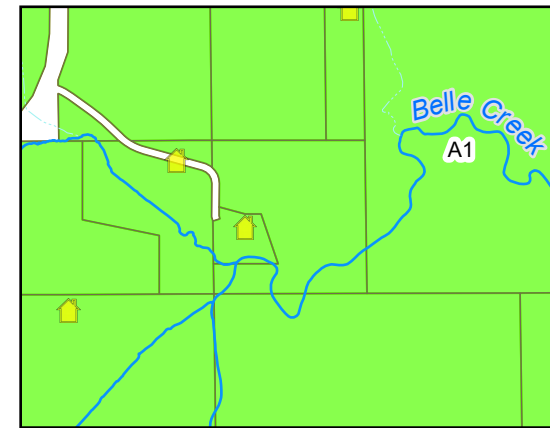
The SW 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section
29 TWP 112 Range 16 in Vasa Township.

Request for Variance to construct a new shed
addition that will be less than 30 feet from Bluff
Land and less than 30 feet from the Side Yard
Property Line.



Legend

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Intermittent Streams | Bluff Impact Zones (% slope) |
| Protected Streams | 20 |
| Lakes & Other Water Bodies | 30 |
| Shoreland | FEMA Flood Zones |
| Historic Districts | 2% Annual Chance |
| Parcels | A |
| Registered Feedlots | AE |
| Dwellings | AO |
| Municipalities | X |



0 25 50 100 150
US Feet

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MAP 02: VICINITY MAP

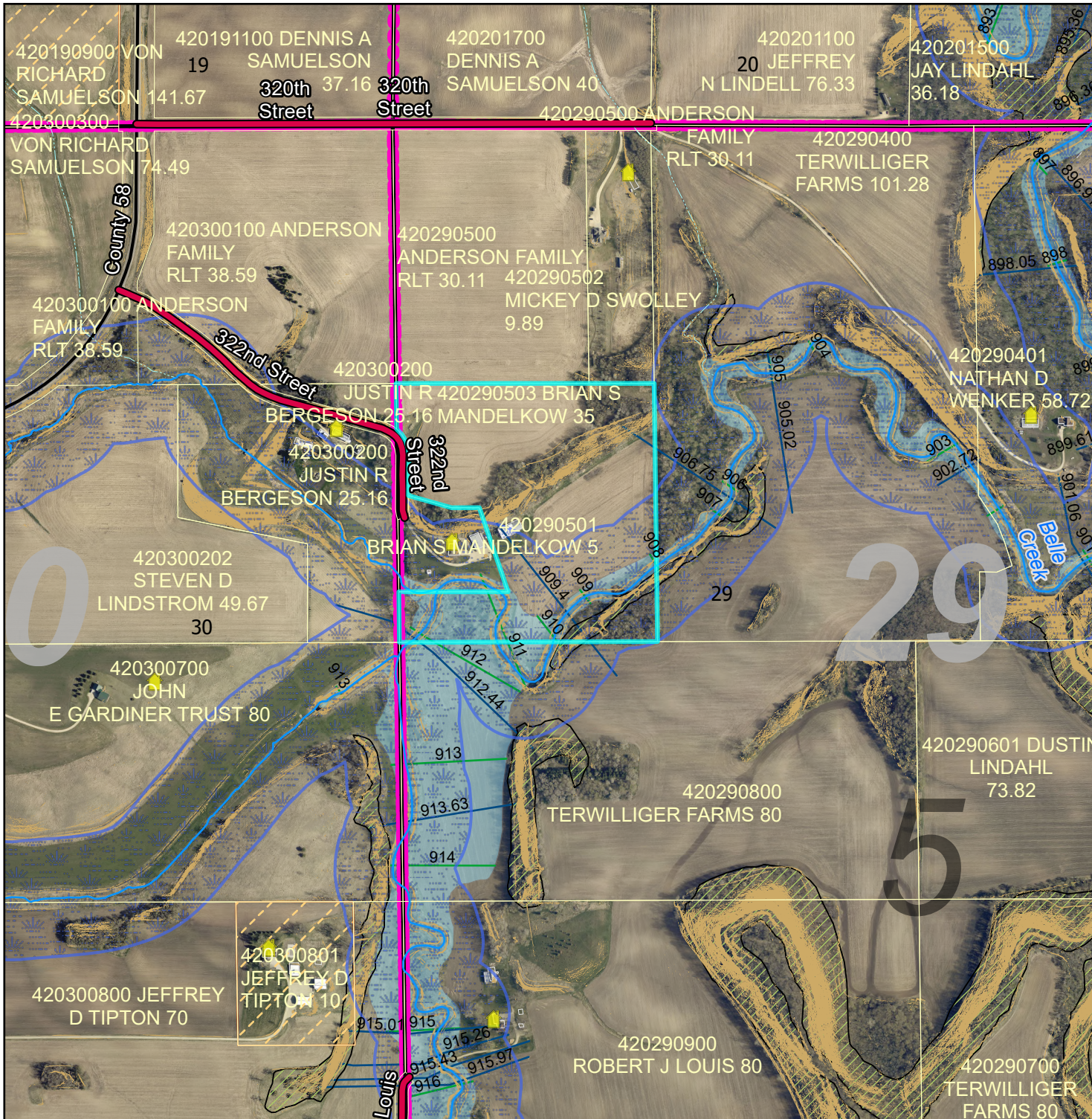
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Public Hearing
March 23, 2026

Brian Mandelkow (Owner)
A-1 Zoned District.

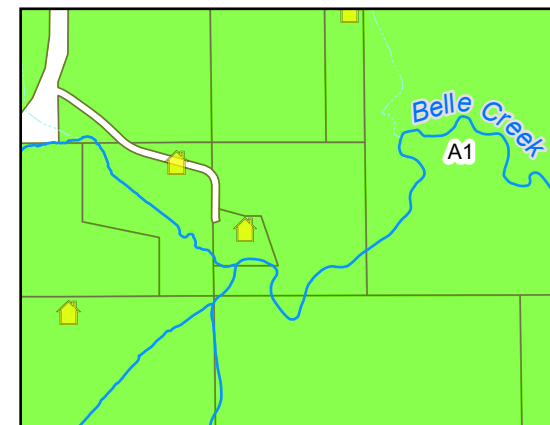
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Legend

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| | Intermittent Streams | | Bluff Impact Zones (% slope) |
| | Protected Streams | | 30 |
| | Lakes & Other Water Bodies | | |
| | Shoreland | | |
| | Historic Districts | | |
| | Parcels | | |
| | Registered Feedlots | | |
| | Dwellings | | |
| | Municipalities | | |
| | | | FEMA Flood Zones |
| | | | 2% Annual Chance |
| | | | A |
| | | | AE |
| | | | AO |
| | | | X |



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