

**CITY OF RANIER  
LAND USE PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
RANIER COMMUNITY BUILDING  
MONDAY OCTOBER 16, 2017 @ 5:00 PM**

**PRESENT:** Planning Commission Members - Sherril Gautreaux, Ron Wilcox, Sue Swendsen, Jeff McHarg, Ladd Kocinski.

**Cantilever Bridge Distillery, LLC representative Marty Goulet, Pat Bracken, Kalan Wagner Allen Rasmussen, Bob Dunbar, Linda and Dan Joyce, Paul and Marilyn Jones, Amy McHarg, Bill Dougherty, Woody and Lee Ann Woods, Gary and Deb Abrams, Jerry Arason, Mike Heibel, Tricia Heibel, Mark Lessard, Bud Lessard, Paul Nevanen**

**RE: ZONING VARIANCE REQUEST – PARCEL # 98-001-03090 LOTS 9-12 BLOCK 2 RANIER PLAT.  
2078 SPRUCE STREET**

Cantilever Bridge Distillery, LLC proposes development on the above described property and is requesting variance from lot coverage and setbacks in addition to a conditional use permit to operate the micro-distillery complex with tasting room, retail space and boutique hotel rooms. A notice of the public meeting to hear the variance request and conditional use permit was published in the International Falls Journal on October 7 and 11, posted on the Ranier website and at the Ranier Post Office.

Mr. Goulet introduced the plans stating that it is a community project with a focus on attracting young people to move here and attract visitors to want to spend money here. They plan on selling the products world-wide. The development will focus on the history of Ranier, the lake and the charm of the area. Folks will be able to tour the plant. It will be a destination with hotel rooms and craft distillery that uses local sources is a big part of the story.

The group is asking for a variance from the maximum lot coverage. The lot size is 113' x 120'. The building will be 95' x 95' approximately, however, the plans are still fluid. Bracken stated that the variance is very important - flexibility is a key until the plans are finalized. He stated that the group is taking a personal risk in building in Ranier and are asking for flexibility.

Commission member Kocinski wanted to ensure that the building is built fully within its lot lines and away from county rights of way.

Some discussion was had about the snowmobile trail in alleyway on the south property line. The alleyway is a 20 foot alley easement. Some thought and planning can be had on moving other large trees in the DNR lot to allow the trail to perhaps intersect onto Oak Ave.

Mr. Goulet acknowledged that parking is an issue that the developers, city and county will have to work together to solve.

In regards to sidewalks, at this time they are not intended to be a part of the project, though they were included in the conceptual drawing.

Goulet explained that under current Minnesota laws, the micro-distillery can off-sale one 3.75 liter bottle a day per customer. Otherwise the products will be sold through a distributor as required by Minnesota laws.

The commission finds that:

1. A variance is a means of departure from the literal requirements of the Unified Land Use ordinance where strict adherence would cause practical difficulties due to special conditions or circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.
2. Because of the particular surroundings, or the shape, configuration, topography or other conditions of the specific parcel of land involved, strict adherence to the regulations of the land use ordinance would cause practical difficulties:

***The structure has historically been a commercial establishment and thus is keeping with the community plan.***

3. The conditions upon which the petition for variance is based are unique to the parcel of land for which the variance is sought and are not applicable, generally, to other property within the same zoning classification:

***The existing structure and the parcel are non-conforming to the Uniform Land Use plan.***

4. The alleged practical difficulty has not been created by any persons presently having an interest in the parcel of land.

***The practical difficulty was not caused by the property owner.***

5. The granting of the variance will not alter the essential character of the locality or be injurious to other property in the vicinity in which the parcel of land is located or substantially diminish property values.

***The proposed building is neither injurious to properties in the vicinity nor anticipated to substantially diminish property values. This area of the Ranier Town Center district is populated with several commercial establishments. Enhancement of the existing structure provides economic opportunity and development.***

6. The proposed variance will not substantially increase the congestion of the public streets or be detrimental to the public welfare or endanger the public safety.

***The proposed structure may increase street congestion but is not intended to endanger public safety. Solutions to parking will be addressed by the city, county and the developer.***

7. It has been demonstrated that the granting of the variance will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of ordinance and is consistent with the Community Plan.

***The purpose of the Ranier Town Center – RTC zoning district is established to provide a mixture of residential and non-residential uses on a neighborhood scale supporting the village center and waterfront.***

8. The Commission unanimously recommends allowing the variance to the Uniform Land Use Ordinance Ranier Town Center zoning district maximum lot use and conditional use permit to construct the development.

**A motion was made by Swendsen; seconded by Kocinski and carried unanimously to recommend a variance from the maximum lot coverage in Ranier's Land Use Ordinance to construct the building which must be within the lot lines and setback from county rights of way and to provide a conditional use permit to construct the development.**