Memorandum

To:	Stillwater Township Planning Commission	**Project Reference:**	Rydeen Variance – Discussion
Copies To:	Barbara Riehle, Clerk		
	Doug and Jean Rydeen, Property Owners	**TKDA Project No.:**	22429.0000
From:	CJ Sycks, Planner	**Client No.:**	
	Evan Monson, Planner		
Date:	February 26, 2025		

SUBJECT: Discussion regarding a concept plan for a potential minor subdivision and variance request for land located on 110th Street North

MEETING DATE: March 6, 2025

OWNERS: Doug and Jean Rydeen

OVERVIEW

In November 2024, a surveyor representing the property owners reached out to the Township regarding a potential minor subdivision of a 93-acre parcel located at Saint Croix Trail North/State Highway 95 and 110th Street North into two parcels: one small parcel for a home to be built upon, and one large parcel to remain as farmland. The approximate location for the new lot is shown in red below.

The Subdivision Ordinance requires, when any new lots abut a public road, that the road be upgraded as part of a subdivision request to meet the ordinance requirements. 110th Street North is not currently meeting the surfacing requirements of a public road and is not meeting the minimum width and shoulder requirements.

The property owners are considering applying for a variance from the requirement to upgrade the road to pursue a minor subdivision. The Town Board reviewed the item as a concept plan at their 2/13/2025 meeting. The Township is able to review plans at a concept level. Any opinions and comments provided prior to reviewing a complete variance and minor subdivision application shall be considered advisory only and cannot be construed as recommending approval or denial of the variance and minor subdivision.

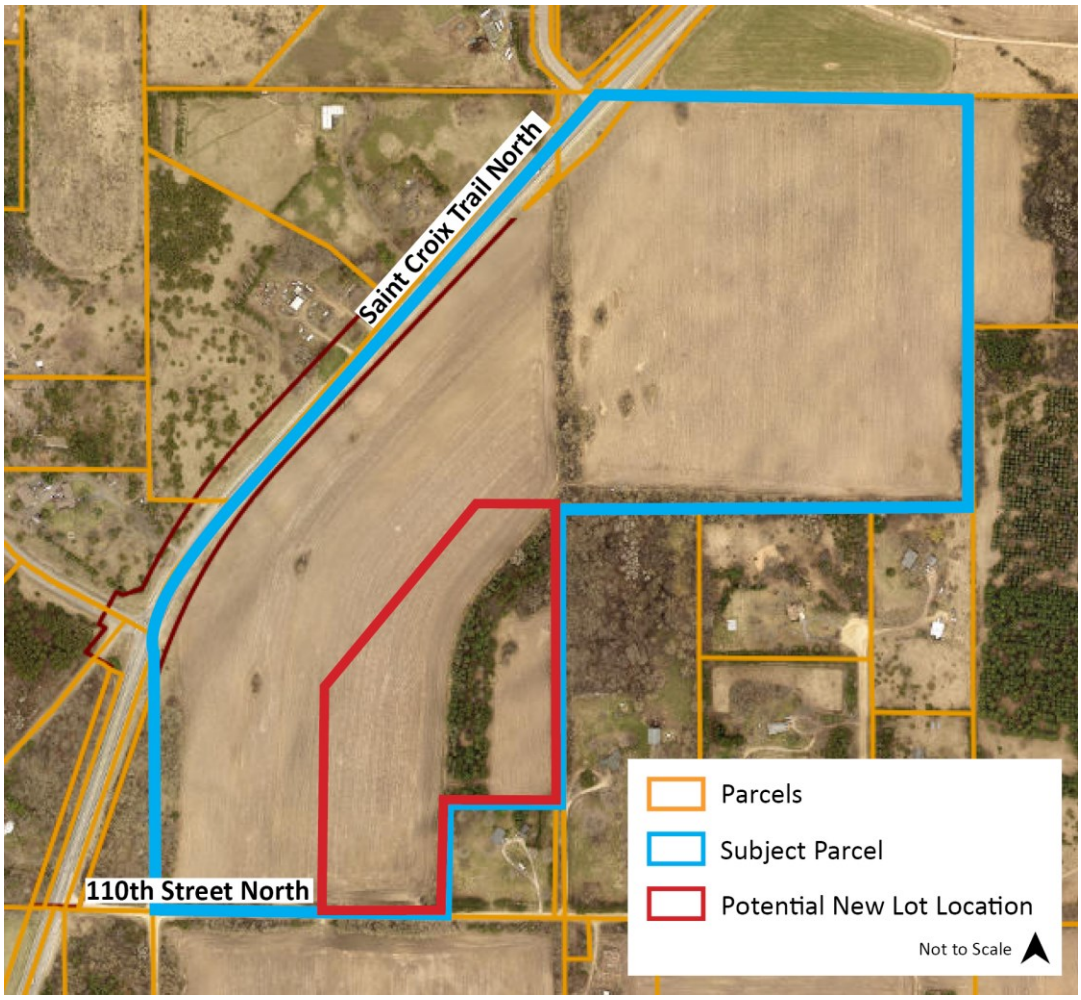

Figure 1: Aerial image per County GIS, outlining the subject parcel and the approximate location of a potential new lot.

SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

Below are relevant sections of the Township's Subdivision Ordinance that will be reviewed in the event of a variance application.

Section 13.3 Streets, General Requirements
(8) "Half or partial streets will not be permitted, except where essential to reasonable subdivision of a tract in conformance with the other requirements and standards of this ordinance and where, in addition, satisfactory assurance for dedication of the remaining part of the street can be secured."

Section 13.5 Street and Trail Design
(2) Minimum right-of-way widths and pavement widths (face to face of curb) for each type of public street or road shall be as follows:

Type of Street	Right-of-way Width	Roadway Width Including Shoulders
Minor Arterial	120 feet minimum	As determined by traffic needs
Collector	80 feet minimum	As determined by traffic needs
Local Street	60 feet minimum	32 feet

Section 14.1 Streets
(1) "Gravel surfaces are prohibited."

(5) "The design of all pavements shall be in accordance with all applicable specifications of the Minnesota Department of Transportation at the time of construction. The designed thickness of the pavement shall be in accordance with the standards shown below, but in no case shall there be less than seven (7) inches of Class 5 or higher and three and one-half (3.5) inches of bituminous. More stringent design may be required by the Township's Engineer."

Section 15.2 Improvements required.
(3) "All streets shall be improved with a bituminous or concrete surface except as approved by the action of the Town Board."

Section 15.2 (6) Construction Plans and Inspection
(2) "All required improvements shall be furnished and installed at the sole expense of the subdivider."

(3) "If any improvement within the subdivision will be of substantial benefit to lands beyond the boundaries of the subdivision, provision may be made for causing a portion of the cost of the improvements, representing the benefit to such lands, to be assessed against the same. In such a situation, the subdivider will be required only to pay for such portion of the whole cost of said improvements as will represent the benefit to the property within the subdivision."

VARIANCE CRITERIA

Chapter Three, Section 5 of the Township's Subdivision Ordinance includes the criteria and required process for considering variances. Below are the criteria that must be met to approve a variance to the Subdivision Ordinance.

- The variance is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- The property in question cannot be put to a reasonable use if used under conditions allowed by the Official Controls.
- The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property, not created by the landowner.
- The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.
- Economic conditions alone shall not constitute a hardship if reasonable use for the property exists under the terms of the Zoning Ordinance.
- The Board may consider the inability to use solar energy systems as a "hardship" in granting of the variance.

BACKGROUND

Mr. and Mrs. Rydeen currently reside at 16277 110th St N, southeast of the subject parcel. Their family owns roughly 173 acres of land in this area of the Township. They would like to construct a one-level home that is physically accessible to age in place on their family's land while leaving the rest of the parcel as farmland. The Rydeen's have worked with a surveyor and contractor to ensure building a home here is feasible and have confirmed potential septic system locations.

If they choose to subdivide this land, they would be required to pave the portions of 110th Street that abut their parcel to the Township's current street design standards, resulting in roughly 2,500 feet of roadway. Quirt Avenue North would not need to be paved.

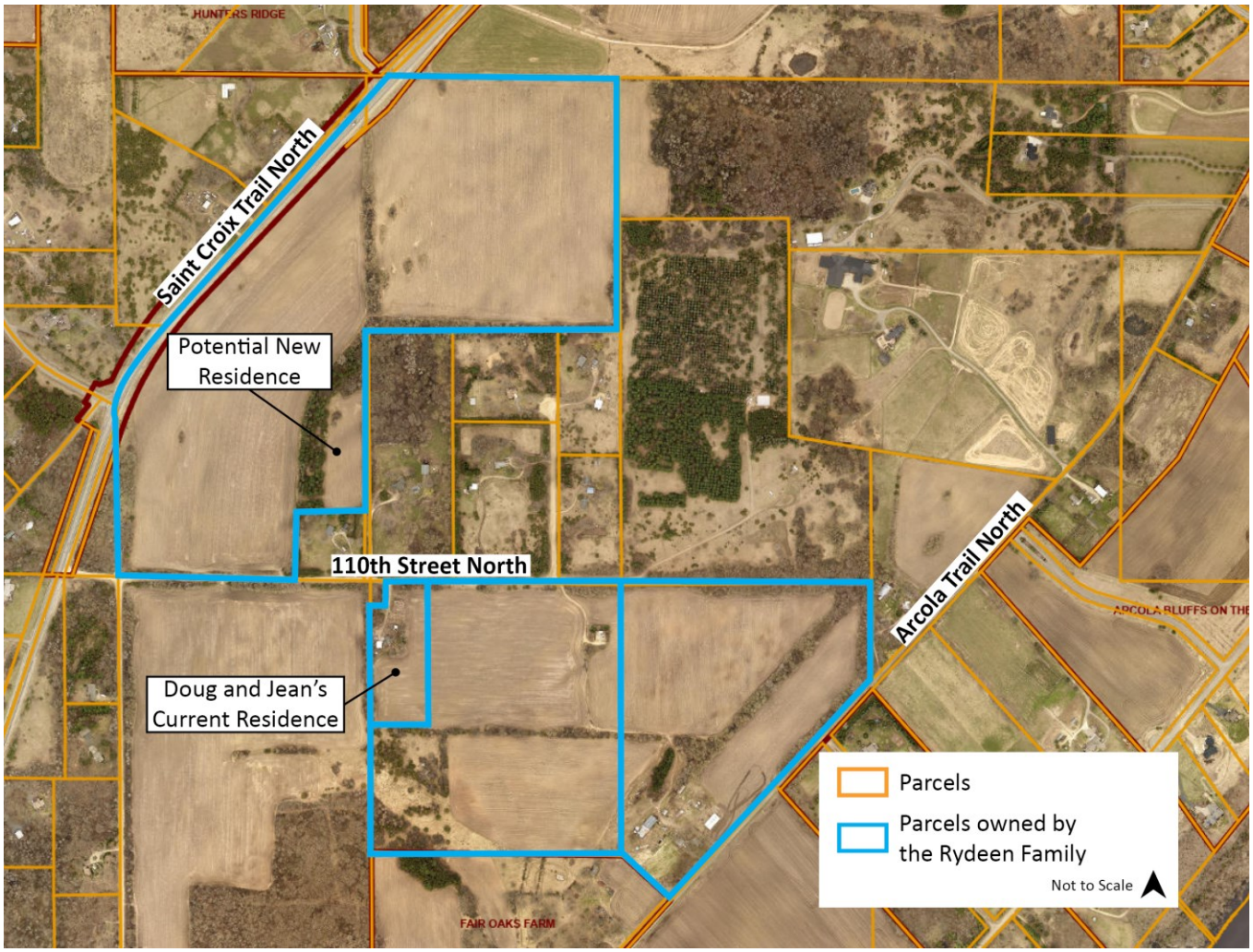

Figure 2: Aerial image of parcels owned by the Rydeen Family, per County GIS.

Figure 3: Aerial image of 110th Street North and Quirt Avenue North, indicated the street to be paved in red.

ACTION

Formal action is not required by the Planning Commission at this time. The Commission may discuss the potential of a variance and minor subdivision request with the applicant conceptually.

Any opinions and comments provided prior to reviewing a complete variance and minor subdivision application shall be considered advisory only and cannot be construed as recommending approval or denial of the variance and minor subdivision.