

TOWN OF ARLINGTON
Planning Commission Meeting at 7:00
August 20, 2025

Public Hearing

Chair Ryan Ringelstetter called the Public Hearing to order at 7:02pm.

Guests present Rob Roth with Roth Professional Services, Paul Johnson Town Attorney, Andy Skwor, Randy Winch, Brian Meinholz, Mark Wickham, Jim Han, Allison Hahn, Eric Landover, Sheri Meinholz, Craig Meinholz, Austin Meinholz, Cassidy Meinholz, Helen Manke, Marvin Manke, Sandy Otto, George Plenty, Bill Wagner, Paula Brandmeier, Barbara Bauer, Ronald Manke, Patti Herman, Kris Manke, Tom Manke, Sue Deuth, Jan Haupt, Rose Leckwee, Tom Leckwee, Randy Karause, Nancy Peerenboom, Mark & Laura webster, Samantha & Kyle Roate, Carol Stior & Mark Martin.

Brian Mienholz to present the request from Blue Star Dairy's proposed livestock siting application on Parcel 390.1 (1399 CTH Q). The application includes supporting documentation to increase from 1,218 lactating & dry cows to 3,520 proposed, with an additional 2,200 heifers and 600 calves proposed (6320 total). This equates to a total of 6,868 animal units according to the unit values provided by DATCP. Please note, this application includes a request for variance to modify the proposed setbacks from 200' (required) to 45' (proposed) on the western property line, and 90' (proposed) on the northern property line, to accommodate the livestock expansion.

Brian Mienholz 45 employees, 7-8 are family members, construction is to consolidate their 2 properties into one to eliminate redundancies and provide better care for the animals. Andy Score Ag Engineer reported the animal units are 1 head equal to 1.4 animal units, it is all based on weight of the animals, allows a lot of flexibility of the farm to grow. There are 1,218 cows currently, both farms together, and then add as the farm grow to 2029 will fill all the barns. 2026-2027 construction, move in 2028 and filled 2029.

Mark Wickam lives to the east of the dairy and asked if there would be anew well. What would water usage be like, and could it affect current existing wells? There are 2 wells currently and will be adding a 3rd well.

Barb Bauer questioned the manure use. It would be put in holding tanks, then is spread on fields.

Mark Webster said there were Nitrate warnings on his private well water. Brian Mienholz replied that they will spread manure in Deforest. All spreading must be approved by the DNR. Mark Wikham chimed in on that the crops are tested to make sure the nutrients are going into the crops, not letting the soil overwhelmed by manure.

Randy Krause was concerned by the local watersheds for Rowan Creek, Spring Creek & Yahara creek. The animal units will be greater than the population of Arlington, Poynette & Lodi and they all have their own waste treatment plants. The number of animals and water usage will be over the proposal. He would like experts to be brought in to review this application.

Patty Herman questioned if the DNR have approved this project, and the answer was they have not.

Ira Kastenbergh asked if the pictures in the presentation examples or current image. Andy answered that they are example only. What is the wish for 20 years, the full 2029 quantity is the most the site will hold. Brian Mienholz answered that they cannot apply if it is going to rain over 1 inch.

Paula Rainwater from the Rock River Water asked about the cows to water usage in perspective, nitrates are certified to the 100-year rain mark, which is happening more often. Anything above 10 parts per million is unsafe for human consumption, and it is tracking up as the years progress. Would you consider a manure digester? Brian Mienholz answered that no rain will enter the covered storages, and looking at other options to handle manure.

Joe McIlrath commented that the Mienholz's have a great reputation, and they are good people, and they won't do anything that would damage the land. But the water is the worry. Methane digesters wouldn't do any more, than what their covered storage units would do. The covered storages are passive digesters.

Mark Wickham commented that manure digesters do not eliminate nitrates at all.

Mark Martin the Manager at Goose Pond Sanctuary asked where they spray the manure now and where will they spread the additional manure. Blue Star is a responsible farm and is regulated by the DNR. What about possible Rowan Creek spills or damage. Climate change, and the hundred-year flood. We should postpone tonight until more information and research can be done. We should have the DNR comments before the PC can approve.

MSC Moll/Walz to adjourn the public hearing.
Adjourn the Public Hearing at 7:54pm

Planning Commission Meeting

Chair Ryan Ringelstetter called the Planning Commission to order at 7:54pm, with all commission members present except Brett Severson.

Guests present Rob Roth with Roth Professional Services, Paul Johnson Town Attorney, Andy Skwor, Randy Winch, Brian Meinholz, Mark Wickham, Jim Han, Allison Hahn, Eric Landover, Sheri Meinholz, Craig Meinholz, Austin Meinholz, Cassidy Meinholz, Helen Manke, Marvin Manke, Sandy Otto, George Plenty, Bill Wagner, Paula Brandmeier, Barbara Bauer, Ronald Manke, Patti Herman, Kris Manke, Tom Manke, Sue Deuth, Jan Haupt, Rose Leckwee, Tom Leckwee, Randy Karause, Nancy Peerenboom, Mark & Laura Webster, Samantha & Kyle Roate, Carol Stior & Mark Martin.

MSC Walz/Mulcahy to forgo with the reading of July 9, 2025, meeting minutes.

Forgo the repeat of request from Blue Star Dairy's proposed livestock siting application on Parcel 390.1 (1399 CTH Q). The public hearing will be held at the Town Hall, 200 Commercial

Street, Arlington, Wisconsin. The application includes supporting documentation to increase from 1,218 lactating & dry cows to 3,520 proposed, with an additional 2,200 heifers and 600 calves proposed (6320 total). This equates to a total of 6,868 animal units according to the unit values provided by DATCP. Please note, this application includes a request for variance to modify the proposed setbacks from 200' (required) to 45' (proposed) on the western property line, and 90' (proposed) on the northern property line, to accommodate the livestock expansion.

Rob Roth referenced his recap for the Planning Commission. They are following the town ordinances and variances. Blue Star will need to complete the storm water & erosion control application & following the town ordinances.

Andy Skwor said most of manure will be through a pipeline but there will be trucking. Stormwater management to a pond on site, 2 entrances to the farm and they are wide enough for farm equipment/fore fire apparatus. Water collection area can be used for fire water.

Luke Walz wanted confirmation variance location...0 people living on property, CSM is to be approved before recommended to board...odor score should remain the same,

Randy Krause asked about the Dept of Ag & DNR odor score distances to neighbor to each of the facilities. Brian Meinholz said they have excess land that can be used for spreading the manure. Land is ready for purchase.

Nate Moll pointed out that the hauling routes have been taken care of in the past, for running manure.

Paul Johnson said the application date from 6/3, is not up to date. The town would like the application to be amended to bring the PC up to date.

Mike Manke asked if the covers a 100%? The odor & traffic is an issue to the neighbors and asked if it would continue. Well water is a concern. It was tested years ago with high nitrates, but he still has concerns of the nitrates.

CSM is required due to buildings, the public hearing could be waived, stormwater & erosion needs to be addressed by the town engineer.

MSC Stevenson/Manke take no action and schedule another meeting for the approval of the Livestock application & variance, with an updated application & site map, plus a completed Stormwater & Erosion application.

For next Meeting the town will need:

Application & Site Map Updated

Rough CSM & Traffic Flow

Well Information

Stormwater & Erosion Application

Next meeting is set Sept. 3 at 7:00.

MSC Moll/Mulcahy to adjourn the meeting at 9:04pm.

Becky Struck, Clerk