***Office of the Zoning Administrator***

***Windemere Township***

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**2023 Windemere Township Recreational Camping Vehicle Ordinance Enforcement**

The Windemere Township Ordinance (hereinafter, the ordinance) regulates recreational camping vehicles (RV’s) and requires in almost all cases that they be permitted and subject to all structure setback standards and sanitary sewer requirements. The Windemere Township Board and the Township Planning Commission have directed that this ordinance be strictly enforced.

The Ordinance defines an RV to include any of the following: travel trailers, pickup coaches/campers, motor homes, and camping trailers. A park model may be classed as an RV or it may be classed as a mobile home, depending on how it is placed on a site.

With respect to permitting an RV, the Ordinance reads as follows:

“F. Licensed camping vehicles may be located in shoreland areas without a building site permit, provided structure setbacks standards, Sec. E, page 49, are met. All vehicles shall be connected to an approved sanitary sewer when running water is available on or to the site. Licensed fish houses may be temporarily located in shoreline areas without a building site permit, provided the setbacks of Sec. E, page 49, are met.”

“G. Recreational Camping Vehicles shall be limited to two (2) per lot and will be considered permanent subject to all permits; setbacks, area and sanitary sewer system requirements in either of the following cases:

1. when the development of a structural addition of any square footage to the camping vehicle occurs, or when an accessory structure of any type or square footage or storage building of any type or square footage is completed on the site; or
2. camping vehicle is unlicensed or cannot be shown to be operable on the highways of the State of Minnesota.”

The Ordinance, as it relates to recreational camping vehicles, can be summarized as follows:

* Structure setbacks must always be met whenever an RV is placed on a lot in Windemere Township, regardless of whether or not the RV is required to be permitted.
* RV’s will always be limited to two (2) per lot.
* If water is available on or to the site, the RV needs to be connected to a compliant septic system, regardless of whether or not a permit is required.
* A permit will always be required if the RV has had any structural addition added to it that was not factory issued with the RV, if there is any structure of any type or square footage on the lot, or if the RV is not currently licensed or cannot be shown to be operable on a road.
* A permitted RV will be counted against the lot coverage requirements.
* RV’s located on lots prior to the passage of the ordinance in 1996 shall be treated as a non-conforming, and may be maintained on the lot subject to all rules and limitations related to a non-conforming use.
* If, in a group of two or more contiguous lots under the same ownership, any individual lot does not meet the minimum lot requirements in the ordinance, the lot will not be considered as a separate parcel of land for the purposes of the permit. The lot must be combined with one or more contiguous lots so they equal one or more parcels of land, each meeting the minimum lot requirements of the ordinance as much as possible.

Enforcement of this ordinance shall be in both shoreland and non-shoreland zones.

RV’s may be stored on a lot and will not be subject to the Ordinance requirements so long as they are not being used for sleeping, eating, or recreation while they are so stored.

All provisions of the Ordinance are subject to requests for a variance before the Board of Adjustment. The zoning administrator will assist property owners with that process as requested. Property owners need to be aware that the granting of a variance is not guaranteed and the property owner must meet the criteria for variances under the laws and rules of the State of Minnesota, including make a showing of hardship.

Once a permit is issued or a variance granted for a specific RV unit, it will not need to be renewed if the property owner continues to maintain or place the RV on the parcel consistent with the permit. Removal for travel or winter storage does not negate the permit as long as the RV listed in the permit is returned to the permitted location. However, if the property owner replaces the RV, or if they wish to change the location of the RV, they must advise the zoning administrator of the change and a determination will be made regarding the need to apply for a new permit.