

**COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT
PLANNING REPORT**

Application: A2-26
Related Application(s): N/A
Owner(s): Selina Frechette & Justin Moreau
Meeting Date: April 24th, 2026
Prepared by: Owen Curnew, Development Planner

PROPERTY INFORMATION:

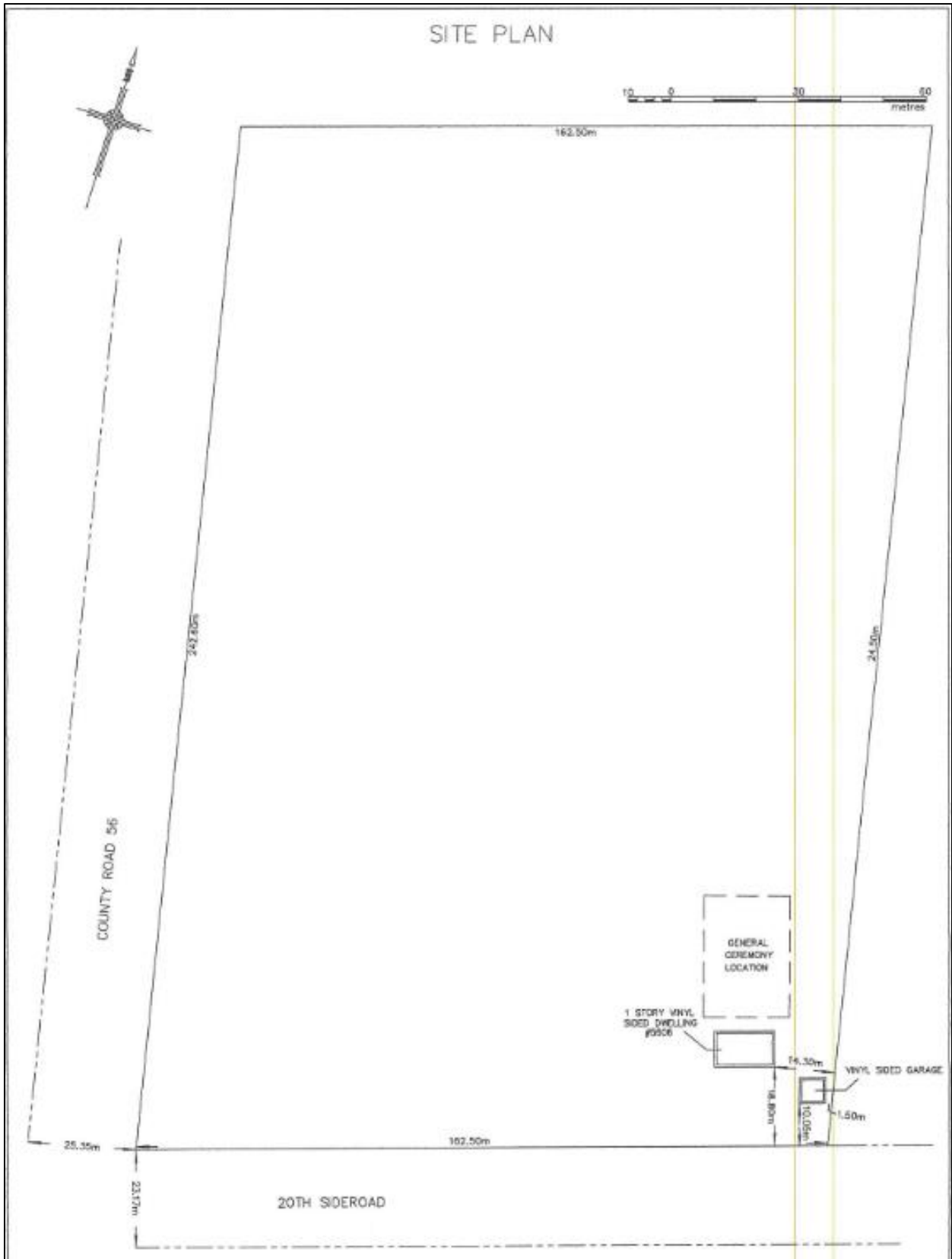
Municipal Address	5606 20 th Sideroad
Legal Description	CON 7 PT W 1/2 LOT 21;RP51R16231 PART 3
Roll No.	432101000305105
Official Plan	Rural
Zoning By-law	Rural (RL)

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend **APPROVAL** of Application A2-26 with the following conditions:

1. That all municipal taxes be paid and up to date.
 2. That any and all external costs associated with this application are borne by the applicant.
 3. That the proper Building Permit(s) be obtained.
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1. The applicant provides a revised site plan clearly demarcating the number of parking spaces available. The parking spaces are required to be a minimum of 6.0m in length and 2.5m in width and shall reside on the existing driveway.
 2. The applicant provide staff with a revised cover letter stating the days of the week the wedding ceremonies will be held.

PROPOSAL (attachment 1):



DATE OF SITE INSPECTION:

April 17, 2026.

REASON FOR THE APPLICATION:

The applicant is seeking relief from the following Section(s) of Zoning By-law 2003-50:

- a) Section 3: Definitions of Essa Township’s Zoning By-law 2003-50, specifically the definition of “Home Occupation,” to permit outdoor activities as part of the use.

SURROUNDING LANDS:

North	The subject property abuts 7557 County Road 56 to the North. The neighbouring property is a large rural parcel comprised of a single-family dwelling, accessory buildings/structures, and is heavily forested.
West	The subject property abuts County Road 56 to the West.
South	The subject property abuts 20 th Sideroad to the South.
East	The subject property abuts 5574 20 th Sideroad to the East. The neighbouring property is a large rural parcel comprised of a single-family dwelling, accessory buildings/structures, and is heavily forested.

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is municipally known as 5606 20th Sideroad. The property is zoned Rural (RL) Zone as per Schedule ‘A’ of Essa Township’s Zoning By-law (ZBL) 2003-50. The applicant has applied for a minor variance to get relief from the provisions set out under the definition of “Home Occupation” under Section 3 of ZBL 2003-50.

Please note, there was a variance approved for the existing garage for a reduction to the minimum front yard setback from 18m to 10m. The variance was approved on May 22, 1997.

COMMENTS:

Test 1.

Does the minor variance maintain the general intent and purpose of the Township Official Plan (OP)? Yes

Section 7.2 outlines permitted uses in lands designated Rural which allow home occupations and home industries

Whether or not the proposed use can be considered a home occupation will be

determined in tests 2-4. Home Industry is not defined in the OP; however, home industries are typically considered to be low-intensity uses that do not change the rural character of neighbourhood and can range from small-scale manufacturing to low-impact services.

Therefore, the variance generally maintains the intent and purpose of the Township's Official Plan.

Test 2.

Does the minor variance maintain the general intent and purpose of the By-law? Yes.

The applicant has provided a cover letter explaining their intentions as well as providing a description of the proposed wedding ceremonies. It is staffs' opinion that the applicant would be seeking relief from item (f).

Section 3 outlines the following provisions:

- (a) there is no external display or advertising other than a sign erected in accordance with any by-laws of the corporation regulating signs;

The applicant has not indicated the need for any signage. Thus, this is not an issue.

- (b) there is no external storage of goods, materials or equipment;

Presumably there are no goods, materials, or equipment (e.g. speakers) being used that would cause a nuisance to neighbours. The applicant has indicated that there will be no sound devices or amplifiers used in conjunction with the wedding ceremonies. Thus, this is not an issue based on the information provided.

- (c) such home occupation is clearly secondary to the main residential use and does not change the residential character of the dwelling or lot, nor create or become a nuisance in terms of noise, traffic or parking;

Based on the description provided, the proposed use seems to be quite minimal in terms of the number of people, parking, etc. Given that there will be no food or alcohol, and the number of people is being limited to ten (10), staff see no issue with the ceremonies as they are no different than small gatherings (e.g. family BBQs, parties, and birthday gatherings).

The site plan does not clearly indicate if it can facilitate the number of cars expected, and staff would require the applicant to provide a revised site plan clearly demarcating the number of cars. Also, the applicant should indicate the days of the week they intend to hold the ceremonies.

At this time, staff would suggest the following conditions of approval:

- 1. The applicant provides a revised site plan clearly demarcating the number of parking spaces available. The parking spaces are required to be a minimum of 6.0m in length and 2.5m in width and shall reside on the existing driveway.**
- 2. The applicant provide staff with a revised cover letter stating the days of the week the wedding ceremonies will be held.**

- (d) no more than 25% of the gross floor area of the dwelling unit is used for the home occupation use or 25% of the gross floor area of an accessory building;

The applicant has stated they only intend to hold these events outside. Regardless, if the house was used to facilitate complimentary uses, they would be restricted to the 25% requirement and there are no perceivable issues with doing so. The applicant has indicated that they currently use a portion of the house under 25% as an office which will be associated to the proposed wedding ceremonies. There is no issue with doing so at this time and the office would be in-keeping with the maximum floor area requirement.

- (e) the office of a professional practitioner or of an agent may be located in a dwelling used as his private residence provided that such offices are to be used by the practitioner or agent and only one additional staff member;

The applicant indicated they currently use a portion of the house as an associated office to the outdoor use. Staff do not see any issue with the continuance of this use as it is permissible.

- (f) no facilities shall be provided to the public other than for private consultation or emergency treatment;

The applicant would need relief from provision (f) to hold outdoor events and facilitate potential indoor uses for consultation and wedding related purposes. Staff see no issue with this and will provide further justification in Tests 3 and 4.

- (g) in no case shall the boarding of animals, auto sales and sales of motorized vehicles, auto body, or auto repair uses be classified as a home occupation; and

None of the above-mentioned uses will be applicable to this operation. Not a concern for staff at this time.

- (h) anyone living in the home, of driving age and employed by the home occupation, or who drives to earn their living, may park one vehicle associated with the home-based business or their source of income in the driveway of the premises.

The applicant has not indicated that there are any vehicles associated with the wedding ceremonies, and the current vehicles are personal vehicles.

Therefore, after a full review of the proposal and policies regarding home occupations, staff believe the proposal maintains the low-density character of the rural property, and surrounding properties. Furthermore, the subject property and surrounding properties are heavily treed, creating a buffer between properties minimizing the potential for conflict.

Thus, the Variance would generally maintain the intent and purpose of Essa Township's ZBL (2003-50).

Test 3.

Is the minor variance desirable for the appropriate development or use of the land, building or structure? Yes.

Home occupations are permitted use and are considered appropriate where they meet the criteria listed in Section 3 of ZBL-2003-50. Upon confirmation of the available parking, operation dates for the wedding ceremony, and approval from the Committee of Adjustment to allow relief from Item (f), the proposed use can be considered a home occupation.

Therefore, the Variance should be considered appropriate use of the land and building.

Test 4.

Is the requested variance minor in nature? Yes

The proposed variance will not intensify the lot beyond what is currently permitted. The provisions for home occupations are intended to limit and prevent conflict between properties as a result of a home business or occupation.

The applicant has stated that only ten (10) people per ceremony will be permitted on the site at a time. The number of people is numerically insignificant when considering the natural buffer that the ample tree coverage provides. Once again, upon confirmation of adequate parking and the days on which the business will operate, the potential for conflicts can be further mitigated by ensuring the site functions and operates without impacting neighbouring properties and the municipal R.O.W.

Thus, the Variance should be considered minor in nature.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Comments were received from the following residents:

Residents of 5581 20th Sideroad (Joy & Elmer Trump):

“We are writing with respect to the above-noted application for variance at 5606 20* Sideroad. We do have some concerns regarding this issue.

Firstly, what constitutes “small” weddings? Is there a limit to the number of people who could be attending? Also, the property requesting this variance is mostly forested with not much open space. If they plan to hold outdoor wedding ceremonies, are they planning to remove a significant number of trees on the property? Also, are they planning to erect structures to provide rain shelters, food preparation areas, or washrooms for people attending wedding events?

Additionally, this residence is not isolated but has family homes both adjacent and across the street, all of whom would be impacted by noise from parties lasting presumably well into the night.

A major safety concern is parking of vehicles. This road is a busy road and is used by personal vehicles and transport trucks alike. The subject property is quite close to the intersection of CR56 and while traffic turns onto 20* Sideroad from CR56, many other vehicles speed down the hill towards the subject property. It is not a safe location for road parking and there is not currently sufficient parking space on the property”

Staff believe the report has addressed all relevant questions from the residents.

CONCLUSION:

For the above reasons, Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



Owen Curnew
Development Planner
Township of Essa

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Attachment 1 – Site Plan

SITE PLAN

