

CITY OF MINNETRISTA



CITY COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA ITEM

Subject: Application from Bryce & Natalie Quinn for a variance from the required riparian view shed setback at 960 Maple Crest Drive.

Prepared By: Nickolas Olson, Senior City Planner
Through: David Abel, Community Development Director

Meeting Date: September 9, 2026

Overview: Bryce & Natalie Quinn (the “Applicants”) have made a request for a variance from the required riparian view shed setback to allow for a deck approximately 149.4 feet from the ordinary high water (lakeshore) at 960 Maple Crest Drive; R-1: Low-Density Single-Family Residence Zoning District; PID# 12-117-24-21-0011 (the “Property”).

Background: The Applicants are proposing to replace an existing deck that they feel does not function well. The proposed replacement extends the deck out an additional 6 feet towards the lake. Currently, the two more function portions of the deck are connected by a small walkway about 22 inches in width. The extension allows the Applicants to move more freely between the spaces while providing the option for additional seating. Due to the location of the homes on either side of the Property, the proposed deck extends past the required riparian view shed setback, which is a secondary lakeshore setback that is established based on the existing location of the homes adjacent to the property and their setback to the lakeshore. Portions of the existing deck, sunroom and home extend past the this setback. As proposed, a variance is required for the Applicants to extend beyond this setback. The Applicants have appropriately applied for a variance, and the application materials have been attached for the City Council to review. The City Council should consider the standard variance criteria when reviewing the request and making a motion.

Variance Request: City Code Section 505.05 Subd. 9 allows the City to issue variances from the provisions of the zoning code. A variance is a modification or variation of the provisions of the zoning code as applied to a specific piece of. A variance is only permitted when:

- a. **The variance is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of this ordinance.**

Section 505.03 Subd. 1 outlines the specific purpose and intent of the City’s zoning ordinance. One of those purpose and intent is to protect the general health and safety of the inhabitants of the City. This is accomplished through the promotion of proper use of land and structures with reasonable standards to which buildings, structures, and land will conform to for the benefit of all.

Mission Statement:

The City of Minnetrista will deliver quality services in a cost effective and innovative manner and provide opportunities for a high quality of life while protecting natural resources and maintaining a rural character.

The proposed deck is a reasonable use for a lakeshore property and it maintains a reasonable setback from the lakeshore, which is almost double the minimum required 75 feet.

b. The variance is consistent with the comprehensive plan.

The basic intent of the comprehensive planning process is to provide a well-founded and coordinated decision-making framework to guide both public and private development and community improvements. In this regard, the comprehensive plan represents the development framework to guide and direct future land development decisions within the City. The Land Use Plan is a narrative and graphic representation of the community's land use and growth management goals and policies that provides the background and rationale for land use designations as represented on the Proposed Land Use Map.

The Property is guided for long term Residential Low land use in the 2040 Minnetrista Comprehensive Plan. The proposed deck does not change the use from single family and is consistent with the long-term plan for the Property. In addition to simply complying with the Proposed Land Use Map, the proposed deck does not further clutter the shoreline by maintaining a more than reasonable setback from the lakeshore and helps preserve the long-term stability of the Property.

A variance may be granted when the applicant establishes there are practical difficulties in complying with this ordinance. Practical difficulties, as used in connection with granting a variance, means:

1. The property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by this ordinance.

This factor means that the landowner would like to use the property in a particular reasonable way, but cannot do so under the rules of the ordinance. It does not mean that the land cannot be put to any reasonable use whatsoever without the variance.

The proposed deck replacement is to increase the functionality of the deck, which is reasonable. The proposed deck would also be approximately 149.4 feet from the lakeshore, which is almost double the minimum 75-foot lakeshore setback, which is also reasonable.

2. The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.

The uniqueness generally relates to the physical characteristics of the particular piece of property, that is, to the land and not personal characteristics or preferences of the landowner. When considering the variance for a building to encroach or intrude into a setback, the focus of this factor is whether there is anything physically unique about the particular piece of property.

Mission Statement:

The City of Minnetrista will deliver quality services in a cost effective and innovative manner and provide opportunities for a high quality of life while protecting natural resources and maintaining a rural character.

The existing home, sunroom, and deck all encroach in part beyond the required riparian viewshed setback. The Applicants did not build the home, sunroom, and deck in their current location, which do not meet the current setback rules. It's their location within the setback that creates the need for a variance to allow for the proposed deck expansion.

3. The variance would not alter the essential character of the locality.

Under this factor, consider whether the resulting structure will be out of scale, out of place, or otherwise inconsistent with the surrounding area.

The proposed deck is consistent with those found on nearby properties and decks on lakeshore properties are not out of place as they are commonly found on those and other properties.

Neighborhood Comments: Notices were sent out to all property owners within 500 feet of the subject property. As a result of sending public notice, staff has corresponded with one property owner and received a written comment from another property owner regarding the request. The written comment has been attached for review.

Planning Commission Recommendation: The Applicants' request was presented to the Planning Commission at their August 24, 2026 meeting. At that meeting, the Planning Commission held the required public hearing. There was no one besides the Applicants present to speak. Having heard no testimony at the public hearing and discussing the Applicants' request amongst themselves, the Planning Commission made a motion to recommend the City Council approve the Applicants' request, based on certain findings of fact and subject to conditions. Motion passed 5-0. Absent: Young, Taylor, Livermore, and Rognli.

Conclusion: The City Council should review the staff report and the recommendation of the Planning Commission. After review, the City Council should consider the entire record before it prior to making a motion. Along with making a motion, findings of fact should be established which support the motion. Findings of fact based on the information submitted by the Applicants may be as follows:

1. The requested variance is in harmony with the purpose and intent of the City's zoning ordinances because the proposed deck is a reasonable use for a lakeshore property and it maintains a reasonable setback from the lakeshore, which is almost double the minimum required 75 feet;
2. The requested variance is consistent with the City's comprehensive plan because the Property is guided for long term Residential Low land use in the 2040 Minnetrista Comprehensive Plan. The proposed addition does not change the use from single family and is consistent with the long-term plan for the Property. In addition to simply complying with the Proposed Land Use Map, the proposed deck does not further clutter the shoreline by maintaining a more than reasonable setback from the lakeshore and helps preserve the long-term stability of the Property;
3. The Applicants propose to use the Property in a reasonable manner because proposed deck replacement is to increase the functionality of the deck, which is

Mission Statement:

The City of Minnetrista will deliver quality services in a cost effective and innovative manner and provide opportunities for a high quality of life while protecting natural resources and maintaining a rural character.

reasonable. The proposed deck would also be approximately 149.4 feet from the lakeshore, which is almost double the minimum 75-foot lakeshore setback, which is also reasonable;

4. The requested variance is the result of unique circumstances not created by the landowner because the existing home, sunroom, and deck all encroach in part beyond the required riparian viewshed setback. The Applicants did not build the home, sunroom, and deck in their current location, which do not meet the current setback rules. It's their location within the setback that creates the need for a variance to allow for the proposed deck expansion; and
5. The requested variance will not alter the character of the locality because the proposed deck is consistent with those found on nearby properties and decks on lakeshore properties are not out of place as they are commonly found on those and other properties.

Recommended Action: Motion to adopt a resolution approving the requested riparian view shed setback variance at 960 Maple Crest Drive based on certain findings of fact outlined in the staff report and subject to the following conditions:

1. Any required grading shall maintain existing drainage patterns or improve the existing drainage of the lot and adjacent lots;
2. The Applicants shall obtain all necessary permits and approvals from the City and other applicable entities with jurisdiction over the Property prior to any construction;
3. The Applicants are responsible for all fees incurred by the City in review of this application; and
4. The variance approval is valid for one year from the date of approval and will become void and expire unless a building permit has been issued for the site.

Attachments:

1. Location Map
2. Applicant's Narrative
3. Proposed Survey
4. Proposed Plans
5. Public Comment
6. Res. No. 92-26 Approving Setback Variance at 960 Maple Crest Drive

Mission Statement:

The City of Minnetrista will deliver quality services in a cost effective and innovative manner and provide opportunities for a high quality of life while protecting natural resources and maintaining a rural character.

960 Maple Crest Drive



1 in = 100 Ft

-  City Boundary
-  Address Labels
-  Parcels



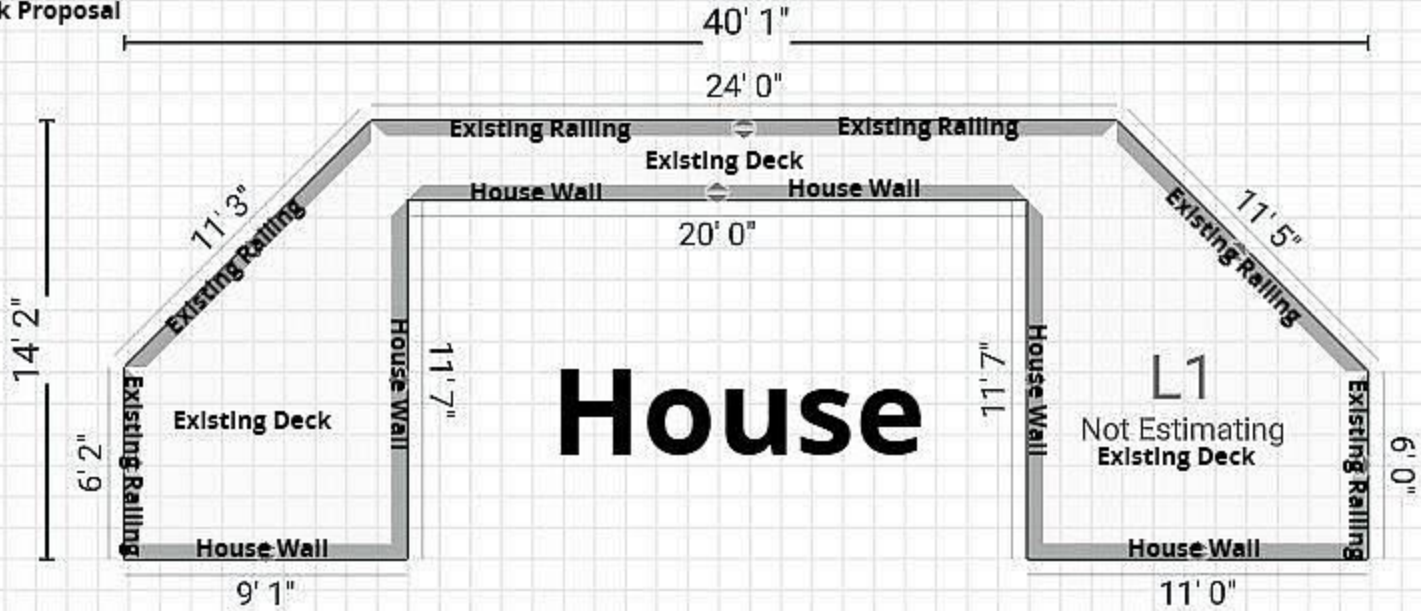
Variance for Quinn Property – 960 Maple Crest Drive Minnetrista

- A. Property Owners – Bryce & Natalie Quinn
- B. Site Data – Lot 8 ,Block 1, Addition: Maple Crest Estates, Parcel Size: Irregular, Torrens
 - a. Parcel Information 29,941s.f. ~0.92 acres
 - i. Impervious Data: Structure: 2,095 s.f.
 - ii. Concrete Surfaces: 1,533 s.f.
 - iii. Gravel Pathway 1,320 s.f.
 - iv. Wood Patio Area: 106 s.f.
 - v. Total 5,054 s.f./29,941 s.f. = 12.7% Impervioius Coverage
 - vi. Zoning: Residential
- C. Provisions of which we seek a variance – Site lines of our deck
- D. Description of Proposal – We would like to build a more functional deck at our home. We purchased the home in December of 2021 and after five years of living in the home and seeing how it lives, we have decided to update the original 1972 exterior and the weathered nonfunctional deck. Along with an updated exterior we would like to build a new deck with a material that performs better and that is usable. Currently the deck is too narrow (22”) on the south side of the house, so you must walk sideways. You cannot easily move from one side of the deck to the other or move items from side to side or even fit a chair to sit on. We would like to add to the south side, so we can easily walk from the west to the east side of the deck. On the west side of deck there is a dense tree line of deciduous trees and conifers that gives privacy to our lot. On the east side of our house we have a cedar privacy fence, so if we were to be graned this improvement to our deck it does not impede on either neighbor’s site line.
- E. Natalie Quinn has discussed this deck improvement with Nick Olson a few times on the phone. Nick helped guide Natalie with needed documentation.
- F. This proposal is to give better functionality and usability to an existing deck.
- G. We plan to use the property improvement in a reasonable manner.
- H. Currently the deck is 22” wide on the south side of the house, making it unusable. We want to be able to use both sides of our deck more easily.
- I. This variance request will not adversely affect the health or safety of persons residing or working in the neighborhood. I will not impair the adequate supply of light and air to adjacent properties. It will not be injurious to property or improvements to the neighborhood. It will not increase the congestion of public streets. It will not endanger public safety. It will not substantially diminish or impair property values within the neighborhood.

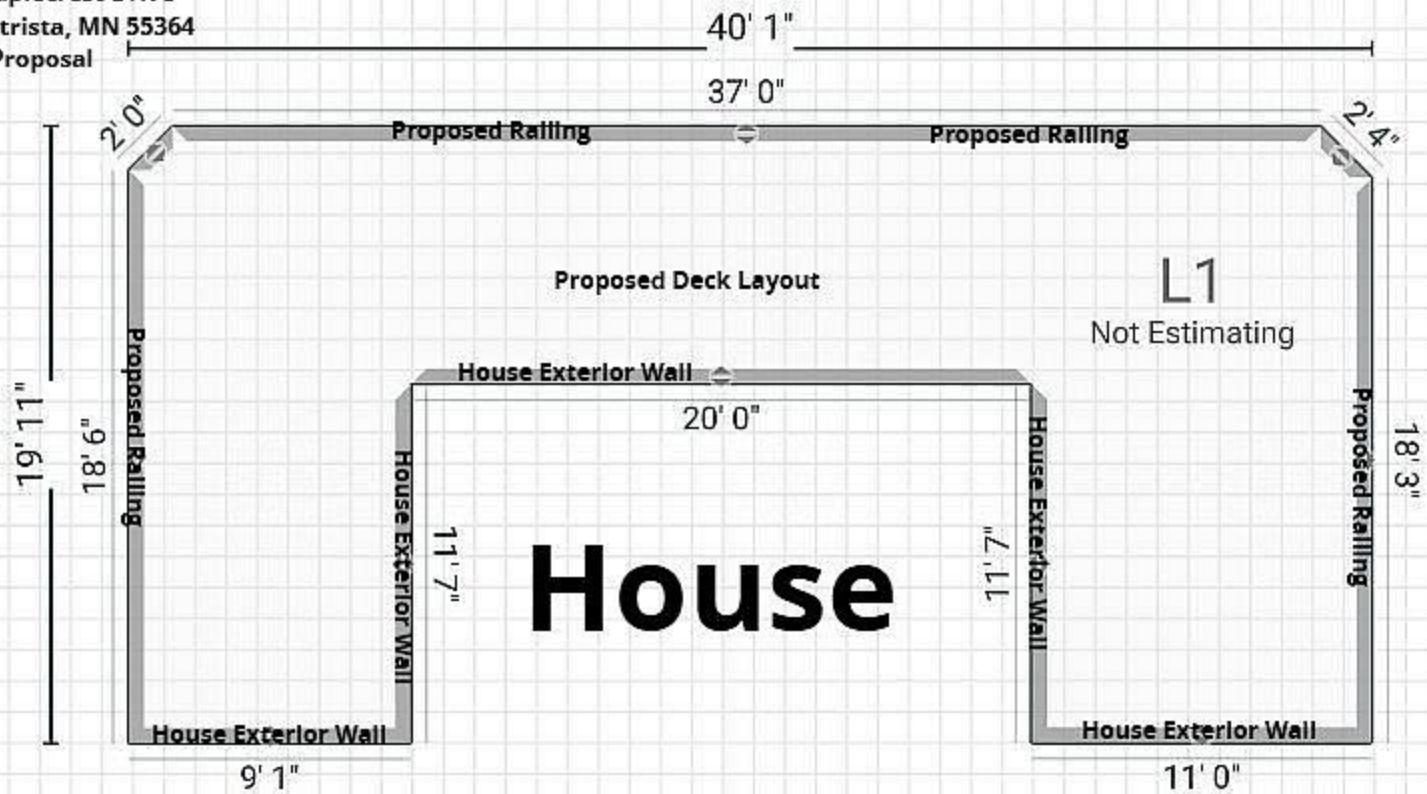
Quinn Residence – 960 Maple Crest Drive - Written Statement for Variance

We are requesting a variance to replace the existing wood deck that is falling apart and does not function well. We would like to build a more functional deck off our sunroom. We purchased the home in December of 2021 and after five years of living in the home and seeing how it lives, we have come to realize that our current deck does not work. Currently the deck is too narrow (22") on the south side of the house, so you must walk sideways. You cannot easily move from one side of the deck to the other or move items from side to side or even fit a chair to sit on. We would like to add to the south side deck, so we can easily walk from the west to the east side of the deck. This variance would give us a deck that could be navigated easily and could also be enjoyed for sitting. Our deck is not visible to either of our neighbors. On the west side of our lot there is a dense tree line of deciduous trees and conifers that gives privacy to our lot. On the east side of our lot we have a cedar privacy fence with a mature crab apple tree that sits up higher on the hill, so you can not easily see our deck from the neighbors house. Based on how our house sits on the lot along with the dense trees and cedar fence our deck is not visible to our neighbors & does not impede on either neighbor's site line. We appreciate you considering this variance for our deck.

Bryce and Natalie Quinn
960 Maplecrest Drive
Minnetrista, MN 55364
Deck Proposal



Bryce and Natalie Quinn
960 Maplecrest Drive
Minnetrista, MN 55364
Deck Proposal



Bryce and Natalie Quinn
960 Maplecrest Drive
Minnetrista, MN 55364
Deck Proposal



Westbury Bella Cavo Horizontal Cable Deck Railing
1/8" Stainless Steel Cable spacing 3" O.C.
Top rail 1-3/4"W x 1-3/8"H
4" Corner Posts
2 1/2" line posts
Top Rail height 36"

Decking 5/4 Trex Select Decking

August 17, 2026

Minnetrista Planning Commission
City of Minnetrista
7701 County Road 110 West
Minnetrista, MN 55364

Re: Variance Request – Bryce & Natalie Quinn, 960 Maple Crest Drive

Members of the Planning Commission,

My wife, Alyssa, and I are writing in support of the variance request submitted by our neighbors, Bryce and Natalie Quinn, regarding their property at 960 Maple Crest Drive.

Unfortunately, we will be out of the country at the time of the August 24 Planning Commission meeting and will not be able to attend the public hearing in person. We wanted to make sure, however, that our support for their request was included as part of the public record.

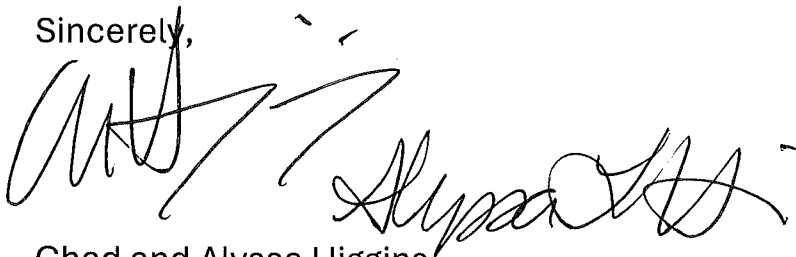
We have known Bryce and Natalie for several years and consider them both friends and good neighbors. As fellow lakeshore property owners in the immediate area, we have always known them to be thoughtful and responsible stewards of their property and of the lake. They take pride in their home and property, and we have every confidence that the improvements they make will continue to reflect that same level of care.

We understand that their application is requesting a variance from the City's riparian view shed setback in connection with the proposed deck on their property. As nearby lakeshore owners, we have no objection to the requested variance and do not believe the proposed improvement will negatively affect our property, our enjoyment of the lake, or the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Living on the lake, we certainly appreciate the importance of the City's ordinances and the need to balance individual property improvements with the interests of neighboring property owners and the broader lakeshore community. In this particular case, we are comfortable with Bryce and Natalie's request and fully support the City granting the variance.

We appreciate the Planning Commission considering the input of neighboring property owners as part of its review. Please feel free to include this letter in the record for the August 24 hearing.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Chad and Alyssa Higgins. The signature on the left is for Chad, and the signature on the right is for Alyssa. Both are written in black ink.

Chad and Alyssa Higgins
930 Maple Crest Drive
Minnetrista, Minnesota 55364

RESOLUTION NO. 92-26

CITY OF MINNETRISTA

**RESOLUTION APPROVING A RIPARIAN VIEW SHED SETBACK VARIANCE FOR
BRYCE AND NATALIE QUINN FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A DECK AT 960
MAPLE CREST DRIVE**

WHEREAS, the City of Minnetrista (the “City”) is a municipal corporation, organized and existing under the laws of the State of Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Minnetrista has adopted zoning and subdivision regulations, per Chapter 5 of the Municipal Code, to promote the orderly, economic and safe development and utilization of land within the city; and

WHEREAS, Bryce and Natalie Quinn (the “Applicants”) have made a request for a variance from the required riparian view shed setback to allow for a deck approximately 149.4 feet from the ordinary high water (lakeshore) at 960 Maple Crest Drive (the “Property”) and which is legally described on Exhibit A attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, on August 24, 2026, the Minnetrista Planning Commission considered the requested riparian view shed setback variance, held a public hearing and, after consideration of the entire record before it, voted 5-0 in favor of recommending approval of the requested setback variance; and

WHEREAS, the Minnetrista City Council has reviewed the application, as submitted, and has made the following findings of fact:

1. The requested variance is in harmony with the purpose and intent of the City’s zoning ordinances because the proposed deck is a reasonable use for a lakeshore property and it maintains a reasonable setback from the lakeshore, which is almost double the minimum required 75 feet;
2. The requested variance is consistent with the City’s comprehensive plan because the Property is guided for long term Residential Low land use in the 2040 Minnetrista Comprehensive Plan. The proposed addition does not change the use from single family and is consistent with the long-term plan for the Property. In addition to simply complying with the Proposed Land Use Map, the proposed deck does not further clutter the shoreline by maintaining a more than reasonable setback from the lakeshore and helps preserve the long-term stability of the Property;
3. The Applicants propose to use the Property in a reasonable manner because proposed deck replacement is to increase the functionality of the deck, which is reasonable. The proposed deck would also be approximately 149.4 feet from the lakeshore, which is almost double the minimum 75-foot lakeshore setback, which is also reasonable;
4. The requested variance is the result of unique circumstances not created by the landowner because the existing home, sunroom, and deck all encroach in part beyond the required

riparian viewshed setback. The Applicants did not build the home, sunroom, and deck in their current location, which do not meet the current setback rules. It's their location within the setback that creates the need for a variance to allow for the proposed deck expansion; and

5. The requested variance will not alter the character of the locality because the proposed deck is consistent with those found on nearby properties and decks on lakeshore properties are not out of place as they are commonly found on those and other properties.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Minnetrista hereby approves the requested riparian view shed setback variance for the construction of a deck at the property generally located at 960 Maple Crest Drive, subject to the following conditions:

1. Any required grading shall maintain existing drainage patterns or improve the existing drainage of the lot and adjacent lots;
2. The Applicants shall obtain all necessary permits and approvals from the City and other applicable entities with jurisdiction over the Property prior to any construction;
3. The Applicants are responsible for all fees incurred by the City in review of this application; and
4. The variance approval is valid for one year from the date of approval and will become void and expire unless a building permit has been issued for the site.

This resolution was adopted by the City Council of the City of Minnetrista on the 9th day of September, 2026 by a vote of ___ Ayes and ___ Nays.

Lisa Whalen, Mayor

ATTEST:

Ann Meyerhoff, City Clerk

EXHIBIT A

Legal Description of 960 Maple Crest Drive:

Lot 8, Block 1, Maple Crest Estates, Hennepin County, Minnesota