STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS
COUNTY OF DEKALB)

ORDINANCE O2026-008

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR AN EVENT VENUE ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 27872 MOOSE RANGE ROAD IN SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP

WHEREAS, Brian & Kathi Sell are seeking a Special Use Permit to establish and operate an event venue in the form of a youth theater called Red Barn Productions on the property at 27872 Moose Range Road, in Sycamore Township, said subject property being legally described as shown in Exhibit "A", attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, following due and proper notice by publication in the Daily Chronicle not less than fifteen (15) nor more than thirty (30) days prior thereto, and by mailing notice to all owners of property abutting the subject property at least ten (10) days prior thereto, the DeKalb County Hearing Officer conducted a public hearing on May 7, 2026, at which the petitioners presented evidence, testimony, and exhibits in support of the petition, and wherein testimony and correspondence was received from twenty-nine members of the public expressing their support of the project; and

WHEREAS, the Hearing Officer having considered the evidence, testimony and exhibits presented has made his findings of fact and recommended that the Special Use Ordinance be approved with conditions, as set forth in the Report of Proceedings and Recommendation of the DeKalb County Hearing Officer, a copy of which is appended hereto as Exhibit "B"; and

WHEREAS, the Planning, Zoning, & Development Committee of the DeKalb County Board having considered the testimony and exhibits from the public hearing and having considered the findings of fact and recommendation of the Hearing Officer, has forwarded to the County Board a recommendation of approval, with conditions, of the requested Special Use Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the DeKalb County Board having considered the Report of Proceedings and Recommendation of the Hearing Officer and the recommendation of the Planning, Zoning, & Development Committee, and has determined that granting the Special Use Permit to allow the operation of an event venue in the form of a youth theater on the subject property would be consistent with the requirements established by Section 53-I-2.B.3 of the DeKalb County Code;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNTY BOARD OF DEKALB COUNTY, ILLINOIS, as follows:

SECTION ONE: The Report of Proceedings and Recommendation of the DeKalb County Hearing Officer, Exhibit "B", attached hereto, is hereby adopted as the findings of fact and conclusions of the DeKalb County Board.

SECTION TWO: Based on the Findings of Fact set forth above, the request for a Special Use Permit to allow the operation of an event venue in the form of a youth theater called Red Barn Productions on the subject property located at 27872 Moose Range Road, in Sycamore Township, is hereby approved, said property being legally described in Exhibit "A" attached hereto.

SECTION THREE: This approval of a Special Use Permit is subject to the following conditions:

1. The property shall be developed and operated in substantial conformity to the plans and exhibits submitted as part of the petitioner's Special Use Permit application and presented at the public hearing.

2. The special use shall be limited to the existing red barn, which is to be utilized for the youth theater, and the associated parking areas. Said youth theater shall be for productions wherein the actors will be minors between the ages of 8 – 18.

3. The remaining areas of the property shall be reserved for the private use of the residents and not used for event activities. These areas shall be properly locked and secured from public access. If in the future the petitioners wish to incorporate these areas as part of the event venue, they have to seek and receive approval for an amendment to the special use ordinance.

4. Productions:
    a. Up to six (6) theatrical productions may occur in a given calendar year, and the production schedule shall be in substantial conformity to the Production Calendar submitted with the special use petition, included as Exhibit "C" attached hereto.
    b. Performances shall only occur on Thursdays, Fridays, and/or Saturdays.
    c. The hours of operation for the theater shall end no later than 10:00 pm on Friday or Saturday nights, and no later than 9:00 pm on any other given night.
    d. The maximum attendance allowed for a given performance shall not exceed eighty (80) persons.
        i. If the existing parking area is expanded to be able to accommodate at least forty (40) parking spaces that meet the requirements of this ordinance, then the maximum attendance allowed for a given performance shall not exceed one hundred (100) persons. Said expansion must occur within two (2) years of the approval of this ordinance.

5. Workshops:
    a. No more than six (6) theatrical workshops for minors may occur in a given calendar year.
    b. Workshops may host a maximum of up to thirty (30) minors, aged 8-18.
    c. Workshops may have a maximum duration of no longer than three (3) hours.

6. At the start of each calendar year, the operators of the theater shall provide the Community Development Department with a Master Calendar detailing: the exact dates of the rehearsals and performances for all productions to occur in that year; and, the exact dates and times of all workshops to take place in that year.

7. Parking -
    a. The venue must maintain a minimum number of parking spaces equal to approximately one (1) parking space per every two and a half (2.5) seats, based on maximum capacity.
        i. For the indicated capacity of eighty (80) persons, a minimum of thirty-two (32) parking spaces shall be provided, each with a minimum width of nine (9) feet and minimum length of nineteen (19) feet. And all drive aisles shall be at least twenty-two (22) feet in width.
    b. The parking for the venue shall meet the requirements of the Illinois Accessibility Code.
        i. Parking areas containing twenty-five (25) to fifty (50) parking spaces is required to have at least two (2) accessible parking spaces, along with accessible pathways connecting these parking spaces to the venue.
        ii. Accessible parking spaces shall be at least sixteen (16) feet wide, and nineteen (19) feet in length, and appropriately striped and signed. Additionally, accessible parking spaces and pathways shall have a hard surface.
    c. All parking areas shall maintain a setback of at least five (5) feet from any property line.
    d. The requirement that the parking area be paved, curbed, and contain interior landscaping shall be waived. (This waiver does not apply to the requirements of the Illinois Accessibility Code.)
    e. All gravel spaces shall be provided with wheel stops.
    f. Screening shall be provided between the parking area and the residential property to the north. Said screening shall consist of an unpierced wall or screen, or compact evergreen planting not less than four feet in height. Any plantings shall be maintained in good condition and not encroach on adjoining property.
    g. The petitioners shall submit a revised parking plan, drawn to scale, that will demonstrate that it will meet all parking standards required.

8. Required Permits – The following shall be submitted, along with any required fees, and receive approval prior to operation of the venue.
    a. A Site Development Permit.
    b. A Building Permit for the existing "red barn", which is to house the theater, to demonstrate that it is in compliance with the currently adopted Building Codes for commercial buildings, including provisions for fire protection. All Building Permits must be prepared, signed and stamped by an Illinois licensed Architect or Engineer. Said structure shall demonstrate that it is in compliance prior to being utilized as a theater.
    c. Sign Permits for any proposed signage.
    d. Copies of the Accessibility Compliance Forms completed, signed, and sealed by an architect or engineer registered with the State of Illinois, verifying that all public areas, including but not limited to: the buildings and structures accessible to the public; outdoor public gathering areas; and the parking area, will meet the required Federal and State Accessibility Codes.

e. Verification that they have received all the required permits and approvals from the DeKalb County Health Department.
f. Verification that the petitioners have received the necessary approvals for the plumbing from the State Plumbing Inspector.
g. The operators shall submit a revised site plan reflecting any changes that may be required by the County Board as part of the approval process.

SECTION FIVE: This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon its adoption by the County Board of DeKalb County, Illinois.

PASSED BY THE COUNTY BOARD THIS 17TH DAY OF JUNE, 2026, A.D.

ATTEST:

Tasha Sims
DeKalb County Clerk

SIGNED:

John Frieders, Chair
DeKalb County Board

Exhibit "A"

Legal Description of the Subject Property

That part of the North Half of Section 15, Township 41 North, Range 5 East of the Third Principal Meridian, described as follows: Commencing at the Northwest corner of the Northeast Quarter of said Section 15; thence South, (bearing assumed for descriptive purposes), along the West Line of said Quarter, 493.0 feet; thence North 89° 40' 30" East, 0.48 feet to the centerline of Moose Range Road for a point of beginning: thence continuing North 89° 40' 30" East, 640.0 feet; thence South 0° 19' 30" East, at right angle to the last described course, 320.0 feet; thence South 89° 40' 30" West, 700.39 feet to the centerline of said road; thence North 10° 21' 44" East, along said centerline, 325.65 feet to the point of beginning, containing 4.92 Acres, all in Sycamore Township, DeKalb County, Illinois.

P.I.N.: 06-15-200-022

Exhibit B

Duane and Lynn Sell - SY-26-05
Petition for Special Use - Youth Theater
Report and Recommendations

Petition:	SY-26-05
Date of Hearing:	May 7, 2026
Published Hearing Time:	3:00 p.m.
Location:	DeKalb County Legislative Center Gathertorium 200 North Main Street Sycamore, IL

Report of Proceedings and Recommendation

I. Summary of Proceedings

Duane and Lynn Sell have submitted an application for special use in order to allow their tenants, Brian and Kathy Sell, to continue operating a youth theater on the subject property, known as Red Barn Productions. Presently, without prior authorization, Red Barn Productions has been operating for several years. The subject property is located at 27872 Moose Range Road, Sycamore, Illinois.

The property is zoned A-1, Agricultural.

At the hearing, present for the County were Derek Hiland, DeKalb County Planning Director, and Marcellus Anderson, Assistant Director. The tenants operating the theater on the property, Brian and Kathy Sell, were present for the public hearing,

Received into the record at hearing were the following documents and information:

1. Public Notice and the legal description of the subject property.
2. DeKalb County Staff Report, with staff comments and recommendations, and attachments.

3. Correspondence and information from other responsible County agencies and/or other appropriate agencies, including the DeKalb County Health Department indicating some concerns and recommendations.

4. The petition and attachments submitted by the Sells, with attachments.

5. The following written submissions from the public were received and are part of the record:

a. John and Brianne Bradley, in support of the application;
b. Kathy Lampkins, in support of the application;
c. Mike, MaryEllen, and Ella Jones, in support of the application;
d. Paul and Alysa Radtke, in support of the application;
e. Jim and Renelle Carmichael, in support of the application;
f. Cody and Jessica Lingle, in support of the application.f

6. The petitioners power point presentation, presented at hearing.

To commence the hearing, Assistant Director Anderson provided a brief synopsis of the procedural status, and the necessity of a public hearing on the application in order for the county to later consider the application. Thereafter, Brian and Kathy Sell, the operators of Red Barn Productions, presented their information, by testimony and a power point presentation.

In their presentation, the petitioners described the property, the areas of use on the property by Red Barn Productions, and stated that the youth theater had been in operation since August of 2020. They stated that the production is youth-oriented, with a religious component, to provide opportunities for youth to be engaged in the theater and theater production. Their presentation focused on the youth-ministry aspect of their operations, and there were several persons who spoke in favor of the current operations, its impact on them personally or their children, and in support of the continued operation of Red Barn Production on the premises.

Brian and Kathy Sell described the seasons for their two major productions, which each run for several weeks, and the anticipated participation and public attendance level. They also described the maximum anticipated persons on the property at any one time, as being one-hundred (100) persons. They noted that rehearsals would end at 9:00 p.m. at the latest, on Fridays, but earlier on Saturdays. They indicated the performances on Fridays usually end at 10:00 p.m.

They were unsure of the total number or types of shows that they anticipate, and indicated there may be a Christmas show as well. They wanted a rather open-ended ticket, so to

speak, and wanted the ability to come to the county to "let them know" from time to time. They were informed that a special use, if granted, is an otherwise prohibited activity on A-1, Agricultural-zoned property, is an exception, and that defined terms and compliance with the authorizing ordinance will be required.

They also inquired if some fees and costs could be waived, since they were a religious, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) entity (by their statement). They were informed that all applicable fees and costs had to be paid, and that the county can show neither favor nor disfavor to their application based on any religious or non-profit status. The applicable criteria and fee schedules are applied to all applicants equally.

They acknowledged receipt of the county staff report, and the items that would need to be brought up to the applicable building code requirements, including emergency exit doors, electrical, septic, the need for hard-surfaced handicapped parking, etc. They indicated that there was space available for overflow parking, but it was grass-covered. There was discussion on the record of the need for gravel for this area.

Director Hiland described for the petitioners and the members of the public who were present, that the applicable county codes are designed to ensure the safety of persons on the premises, and designed to ensure compliance and compatibility with the public-policy stated agricultural priority of property zoned A-1, Agricultural. He noted that the barn being used as a production and theater barn was not originally designed for that purpose, but was an agricultural use barn. It may or may not be sufficient for the current, unauthorized, use, and that is why the codes exist. If a premises is open to the public, as this space appears to be and is being requested to be going forward, it must comply with the applicable parking, building, septic codes, etc. as does any premises being operated in such a manner that is open to the public.

Some folks indicated dissatisfaction with the length of time it is taking, in their opinion, for county approval and for this process. They requested that the application be "expedited". I would point out that the county exercised due diligence, in the opinion of this hearing officer, from start to finish. According to the record, the petitioners were notified of the need for application and ultimately county approval mid-fall of last year, but did not file their application until many months later. This public hearing was heard at the first available opportunity following the petitioner's application, and the required public notice.

The petitioners requested that they be allowed to continue to operate while their application is pending with the county. Director Hiland stated it was his position that doing so would not be safe or in the interests of the public, until all final recommended safety and code compliance was completed. He believed it best to err on the side of safety out of an abundance of caution, as the premises is anticipated to be open to the general public.

I concur entirely with Director Hiland on that issue. The county code is to be applied equally, without favor or disfavor, to all applicants, and it was duly enacted by the elected representatives of the county. In short, it is the law of the land, for the purposes of the application, code compliance, and the hearing process, and has been enacted for the general health and welfare of the public under its jurisdiction. The fact that there does not seem to have been any injurious actions suffered by the public during the preceding and unauthorized operations of Red Barn is not persuasive and does not negate the necessity for code safety compliance by the applicants before permitting access to members of the public.

The following persons offered public comment in support of the application:

Anne Scharlau
David Larson
Deborah Kern
Amanda Ross
Leah Brooks
Bonnie Lopez
Kim Robers
David Finley
Jessica Dagner
Vicki Rosas
Sarah Oliver
McKenna Sell
Claudia Teckenbrock
Diann Slusser
Tyler Gayle
Cody Sell
Lynne Sell

II. Analysis of Section 53-I-2.B.3 Criteria

1. The proposed special use complies with all applicable provisions of the applicable district regulations.

I find that the proposed special use for the petition can or will comply with all applicable district regulations. I would note the requirements outlined in the county staff report are reasonable, and in the public interest.

2. The proposed special use will not be unreasonably detrimental to the value of other property in the neighborhood in which it is to be located or the public welfare at large.

I find that the proposed special use for the petition will not be unreasonably detrimental to the value of other property in the neighborhood, or the public welfare at large. Visually, it is indistinguishable from other barns and outbuilding structures present throughout the county, and is situated in a relative "pocket" on the property, with surrounding vegetation.

3. The location and size of the special use, the nature and intensity of the operation involved in in or conducted in connection with it, and the location of the site with respect to streets giving access to it are such that the special use will not dominate the immediate neighborhood so as to prevent the development and use of neighboring property in accordance with the applicable zoning district regulations. In determining whether the special use will so dominate the immediate neighborhood, consideration shall be given to:

A. The location, nature and height of buildings, structures, walls, and fences on the site; and

B. The nature and extent of proposed landscaping and screening on the proposed site.

I find that the location, nature, and height of buildings, structure, walls, and structures on the site, and the nature and extent of the current and county-recommended landscaping and screening on the site is appropriate for the type/nature of the operations proposed and will not dominate the immediate neighborhood so as to prevent the development and use of neighboring properties. Indeed, the neighboring landowners were present and indicated no opposition to the project.

4. Off-street parking and loading areas will be provided in accordance with the standards set forth in these regulations.

Petitioner has or will address these issues in a satisfactory manner consistent with the standards set forth in these regulations, in the opinion of the hearing officer. Again, the county staff report contains certain recommendations in this regard, and the petitioners, in the opinion of the hearing officer, should comply with those recommendations.

5. Adequate utility, drainage, and other such necessary facilities have been or will be provided.

There was no information submitted indicating any property issues concerning drainage. The petitioners indicated they have been and will remain in contact with the DeKalb County Health Department regarding septic and waste issues, and will comply with all regulations in this regard.

6. The proposed uses, where such developments and uses are deemed consistent with good planning practice, or can be operated in a manner that is not detrimental to the permitted developments and uses in the district; can be developed and operated in a manner that is visually compatible with the permitted uses in the surrounding area; shall in all other respects conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located; and are deemed essential or desirable to preserve and promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of DeKalb County.

The proposed use is deemed consistent with good planning practice. The nature of the proposed use will have nominal impact on the agricultural land, due to its location in the "pocket" on the subject property. No new structures are anticipated or projected. Again, visually, it is indistinguishable from other home/outbuilding properties prevalent throughout the county.

III. Recommendations

Based on the above and foregoing, I hereby recommend that the application for special use in petition SY-26-05 be approved by the county. This recommendation is conditioned on petitioners complying with the agreed-upon recommendations from county staff, and full compliance with all building code requirements, costs, and fees, including well and septic as may be required. The hours of operation should not exceed 10:00 p.m. on Friday or Saturday evenings, and not exceed 9:00 p.m. on any other given night. By hours of operation, it intended that all vehicles and members of the public should be off of the property by those times. Further, the type and nature of the productions should be specifically delineated in the approval ordinance, if the county is inclined to approve, and should be substantially as testified to by petitioners at the public hearing.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale J. Clark
Hearing Officer

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Exhibit C

Schedule A
Calendar Summary

August	Auditions for Fall Production (4 hours, <31 Cast), Weekend Rehearsals (7 hours/weekend)
September	Weekend Rehearsals (7 hours/weekend, <31 Cast)
October	2 rehearsal weekends (7 hours/weekend, <31 Cast) 5 weeknight rehearsals (5:30-8:30); 7 performances (2 weekends)
November	OFF (possibly adding audition night and 4 weekend rehearsals)
December	OFF (possible Winter Audition Night; adding 2 weekend rehearsals, 1 weekend performance)
January	Weekend Rehearsals (7 hours/weekend)
February	Weekend Rehearsals (7 hours/weekend)
March	2 rehearsal weekends, 5 weeknight rehearsals (5:30-8:30); 7 performances (2 weekends)
April	OFF
May	Auditions for summer productions (4 hours)
June	2 junior productions: morning rehearsals, weekend performances; 1 senior production:
July	OFF

Schedule B
Calendar - Detail

Month	Activity	Time	Total Time	People
August	Auditions	6-10pm	4 hours	< 40 Kids
	Rehearsals	6-9pm (Fridays) 9:30am-2pm (Saturdays)	3 hours 4.5 hours	< 31 Cast < 31 Cast
September	Rehearsals	6-9pm (Fridays) 9:30am-2pm (Saturdays)	3 hours 4.5 hours	< 31 Cast < 31 Cast
October	Rehearsals	6-9pm (Fridays) 9:30am-2pm (Saturdays)	3 hours 4.5 hours	< 31 Cast < 31 Cast
	Tech Week 1	5:30-8:30 (Monday-Wednesday)	3 hours	< 31 Cast, <10 Crew
	Shows	5:30-9pm	3.5 hours	< 31 Cast, < 10 Crew

	Weekend 1	(Thursday - Friday) 6:30-8:30pm (Thursday - Friday) 12:30-9pm (Saturday) 1:30- 3:30pm (Saturday)	 (2 hours) 8.5 hours 2.0 hours	 < 80 Audience < 31 Cast, < 10 Crew < 80 Audience
	Tech Week 2	5:30-8:30 (Wednesday-Thursday)	3.0 hours	< 31 Cast, <10 Crew
	Shows Weekend 2	5:30-9pm (Friday) 6:30-8:30pm (Friday) 12:30-9pm (Saturday) 1:30- 3:30pm (Saturday)	3.5 hours (2 hours) 8.5 hours 2.0 hours	< 31 Cast, < 10 Crew < 80 Audience < 31 Cast, < 10 Crew < 80 Audience
	Cast Party	6-9pm (Friday)	3.0 hours	< 31 Cast
November				
December				
January	Auditions Rehearsals	6-10pm 6-9pm (Fridays) 9:30am-2pm (Saturdays)	4 hours 3 hours 4.5 hours	< 40 Kids < 31 Cast < 31 Cast
February	Rehearsals	6-9pm (Fridays) 9:30am-2pm (Saturdays)	3 hours 4.5 hours	< 31 Cast < 31 Cast
March	Rehearsals Tech Week 1 Shows Weekend 1	6-9pm (Fridays) 9:30am-2pm (Saturdays) 5:30-8:30 (Monday-Wednesday) 5:30-9pm (Thursday - Friday) 6:30-8:30pm	3 hours 4.5 hours 3 hours 3.5 hours (2 hours)	< 31 Cast < 31 Cast < 31 Cast, <10 Crew < 31 Cast, < 10 Crew < 80 Audience

		(Thursday - Friday)		
		12:30-9pm (Saturday) 1:30- 3:30pm (Saturday)	8.5 hours 2.0 hours	< 31 Cast, < 10 Crew < 80 Audience
	Tech Week 2	5:30-8:30 (Wednesday-Thursday)	3.0 hours	< 31 Cast, <10 Crew
	Shows Weekend 2	5:30-9pm (Friday)	3.5 hours	< 31 Cast, < 10 Crew
		6:30-8:30pm (Friday)	(2 hours)	< 80 Audience
		12:30-9pm (Saturday) 1:30- 3:30pm (Saturday)	8.5 hours 2.0 hours	< 31 Cast, < 10 Crew < 80 Audience
	Cast Party	6-9pm (Friday)	3.0 hours	< 31 Cast
April				
May	Auditions	*3-5pm (Thursday) *6-8pm (Thursday) 10 minute time slots	4 hours	< 49 Cast
June	**Week 1 Junior Musical**			
	Rehearsals	9am-12:30pm (Monday-Thursday)	3.5 hours	< 25 Cast, < 10 Crew
		*4-8pm (Friday)	4.0 hours	< 25 Cast, < 10 Crew
	Show 1	6:30 - 8pm (Friday) 9am-11am (Saturday)	1.5 hours 2.0 hours	< 80 Audience < 25 Cast, < 10 Crew
	Show 2	9:30-11am (Saturday)	1.5 hours	< 80 Audience
	Week 2 Junior Musical			
	Rehearsals	9am-12:30pm	3.5 hours	< 24 Cast, < 10 Crew

		(Monday-Thursday)		
	Show 1	*4-8pm (Friday) 6:30 - 8pm (Friday)	4.0 hours 1.5 hour	< 24 Cast, < 10 Crew < 80 Audience
	Show 2	9am-11am (Saturday) 9:30-11am (Saturday)	2.0 hours 1.5 hours	< 24 Cast, < 10 Crew < 80 Audience
	Week 3 **Senior Drama**			
	*Auditions	*9am-Noon	3.0 hours	< 24 Cast
	Rehearsals	9am-3pm (Monday-Thursday)	6.0 hours	< 24 Cast
	Show 1	3pm-8pm (Friday) 6:30 - 8pm (Friday)	5.0 hours 1.5 hours	< 24 Cast, < 10 Crew < 80 Audience
	Show 2 & 3	3pm-8pm (Saturday) 3:30-5pm (Saturday) 6:30-8pm (Saturday)	5.0 hours 1.5 hours 1.5 hours	< 24 Cast, < 10 Crew < 80 Audience < 80 Audience
July				

Exhibit C

Exhibit C

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