

PORTER COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2020

The regular meeting of the Porter County Plan Commission was held at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 22, 2020 in the Porter County Administrative Center, 155 Indiana Avenue, Suite 205, Valparaiso, Indiana. Rick Burns presided.

Members present were: Laura Blaney, Brian Damitz, Nikky Witkowski, Luther Williams, Bob Poparad, and Rick Burns. Mike Mirochna arrived late. Also present were Robert Thompson, Kristy Marasco, Attorney Scott McClure, Kelly Cadwell, Helene Pierce, citizens, and representatives of the press.

MINUTES:

Laura Blaney made a motion to approve the October 2, 2019 and November 21, 2019 regular meeting minutes as submitted. Nikky Witkowski seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried 6-0.

COORESPONDENCE:

Robert Thompson introduced and welcomed Bob Poparad to the Plan Commission Board.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

President: Bob Poparad nominated Rick Burns. Laura Blaney seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried 6-0.

Vice-President: Laura Blaney nominated Bob Poparad. Luther Williams seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried 6-0.

Board of Zoning Appeals Representative: Bob Poparad nominated Brian Damitz. Nikky Witkowski seconded the nomination. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried 6-0.

Development Review Commission Representative: Rick Burns nominated Kevin Breitzke. Laura Blaney seconded the nomination. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

DW-19-0045 (continued) – Lee Major Subdivision, c/o Grace Cruz and Nancy Lee, 250 West 550 North, in Center Township in the R2, Medium Density Single-family Residential District. Petitioner requests the allowance of individual drive off of County Road 250 West (with approximate 50-foot separation), for a proposed fifteen (15) lot subdivision. Mr. Charles Parkinson, Mr. Scott Civanich, and Ms. Nancy Lee presented. Attorney Scott McClure advised there are six (6) members present, therefore, a vote of five (5) in favor is needed to pass. Mike Mirochna arrived during opening comments. Mr. Charles Parkinson advised this item was again continued from last month and the petitioner has continued to make changes based on public and Board Member comments.

There is no platting yet, however, the project allows for two roads to enter off of 250 West. Posted speed limit is 25 mph. We are now requesting eight (8) lots on the west side of 250 West. We started at 13, went down to 10 and we are now down to 8. This is the same number of lots located across the street. The lots are 120 feet wide. The petitioner has committed to widening 250 West and bringing it to County standards. The petitioner has also committed to installing a deceleration lane off 550 North. A traffic study was performed for this area and the proposed development will be insignificant to increased traffic. We respectfully request a favorable recommendation this evening.

Motion: Laura Blaney made a motion to reopen the public hearing based on any new information provided in opening comments. Brian Damitz seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried 7-0.

Public Hearing:

Rick Burns asked if any of the public would like to speak in favor of or in opposition of this case. Rick Burns also asked that the public address their questions to the Plan Commission while at the same time the petitioner will take notes and respond at one time.

Mr. Barney Harding, 577 N 550 W, states he was not notified of this meeting. Attorney Scott McClure advised this case was continued from previous meeting dates therefore notice was not required.

Mr. Rick Staresina, 575 N 250 W, questioned how residents will access lot 2, and noted that having a driveway at the Springhill Drive intersection is dangerous.

Ms. Tiffany Rogers, 289 Kingston Drive, asked that all previous meeting comments be taken into consideration and for the Member to consider the traffic that will now be cutting through her subdivision.

Petitioner's Rebuttal:

- Many of the previous comments pertained to drainage and storm water and other items that will be discussed in detail during platting.
- As proposed, there is an existing house on lot 1. Lot 2 will share the existing driveway and there will be a driveway easement agreement in place.
- Driveway placement will be addressed during platting.

The public hearing was closed, and questions/comments were heard from the Members.

Q: How deep are the lots?

A: Approximately 162 feet. All of the proposed development area is owned by the same owner.

Q: Platting will work through all driveway distance, width, etc. Requirements?

A: Yes.

Q: Is the proposed deceleration lane going to create or cause more passing issues?

A: Robert Thompson advised best practices will be used during the platting process based on the length of the road, distance for stopping, etc.

Motion: Bob Poparad made a motion to approve Case DW-19-0045 for eight (8) driveways. Nikky Witkowski seconded the motion. A ballot vote was taken, and unanimously carried 7-0.

STAFF ITEMS:

February Meeting: Mr. Robert Thompson advised February's meeting will have solar farms cases on it. There seems to be an increased interest in solar farms so staff is working on an Ordinance for solar farm regulations.

Planning Training: Ms. Nikky Witkowski passed out a flier to all Members regarding an American Citizens Planning Training Session coming up online and via workshop. All are welcome.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the January 22, 2020 Porter County Plan Commission meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Rick Burns, President

Attest: Robert W. Thompson, AICP
Director