

PORTER COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 23, 2021

The regular meeting of the Porter County Plan Commission was held at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 23, 2021 in the Porter County Administrative Center, 155 Indiana Avenue, Suite 205, Valparaiso, Indiana. Bob Poparad presided.

Members present were: President Rick Burns, Kevin Breitzke, Brian Damitz, Mike Mirochna, and Luther Williams. Also present were Robert Thompson, Kristy Marasco, Attorney Scott McClure, Helene Pierce, citizens, and representatives of the press.

MINUTES:

Mike Mirochna made a motion to approve the March 24 and January 28, 2021 meeting minutes as submitted. Kevin Breitzke seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and unanimously carried 5-0.

COORESPONDENCE:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

ZO-21-0032 & ZO-21-0033 – Porter County Board of Parks & Recreation, Brinka Cross Gardens, 445 East Furness Road, Michigan City, IN in Pine Township in the RR, Rural Residential District and Hawk Ridge, 445 East 1600 North, Michigan City, IN in Pine Township in the RR, Rural Residential District. The petitioner is requesting to rezone land from RR, Rural Residential District to P1, Parks and Recreation District. Ms. Jackie Nadeau and Mr. Craig Kenworthy presented. The purpose of this rezone is so the existing park is property zoned. Nothing will change. The park is existing and will remain in this location as a park.

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.

The following members of the public spoke in opposition to the proposal:

- Sarah Miller, 479 E Furness Road, Michigan City.
- David Miller 479 E Furness Road, Michigan City.
- Louise Touche, 447 E Furness Road, Michigan City.
- Paul Gordon, 514 E 1600 N, Michigan City.
- Tom Smith, 479 E Furness Road, Michigan City.
- Rachel Ingotti, 442 E Furness Road, Michigan City.

Those in opposition cited items such as:

- Long term impacts.
- Homeowner's privacy.
- Not wanting further park development.
- Trash in homeowner's yards/property.
- Trespassing.
- Not knowing future development plans of the park or having input.

Rebuttal:

- There seems to be a lot of misunderstanding with what the request is. The park is in existence and in working order and will remain that way. All they are asking for is the zoning district to match what is there. It's a passive park, will always be a passive park, and the zoning district should represent that.
- They are not expanding, changing anything, developing anything, increasing wildlife, etc.
- We do plan to restore the existing wetlands at some point and restore the natural habitat. Both of these already exist.
- The park is maintained to the best of the County's ability. Staff members cannot police everything. We have trash receptacle and proper trail signage but will consider more of both and no trespassing signage.
- P1 is an in-perpetuity zoning and will not allow the building of homes, etc. Remaining RR would allow a lot of different kinds of development.

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

Attorney Scott McClure noted that the property is park owned and exists as a park and therefore needs to be properly zoned. If there is ever a future plan to expand it would have to go through the public process as all other items. P1 does not work against property owners.

Motion: Kevin Breitzke made a motion to favorably recommend ZO-21-0032 (Brinka Crossing) to the County Commissioners as presented. Mike Mirochna seconded the motion. A ballot vote was taken and unanimously carried 5-0.

Motion: Kevin Breitzke made a motion to favorably recommend ZO-21-0033 (Hawk Ridge) to the County Commissioners as presented. Mike Mirochna seconded the motion. A ballot vote was taken and unanimously carried 5-0.

ZO-21-0034 – Clifford Road, LLC, c/o McMahon Associates, Inc, Trailyard, LLC, 2551 Clifford Road, Valparaiso, IN in Center Township in the I1, Light Industrial District. Petitioner is requesting to rezone parcel(s) of land from I1, Light Industrial District to CM, Moderate Intensity Commercial District. Mr. Kevin Coros and Mr. Chuck Gleason presented. Trailyard, LLC owns two (2) parcels of land at 2551 Clifford Road that they would like to rezone from I1 to CM. The property, formally known as, the Stroud Property, is being improved by Trailyard, LLC and will be used for the Trailyard Café and bicycle shop.

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. No one spoke; therefore, the public hearing was closed, and questions/comments were heard from the Members.

Q: Will the café and bike shop be in one building?

A: Yes.

Q: Will the existing house be removed?

A: Yes.

Q: Will the remaining building remain?

A: Yes.

Motion: Brian Damitz made a motion to favorably recommend ZO-21-0034 to the County Commissioners with the condition that the existing house is removed as in the presented plan and the two lots are combined into one. Mike Mirochna seconded the motion. A ballot vote was taken and unanimously carried 5-0.

DW-21-0039 – Josh Turner, County Road 125 West south of County Road 700 North, Valparaiso, IN in Liberty Township, in the RR, Rural Residential District. Petitioner is requesting a Design Waiver from storm water requirements from checklist Appendix III-2a (Major Subdivision) and to use checklist Appendix III-2b (Minor Subdivision) for Tuner Estates Major Subdivision. Mr. Josh Turner and Ms. Laura Brown presented. The petitioner is asking to use the minor subdivision check list for storm water requirements instead of the major subdivision checklist.

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. No one spoke; therefore, the public hearing was closed, and questions/comments were heard from the Members.

Bob Thompson advised that they petitioner will still have to go through the same engineering review regardless of which checklist is used. The major subdivision check list is very intensive and since this is ten (10) lots the minor subdivision check list will be adequate.

Motion: Kevin Breitzke made a motion to approve DW-21-0039 as presented. Mike Mirochna seconded the motion. A ballot vote was taken and unanimously carried 5-0.

STAFF ITEMS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the June 23, 2021 Porter County Plan Commission meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Rick Burns, President

Attest: Robert W. Thompson, AICP
Director