

PORTER COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION
July 28, 2021 – Meeting Minutes

LOCATION: County Administrative Center, Ste 205 TIME: 5:30 p.m.
155 Indiana Avenue, Valparaiso IN

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Luther Williams, Kevin Breitzke, Mike Mirochna, Rick Burns, Bob Gilliana, Nikky Witkowski, Brian Damitz. Bob Poparad and Laura Blaney were absent.

Rick Burns called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance.

Motion: Kevin Breitzke moved to approve the minutes from the June 23, 2021 meeting as presented. Mike Mirochna seconded the motion and so approved with a 7-0 vote

New Business

Rick Burns introduced Bob Gilliana who is the new member of the Plan Commission.

Case: ZO-21-0050

Applicant: East Porter County School Corporation

Location: 220 East 250 South, Valparaiso, IN 46383

Zoning: A1, General Agriculture District

Request: To rezone a parcel of land from (A1) General Agriculture District to (IN) Institutional District.

Wendy Kulczyk, Director of Business Affairs and Craig Kenworthy, Director of Facilities were present for the Applicant.

East Porter County schools is looking to build a road behind the schools. South of the school is the Morgan Township Fire Department. School traffic can be a problem if there is an emergency during the time school traffic is busy. At this time all they are doing is a road. There is a possibility that in the future they may be expanding the school building.

Public Hearing:

Celeste Coleman – 249 South Highway 49. She questioned where the road will come out. The same person owns another piece of property in the area. She wants to make sure it cannot be zoned industrial.

It was explained the new road will come out on 250. The property will not be zoned industrial. It is for the school and will be institutional.

Celeste Coleman – 249 South Highway 49. She asked if the new road will come out between two homes. What sort of traffic will this generate?

It was explained at this time the school does not anticipate any expansion. The addition of this new road will help with school traffic and emergency vehicles. This road will be for school use only. There will be traffic but they cannot determine how much. They feel it will be similar to what is there now.

Stephanie Tripp– 208 E 250 S. She asked if they intend to use Sycamore Drive. Currently this road is not paved and is not used. She also asked if there will be any stop signs or traffic lights.

It was explained Sycamore is not being incorporated in this project.

Seeing no one else wishing to address the Board, Rick Burns declared the Public Hearing closed.

Discussion:

Kevin Breitzke stated this helps with being able to hook up to sanitary sewer and water. The zoning classification is very limited use. It is Institutional Zoning.

Michael Mirochna asked if the number of school buses is approximately 10-15 and if the number of teachers is approximately 50. He was told that is correct.

Rick Burns asked if Sycamore is a private drive. Bob Thompson stated he is not sure but he will research and get an answer. Rick asked if they will put speed bumps or other speed reducing measures on the road. Bob Thompson replied that is up to the School Corporation.

Motion: Kevin Breitzke moved make a favorable recommendation to approve Case ZO-21-0050 with Institutional Zoning contingent on not using Sycamore Drive for access. Michael Mirochna seconded the motion and so approved with a 7-0 vote.

Bob Thompson announced this case will be heard before the Porter County Commissioners at their meeting on August 31, 2021 at 10:00 am.

Case: ZO-21-0052

**Applicant: Coolwood Associates LLC and Michael Cenar
NWI Crossings Industrial Park**

Location: 307 US Highway 6, Valparaiso, IN 46385

Zoning: CM, Moderate Intensity Commercial District

Request: To rezone parcel(s) of land from (CM) Moderate Intensity Commercial District to (L1) Light Industrial District.

Attorney Jeffrey Katz presented for the Applicant. He and James Lyons purchased this parcel of land 20 years ago. Since that purchase they have had no buyers for the property. Currently he has a contract to sell three acres on the south end. Therefore, he would like to keep the south end as Commercial zoning. He was approached by Stu Summers on behalf of the RDC to rezone the remaining property to Light Industrial. His request tonight is to rezone 47 of the 58 acres to Light Industrial.

Public Hearing:

Milton Glovatsky - 302 West 875 North. He asked if along Highway 6 is it currently zoned commercial. It was explained it is. He further asked what uses are allowed in Light Industrial. He stated at the north end of the property there is an air strip. Clearances will be required for airplanes.

Jessica Parks – 310 West US 6. She has rental spaces in the area. She wants to know how this will affect her tenants.

Anna Christopher – 810 N 330 W. She asked what uses are allowed and how it will affect her property.

Milton Glovatsky –302 West 875 North. He added to his previous statement that the air strip is registered with the State and FAA. The designation number is 3IN0.

Bob Thompson explained that Light Industrial is “clean industry”. No emissions are allowed. Outside storage is very limited. The maximum building height is 50’.

Jeffrey Katz showed a list of permitted uses in Light Industrial. This list is also on the web site. He added that right now the property is generating very little tax revenue. If it is developed this will increase tax revenue and create jobs.

Anna Christopher – 810 N 330 W. She asked about the sale contract Jeffrey Katz had mentioned. He explained it is for Casey’s and that parcel is not part of the rezoning request tonight.

Catherine Johnson - 892 North State Road 149. She stated Industrial sounds like a strong word. An assembly factory is much different than a strip mall.

Seeing no one else wishing to address the Board, Rick Burns declared the Public Hearing closed.

Attorney Scott McClure discussed the RDC has approached Jeffrey Katz in regard to the US 6 Overlay and the work the RDC is planning along US Highway 6. He explained Light Industrial is clean industry. There cannot be emissions from the businesses. Outside storage is very limited. This is all part of a larger plan to lift up the South Haven area.

Brian Damitz asked about the steps of a rezone. In the list of permitted uses, it had sexually oriented businesses.

It was explained that sexually oriented businesses has been removed from the list of permitted uses. After tonight’s meeting this goes before the Commissioners. It will then come back to the Plan Commission for platting. The Plan Commission can give a favorable recommendation but limit the uses allowed. The safety of the airport will be taken into account.

Nikky Witkowski stated she has looked it up and there are no restrictions for the neighboring runway.

Michael Mirochna asked why the RDC is involved. He asked why this is being done now. Attorney McClure explained the County has been doing a lot of work in the South Haven area. The RDC reached out to Jeffrey Katkz. This property might be made a TIF. Bob Thompson added they are trying to unify Highway 6. Michael Mirochna stated 10-15 years with no tax money due to the TIF district is not good. Scott McClure explained if the property becomes a TIF, the money will be required to be spent in that area.

Kevin Breitzke stated he is concerned if this becomes a TIF. He would like to see strict guidelines on nuisance. Scott McClure explained the Plan Commission hears any TIF requests.

Motion: Kevin Breitzke moved to make a favorable recommendation to approve Case ZO-21-0052 and rezone 47 acres to I1 Light Industrial District contingent on no sexually oriented businesses being allowed. Luther Williams seconded the motion and so approved with a 7-0 vote.

Bob Thompson announced this case will be heard before the Porter County Commissioners at their meeting on August 31, 2021 at 10:00 am.

Staff Items:

Bob Thompson advised he has talked to Bob Poparad and asked if in his absence he would agree that Rick Burns be able to sign documents. Bob is ok with this arrangement.

Motion: Kevin Breitzke moved to allow Rick Burns to sign documents on Bob Poparad's behalf in his absence. Michael Mirochna seconded the motion and so approved with a 7-0 vote.

Kristy Marasco advised that Monica Gee will be out of the office frequently due to health issues. Staff reports will be sent to Board members via e-mail. They are asked to print out any reports they want for the meeting and bring them with them. The packets of all the information will no longer be provided at the meetings.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the July 28, 2021 Porter County Plan Commission meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Rick Burns, Vice-President

Attest: Robert W. Thompson, AICP
Director