

Wabash County Plan Commission

Wabash County Courthouse • One West Hill Street, Suite 205 Wabash, IN 46992

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Wabash County Plan Commission Board

Board Members: Randy Curless, Jeff Dawes, Sam Hann, Mark Milam, Doug Rice, Christian Rosen, Geoff Schortgen, Cheri Slee, Joe Vogel

Staff: Mark Frantz, Board Attorney; Brian Campbell, Plan Director; Amanda Lyons, Administrative Assistant

Meeting Minutes of Thursday, April 4, 2024

Roll call was taken with the following present:

Board Members: Jeff Dawes, Sam Hann, Mark Milam, Doug Rice, Christian Rosen, Cheri Slee, Joe Vogel

Staff: Mark Frantz, Board Attorney; Brian Campbell, Plan Director; Amanda Lyons, Administrative Assistant

Absent: Randy Curless, Geoff Schortgen

Others present: Mark Thomas, Tamara Thomas, Sarah Hanes, Scott Hanes, Nicky Burnsworth, Cheryl Ross, Dave Blocher, Jim Bostwick, (speaking but not signed in) Spencer O'Dell

The Wabash County Plan Commission Board met on Thursday, April 4, 2024 in the Commissioners Meeting Room at the Wabash County Courthouse. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Board Vice Chairman Mr. Mark Milam.

Mr. Milam stated first on the agenda was a review of the minutes from the March 7, 2024 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Mr. Hann, second by Mr. Rosen. Roll call vote was taken; motion passed 7-0.

Mr. Milam then asked for an update on the Curt Arnett Unsafe Premise Order for the property located at 23 W Branson St, Liberty Twp. Mr. Campbell shared with the board that he had discussed the property with Mr. David Arnett, Curt's son. The company that was hired to work on the property is currently working across the street at David's property. When work is completed at that site, they intend to complete the work at 23 W. Branson Street. The work remaining includes the remaining roof repairs, repairs to the steps, and installing cellar style doors to secure the basement entrance. Mr. Campbell indicated he will continue to monitor progress, communicate with Arnett's, and have an update for the board at next month's meeting.

Next on the agenda was an Unsafe Premise Order update on the 320 Washington Street Land Trust property, located in Lagro Township. Mr. Frantz shared with the board that it has been filed in court. The property owner has 23 days to file an answer. If they fail to do so, the Plan Commission can get an order for demolition. Mr. Campbell added that he checked the site this week; there have been no changes.

Mr. Milam indicated next on the agenda was Rezone #2, a request by Eel River Enterprises to rezone two parcels in Paw-Paw Township from Industrial to General Business. Mr. Campbell shared with the board that the property is located at 7221 W State Road 16, Roann and the adjoining parcel to the west. Eel River Enterprises is working with AR Engineering to complete the rezone. The Roann Town Board has given their approval to the request. Mr. Campbell read into the record a letter received from Rob & Nancy Cussen (attached) indicating concerns they have with the proposal. Mr. Campbell added that given the concerns about asbestos, he had contacted Chris Straub with the Wabash County Health Department. He also stated Tamara (Costelow) Thomas had asked questions in the office; after reviewing the plans she had no concerns. Board members reviewed information provided by AR Engineering and the property on GIS. Mr. Rice asked if the structure is to be located on the east parcel, which is inside the Roann town limits, would the town set restrictions? Mr. Campbell explained no, the county would be responsible for any restrictions. He added that he felt many of the concerns mentioned in Cussen's letter are already addressed in the zoning ordinance. Mr. Spencer O'Dell, of AR Engineering, stated full engineered drawings would be submitted at the time of site plan approval. For the rezone hearing they are providing a concept plan for board review. Mr. O'Dell explained for the planned project, they were attempting to reduce the intensity by applying to rezone both parcels. Mr. Campbell explained that the east parcel is two separate parcels that have been combined for tax purposes. The intent from the plans is to build on the northeast portion of the east parcel. Ms. Slee asked if there were thoughts about developing the west parcel; Mr. Campbell indicated he was not aware of any at this time. Mr. Rosen stated he felt the placement of the structure would be good and allow protection for the homeowners. Mr. Milam then asked if there were any questions from those in attendance. Ms. Thomas pointed out on GIS that there is a retention pond area west of the parcels being reviewed, and that it does occasionally flood. The board reviewed the area and determined it appears the water flows across to the river. Ms. Slee reminded everyone that when plans are submitted drainage plans will need to be submitted as well per the stormwater ordinance, adding that they will have to retain water as per the ordinance. Board members discussed rezoning the east parcel as general business and the west as residential. Mr. Frantz explained a favorable recommendation could be given to the east and an unfavorable to the west parcel, but that would mean the west would remain industrial. As general business residences could be built on the west parcel per the zoning ordinance. Mr. Rice stated he felt general business was better for the adjoining property owners than industrial. There being no further questions or comments, Mr. Rice made a motion to give a favorable recommendation to the Wabash County Commissioners for the rezone of the two parcels presented to General Business; second by Mr. Dawes. The board proceeded to roll call vote; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Campbell then provided the board with a complaint update, stating:

- 82 open complaints in 2024
 - 43 complaints rolled over from 2023
 - 39 new complaints have been received in 2024
 - 16 complaints have been resolved in 2024
- Multiple calls have been received regarding a property with a mobile home at 25 N Perch Drive, Twin Lakes Estates, in Pleasant Township. The owner is deceased and the family has no interest in the property. There is a mortgage on the property and it has been previously listed for a sheriff's sale. That sale was cancelled as the mobile home was partially burnt. The Wabash County Sheriff's Department has confirmed their investigation is complete. Currently, the bank is not proceeding to attempt to collect on the mortgage and the property is left unattended. There is a considerable amount of clean-up to be done on the property and the mobile home would need to be removed. Board members discussed options with Mr. Frantz regarding waiting to see if the property would sell in a tax sale or using unsafe premise funds to clean up. Mr. Campbell indicated he is concerned

about using unsafe premise funds as he does not want to set a precedent. Mr. Frantz advised the board the property would likely go to tax sale next year, but it is unknown if it would sell in the current condition. He also cautioned the board that if funds are used to clean up the property a judgement or lien could be attached to the property, but the board should assume the fees would not be repaid in this situation. Board members requested that Mr. Campbell get an estimate for the clean up to review at the next meeting.

Mr. Milam asked if there was any other business to be brought before the board.

There being no further business, Mr. Milam asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Mr. Vogel to adjourn; second by Mr. Rosen. Vote taken; motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Amanda Lyons
Secretary, Wabash County Plan Commission

(bac)

**If any names are incorrect, spelled incorrectly, or omitted from the attendance in these minutes, we apologize.*