

**MERRILLVILLE PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2023
6:30 PM**

Plan Commission President Margaret Uzelac led the Meeting of the Merrillville Plan Commission at 6:30 PM to order and then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Members in attendance were Mr. Luke Rich, Mr. Ric Holtz, Councilman Jeff Minchuk, Councilman Shawn Pettit, Plan Commission Vice President Brian Dering, and Plan Commission President Margaret Uzelac.

MINUTES: MAY 16, 2023

Plan Commission Vice President Brian Dering made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Luke Rich. The Plan Commission voted 6 – 0 to approve minutes.

COMMUNICATIONS:

NONE

COMMENTS FROM CHAIRMAN

NONE

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

1. P5Pp2-0723 8257 LLC PETITIONER AND OWNER

Located at the intersection of 82nd & Grant Street
Request: Preliminary Planned Unit Development Approval on 4.8 Acres in a PUD
Purpose: Residential Duplexes

Developer Mr. Bruce Bozich came before the Plan Commission explaining the proposed town homes which will be two- story, two sided townhomes and there will also be some single -family homes as part of the proposed PUD.

Plan Commission Vice President Brian Dering inquired about access to the proposed site and whether a gravel Town road that is near the proposed site will be a semi private road, or a private road.

James Knuth of MECA Engineering explained that 82nd Avenue will be a dedicated Right-of-Way and that the property does extend to the north end of 82nd Avenue.

Bob Csanyi of Robinson Engineering stated that according to the Lake County GIS that 82nd Avenue looks like it is a dedicated road, however the north parcels that are on the plat actually go thru 82nd Avenue. He continued that Robinson Engineering requested that MECA Engineering review the plat to see how to utilize the lots, and it will need to be appropriately shown on the plat, also the ability of emergency vehicles to be able to drive thru and not drive around to get to the proposed site.

Councilman Shawn Pettit inquired if the petitioner was proposing to rebuild 82nd Avenue and dedicate it, or dedicate it to the Town.

Mr. Bozich stated that 31' of the property belongs to the Town, 100' belonged to the developer, but the Auditors' office showed 131'.

Plan Commission Vice President Brian Dering suggested that it would be best that the petitioner make this road a one- way street going West to Grant Street.

The petitioner stated that the single-family homes will have access from Grant Street, north of the detention pond.

There was a discussion about the length of 82nd Avenue.

Plan Commission Vice President Brian Dering stated that road will need to be rebuilt to the Town standards. He also inquired about the status of the valley on the proposed site.

Mr. Knuth stated that the high point of the proposed site is on the southeast portion of the property, and that the water is coming from offsite.

Town Engineer Steve King stated that Mr. John Dykstra of Robinson Engineering had several comments about the drainage that will need to be resolved.

Mr. Bob Csanyi of Robinson Engineering stated there are no regulated drains, there is no flood way or flood plain on the property, and there are no wetlands that are shown.

Councilman Shawn Pettit expressed that public comment will need to be heard after the Staff Report is read, and that this petition might need to be tabled.

Attorney Joseph Svetanoff stated that any public comments will be limited to three minutes per person, the comments must be related about the proposed subject, and there must be no repetitive comments.

Councilman Shawn Pettit stated that this proposed site is in Councilman Rick Bella's ward, and that he wanted to make sure that Councilman Rick Bella is aware of the project.

Town Engineer Steve King stated that the drainage review has been done, that comments were sent to MECA Engineering for their response, and that Stormwater Director Matt Lake is aware of the comments.

Mr. Bob Csanyi expressed that Robinson Engineering's surveyor has reviewed the plat and comments were forwarded over to MECA Engineering.

Plan Commission Brian Dering inquired if the residents to the north and to the south of this proposed project will be protected.

Mr. Steve King stated that they should be protected, and as the review process goes along, MECA will need to conform to the Town standards and the drainage standards, this might be a situation that will cause the petition to lose one of the lots.

Mr. Anthony Holloway of 1415 West 82nd Avenue commented that his property has flooded many times, and he stated that there are potholes on the road, and that there is a mistake with who owns the road.

Dawn Grant of 8129 Grant Street stated that Councilman Rick Bella had been to their property and had discussed that they were told that 82nd Street would not go all the way through since it would cut into a neighbors' land, and continued that she and the neighbors do not want the road to go all the way through.

Mr. Andrew Reiser of 8120 Lincoln Street specified that he does not want 82nd Avenue to go through.

Plan Commission Vice President Brian Dering stated that every document shows the road as 82nd Avenue, but it just needs to be verified who owns the 82nd Avenue.

Councilman Shawn Pettit inquired if the Lake County GIS shows a yellow right-of-way.

Steve King and Bob Csanyi stated that it does show a yellow right-of-way.

Attorney Joseph Svetanoff stated that the Towns engineering team will need to get together with the petitioners engineering team to determine who is the owner.

Lanita Greer of 1380 W 82nd Place inquired about the proposed project.

Melissa Peterson of 1500 W 82nd Place spoke against the project.

Plan Commission Vice President Brian Dering inquired will the petitioner keep as many trees as possible, and that the petitioner is requesting two curb cuts: one of the curb cuts would go into the main subdivision and the other would be private for the single family home, and that lot 13 needs to be addressed.

There was a discussion that the Staff Report and the Agenda will need to have Single Family Homes added in.

Mr. Bob Csanyi stated that James Knuth with MECA Engineering needs to make note of the proposed drive of Lot 18.

Councilman Jeff Minchuk made a motion to table this petition. The motion was seconded by Plan Commission Vice President Brian Dering.

Mrs. Trousdale of 1415 West 82nd Avenue inquired if the proposed project would have a circular drive leading into the proposed site.

Attorney Joseph Svetanoff suggested that the developer bring a copy of the sketch of the architectural rendering to hand out at the next meeting.

The Plan Commission voted 6 – 0 to table this petition.

Councilman Shawn Pettit informed those at the meeting that there will be three more chances to ask more questions at the next public meetings for this petitioner.

2. P6CPI-0723 STAMPD DEVELOPMENT, LLC PETITIONER & OWNER

Request: Located at 7905 Broadway
Conceptual Planned Unit Development Approval on 3.609 Acres in a
C-3, Highway Commercial Zoning District
Purpose: Retail, Restaurant and Commercial Services

Mr. Mel De Mao of Carmel, Indiana who is with STAMPD Development came before the Plan Commission and he submitted the exterior renderings and explained that this building design is the first of its kind for the State of Indiana.

Plan Commission President Margaret Uzelac inquired if the petitioner was going to change the roof design.

Mr. Del De Mao stated that he brought some rendering of various options of roof designs and explained the interior design of the State service unit.

Councilman Shawn Pettit stated that the State will have to accept the Towns roof guidelines and the design guidelines since this location is a busy corridor which is heavily traveled.

Attorney Joseph Svetanoff explained to the petitioner that the Town would like for the the proposed building to be esthetically appealing.

Councilman Shawn Pettit expressed to the petitioner that the Lincoln Junction strip mall is an excellent example of how this proposed project should look like.

The Plan Commission members discussed that the proposed plans for the front outlots are nicer than the State Service building.

The petitioner stated that one of the proposed outlots might be a bank and that he has been in communication with several banks.

Councilman Shawn Pettit recommended that the Plan Commission approve this for Conceptual Planned Unit Development with the conditions at Preliminary and Final that these buildings must meet the Towns' commercial design guidelines.

The Petitioner agreed to come back to the Plan Commission Workshop to design all of these proposed buildings to the Town guidelines.

Councilman Shawn Pettit made a motion to approve this petition with the conditions that all of these buildings will meet all the Town of Merrillville commercial design guidelines.

Mr. Ric Holtz seconded the motion.

The Plan Commission voted 6 – 0 to approve this petition.

Attorney Joseph Svetanoff expressed to the petitioner that if the petitioner can get the proposed BMV building to be designed like the front out-lot buildings, it would be a lot easier at the next meeting.

3. **P7Cp2-0723** **TOM FITZPARTICK, P.E./STORAGE OF AMERICA**
PETITIONER & BARBARA A. ALTERS OWNER

Located at 7300 US Lincoln Highway

Request: Conceptual Planned Unit Development Approval on 18.5 Acres
 In a C-3, Highway Commercial Zoning District and R-2, Residential
 District

Purpose: To allow a Storage Facility

Tom Fitzpatrick came before the Plan Commission.

Councilman Shawn Pettit stated that it seems to be aggressive to have 37 buildings, and that if the proposed site is going to be paved, he wants to be sure that it won't cause any flooding to the surrounding properties.

The petitioner stated that the stormwater needs would be met according to the State and according to the Town guidelines. The building that faces U.S. 30 will have a stone-like facade, there will also be wrought iron fence placed on the site, and the gate will have a key pad for entry. He said that the proposed project will be done in phases and each phase may take two to three years to complete, with seven to ten years to complete the whole project, however that could also change. Providing that this proposed project gets the needed approvals, then the petitioner will purchase the property from the owner.

Plan Commission Vice President Brian Dering inquired about the back view of the back end of the proposed project.

Attorney Joseph Svetanoff expressed that this proposed project will be completed in phases, and it is not known what will be done with the land on each side, and that the conditions should be set now so the conditions can stick into the future.

Councilman Shawn Pettit stated that the property to the north has well and septic, so there might not be any subdivision development there.

Councilman Shawn Pettit made a motion to approve this petition. The motion was seconded by Councilman Jeff Minchuk.

The Plan Commission voted 6 - 0 to approve this petition.

4. P8Cp3-0723 TOM FITZPATRICK, P.E./STORAGE OF AMERICA

Located at 1213 West US Highway 30

Request: Conceptual Planned Unit Development Approval on 18.5 Acres
In a C-s, Highway Commercial Zoning District and Planned Unit
Development

Purpose: To Allow a Storage Facility with Retail Commercial Offices facing US
30

Mr. Tom Fitzpatrick explained that the building would be architecturally appealing with brick half way up on the front of the building, and that there would be the wrought iron fence filling in the gaps between the buildings, around the office building, and the detention pond will be fenced. He stated that there was a wetland study done on the property, and that there is a flow ditch that goes along the property line on the east side which floods after a hard rain. He continued that one portion of the property might need a drainage pipe or a ditch. The petitioner may want to cut off the drainage that comes from the west and redirect it to the stormwater detention basin.

Councilman Shawn Pettit stated that the petitioner should check on the ratio of the parking for the proposed office.

Mr. Ric Holtz stated that the roof line looks like the roof of a pole barn.

Plan Commission Vice President Brian Dering stated that the petitioner will need to follow the Town's Design guidelines. He continued that the petitioner will need to maintain a tree line as a possible way to screen the storage lockers. He inquired if the adjacent property to the west was going to be landlocked.

There was a discussion and it was determined that the adjacent property to the west would not need to be landlocked.

Councilman Jeff Minchuk made a motion to approve this petition with the condition that the petitioner will have plenty of cameras and plenty of lights on the site for security, as well as an eight feet fence.

The petitioner added that he is proposing to do a fence with brick on the rear of the buildings on the east side, or a green screening.

Councilman Shawn Pettit suggested that the petitioner speak to Councilman Rick Bella regarding the proposed project.

Mr. Brian Dering seconded the motion.

The Plan Commission voted 6 – 0 to approve this petition,

OTHER BUSINESS

NONE

ADJOURNMENT

Plan Commission Vice President Brian Dering made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Ric Holtz seconded the motion. The Plan Commission meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marie Wilson,
Recording Secretary