MINUTES OF MEETING OF
WASHINGTON COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Held September 10, 2018
Washington County Conference Room

The Washington County Plan Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President, David Hoar. Board members present were David Hoar, Ervin Day, Mark Hartman, Anthony Scifres, Deirdra Miller, Todd Ewen, and Kevin Baird; absent were members Danielle Walker and Preston Shell. Board of Zoning Appeals members present were Max Greene, Anthony Scifres, and Mark Hartman; absent were Darrell Tye and John Mishler. Also present were the Commission's Attorney, John Mead, Plan Director Travis Elliott, Consultant, K.K. Gerhart-Fritz, and members of the public, Rhonda Greene, Rick Becht, and Michael Gettlefinger.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Deirdra Miller; David Hoar offered prayer.

Minutes of the August 6, 2018 meeting were reviewed. Upon motion by Anthony Scifres, second by Deirdra Miller, the minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

Plan Director Travis Elliott presented the re-plat of Dutch Park Subdivision being, Application #18-04, developed by Rick Becht. The former subdivision containing 17 lots has previously been abandoned. Kevin questioned whether the lots meet the minimum for spacing between driveway entrances. Becht has modified the plat so that Lots 3 and 4 share a common drive and an easement placed on Lot 3 for driveway access by Lot 4. The width on Lot 3 has been changed to 150'. Travis stated that the County highway superintendent has approved the driveway entrances.

There was additional discussion regarding drainage. Kevin stated elevations should be a part of the erosion control plan. Todd commented there was no problem with Rule 5. David noted that existing structures would be grandfathered. There are two (2) houses presently within the subdivision.

Becht stated that each lot would have an individual septic system. David commented that in subdivisions, the Commission's preference should be for a single entrance in and a single entrance out.

Travis stated that the County Health Director, Chris Boling, had commented that the re-plat was more acceptable because individual lots will have their own septic, but pointed out that each lot would still need to have a perk test. Becht stated that all lots have water.

Upon motion by Todd Ewen, second by Anthony Scifres, re-plat of Dutch Park Subdivision was unanimously approved.

Travis next presented application 18-03 filed by Michael Gettlefinger for a manure compost storage facility. Travis stated that everything is in order and gave a favorable recommendation. Upon motion by Anthony Scifres, second by Kevin Baird, the Commission unanimously approved the application.

David Hoar called upon K.K. Gerhart-Fritz. K.K. asked what zoning districts does the Commission want to have? She asked if anyone had reviewed the State agricultural model and suggested for everyone to review the model. She also inquired about the Jackson County Forestry reserve model and the Hendricks County ordinance. She had provided links to all of these in an e-mail prior to the meeting.

K.K. sent out a draft of zoning district purpose statements to be reviewed and discussed by the Commission. K.K. noted that in the A.G. General Agricultural District, the model also included rural residential. David asked about the location of AI Intensive Agricultural District.

There was discussion of the State model. K.K. stated that several counties have adopted the State model with variations. Kevin questioned if there is a category for ag tourism. He stated there needs to be clear protection for such businesses. K.K. responded that the Commission needs to decide what uses are appropriate in the various zones. John noted there are several small winery businesses in the County.

K.K. stated there are two (2) residential zone purposes – R1 would be low density; R2 would be a major subdivision, duplexes, apartment dwellings, and subdivisions with more then ten (10) lots.

K.K. also identified two (2) business zones – B1 would be general; B2 would be highway/business, and industrial zone. She also identified the Airport Overlay as a zone.

K.K. stated that the next step is to review the district purpose statements and then begin discussing and agreeing on the standards that would be applied in each of those zones. David commented that any area under ten (10) acres should be considered residential. K.K. noted that a zone designation is based on use and not on size.

There was discussion regarding how large a residential lot in an ag zone should be. K.K. is going to populate a table with standards to review. David asked the Board to work on and review the standards prior to the next meeting on October 1st. Todd commented there is a need for an ag section for roadside vendors and farm retailers. Ervin commented that if there is an influx of seasonal migrant workers, is housing for them residential or agricultural? It was commented that farm worker housing should be allowed as a special exception. David asked K.K. to draft a standard. The Commission thanked K.K. for attending.

Travis questioned if there is a grandfathered operation, would it be allowed to change from one species to another without going through the process, e.g. a turkey operation changed to a chicken operation. David commented that as long as the manure load is adequate, is the use appropriate or would it be non-conforming? Deirdra questioned how much difference is there in manure load? No decision was reached by the Board.

There was discussion regarding change of use, such as an equipment shed to a manure facility. Would this require variance before the Board of Zoning Appeals? Rhonda Greene commented that she felt such change should be presented to the BZA and stated that there is a need for interface with the community which results from a BZA hearing.

There was discussion regarding drainage from subdivisions.

Travis asked to review the ordinance regarding site distances for driveway entrances. Travis noted that different standards are being followed by the Highway Department and what's required in the ordinance. There are at least three (3) different areas – subdivisions, county driveways, and subdivision to county roads.

Travis' concern was with an Indiana Land subdivision on the North side of Skyline Road. There are safety issues because of the topography of the road and the location of the driveway entrances. The recorded subdivision plat actually shows locations for driveways. Trying to interpret the different rules is confusing; Travis suggesting developing one (1) standard. The subdivision in question is grandfathered.

David stated that we should insist on one (1) entrance for the subdivision onto the public road and not multiple entrances off of individual lots. Ervin commented there are several subdivision plats in the County where two (2) driveways are laid out side by side. K.K. stated standards could be adopted to address the issue of access to a county road.

There was question and discussion regarding when a subdivision plat is abandoned or whether an ordinance could be developed and adopted that established a period after which the plat is abandoned and the lots revert to a common area. Also to be considered is the requirement in approving a subdivision is that a percentage of the lots be developed within a set period of time.

There being no additional business to come before the meeting, upon motion of Deirdra Miller, seconded by Todd Ewen, the Commission unanimously approved to close the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

The Board of Zoning Appeals was not called to order; no action taken.

Washington County Plan Commission by:

David Hoar, President

Danielle Walker

Todd Ewen

Ervin Day

Mark Hartman

Anthony Scifres

Preston Shell

Kevin Baird

Deirdre Miller

WCPC Attorney:

John W. Mead/Mark D. Clark