CO. COUNCIL PRESENTED TO BLDG. COMMISSIONER ON 2/23/2026

MINUTES OF MEETING OF

WASHINGTON COUNTY PLAN COMMISSION
Held December 2, 2025
Washington County Commissioners and Council Chambers, 2nd Floor

The regular meeting of the **Washington County Plan Commission** was called to order at approximately 6:30 P.M., on December 2, 2025, by Vice-President, Kevin Baird. Board members present included Emily Rodman, Danielle Walker, Andrew Davisson, David Lyles, Kevin Baird, Marsha Dailey, Lucy Brenton, and Lori Gilstrap. President Todd Ewen was absent.

Also present was Plan Commission Attorney, Lisa M. Fleming and County Building Commissioner, Travis Elliott. Members of the public in attendance included Chuck McPheeters, Tony Cardwell, Preston Shell, Max Green, Rhonda Green, Larry Hardwick, Gary Tarr and Walla Tarr. Owen Speth of Ranger Power was also in attendance.

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Emily Rodman. Kevin Baird offered a prayer.

The **Plan Commission Meeting Minutes from October 7, 2025,** were not ready for review. They will be reviewed at the next meeting, to be held on January 6, 2026. It should be noted that the November Plan Commission meeting was cancelled.

There was a continuation of the discussion on **Solar Power**. Kevin Baird led this discussion after providing Plan Commission Members with a summary of eight (8) frequent remarks/topics related to Solar Farms, that he prepared. The first three topics on Kevin's list were discussed and included, 1) the definition of a commercial solar farm, 2) set back requirements, and 3) privacy screens.

Danielle Walker weighed in on the **definition of a commercial solar farm** and said she prefers, Commercial Solar Energy (CSE) systems, which is the description used in the Indiana Code. Minimum/maximum acreages and the type of land in unincorporated portions of the county to be used for solar farms was also discussed. There was a discussion about how we determine what acreage could be used for commercial solar farms; should this be limited to just

farmland, or all acreage in unincorporated areas of the county? Kevin Baird commented that some counties include timberland as farm land. He noted that timber is a patient farmer. Andrew Davisson said he would like to see a minimum acreage for farmland. Lori Gilstrap pointed out that some areas of the county are not suitable for commercial solar farms, such as the knobs. Lori expressed her preference to look at certain unincorporated areas of the county for commercial solar farms, but not all areas. David Lyles agreed with Lori Gilstratp on this point.

Setback requirements from property lines, roads, etc., were then discussed. Lucy Brenton offered comments about what neighboring counties that have adopted solar ordinances are doing. Andrew Davisson offered that setback requirements should depend on the type of commercial solar projects. Marsha Dailey shared that I.C. 8-1-41-10 suggests minimal setbacks for farms but stated that some counties have adopted setbacks that are far greater than those suggested in the Indiana Code. Lori Gilstrap talked about the need for setbacks from karst areas. Lucy Brenton talked about a shift in farming as older farmers retire. Lori Gilstrap predicted that we will see more corporate ownership of farmland as older farmers retire. Lucy Brenton touched on foreign ownership of farmland and stated that some investors are seeking out land with aquifers. Danielle Walker talked about the point system we use when evaluating proposed confined feeding operations. She noted that more points are given for larger setbacks. Danielle also pointed out that in the Miami County Solar Ordinance there are reciprocal ordinances. David Lyles shared his thoughts on a 1,500-feet setback, saying he felt it was a restriction.

Privacy Screening at commercial solar farms was briefly discussed with several members weighing in. Owen Speth of Ranger Power was asked to comment on fencing. Owen relayed that woven wire, 6-feet in height is used to delineate property lines and deter trespassers, but most animals can get under it. David Lyles said he opposed to fencing that restricts animals.

There was a discussion on the **Plan Commission Meeting Schedule for 2026**. Kevin Baird led the discussion. The Plan Commission will continue to meet on the first Tuesday of every month at 6:30 P.M. unless noted otherwise by the schedule or a special notice. The meetings will be held on the second floor of the Washington County Historic Courthouse, in the

Commissioners and Council Chambers. Andrew Davisson made a motion to approve the proposed 2026 schedule, the motion was seconded by Emily Rodman, and there was unanimous approval by all Plan Commission Members in attendance. The approved 2026 meeting schedule is listed below:

Approved 2026 Plan Commission Meeting Schedule

January 6, 2026
February 3, 2026
March 3, 2026
April 7, 2026
May 5, 2026
June 2, 2025
July 7, 2026
August 4, 2026
September 1, 2026
October 6, 2026
November 10, 2026
December 1, 2026

Kevin then asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Marsha Dailey made a motion which was seconded by Emily Rodman. The adjournment was unanimously approved and the meeting ended at approximately 7:30 P.M.

Washington County Planning Commission by:

Todd Ewen, President

Kevin Baird, Vice President

Danielle Walker

Emily Rodman

David Lyles

Andrew Davisson

Lori Gilstrap

Marsha Dailey

Lucy Brenton

1/06/2026

Lisa M. Fleming, Attorney for WCPC/BZA