

**MINUTES OF THE PLAN COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING
NOVEMBER 3, 2025**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Plan Commission Public Meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by President Tom Anderson at the Schererville Town Hall, 10 E. Joliet St. Schererville, IN.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. Roll Call

Roll Call was taken with the following members present: President Tom Anderson, Vice-President William Jarvis, Secretary Gary Immig, Mr. Robert Kocon, and Mr. Chris Rak. Staff present: Town Manager James Gorman, Director of Operations Andrew Hansen, Planning & Building Administrator Denise Sulek, Recording Secretary Megan Schiltz, Attorney Christian Bartholomew, and Councilwoman Robin Arvanitis. In the audience was Councilman Caleb Johnson. Absent was Mr. Tom Kouros

Mr. Myles Long arrived immediately following roll call at 6:01 P.M.

C. Approve Minutes of the Plan Commission Public Meeting of October 6, 2025

Mr. Kocon made a motion to approve which was seconded by Mr. Immig and carried 6-0.

II. PUBLIC ACTION AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. P.C. Case #25-9-16 41° North Tavern

General Location: 8101 Wicker Ave. – Eagle River Northwoods Addition

Petitioner(s): Silken & Shivangi Patel

Request: Secondary Approval of a U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor Overlay District Development Plan

Mr. Patrick Edwards, 41° North Tavern Manager, along with General Manager Jacqueline Weber, represented on behalf of the petitioner. Mr. Anderson stated that there had been three issues from primary approval; the sign, fence and gate, and then the roof area. Mr. Edwards informed the board that they were still waiting on approval from the State and was told he would have an answer in the next couple weeks. Mr. Edwards went on to say that they would like to push forward on the frame work while they wait for State approval because it was not enclosed; adding that they would then move on with whatever decision they make as soon as possible. Mr. Anderson asked if there were any questions or comments from the board. Mr. Jarvis asked if that would then be a contingency towards the State approval. Mr. Anderson asked Attorney Bartholomew if they could make that a contingency so that they could start with the sign and gate before the ground freezes. Attorney Bartholomew replied that he did not see why they couldn't. Mr. Edwards said that whatever the decision the State made, if they would need the sprinkler or not, they would of course follow with what they said. Mr. Anderson then clarified with Mr. Gorman that there had not been any changes since primary approval. Mr. Jarvis made a motion to approve P.C. Case #25-9-16 pursuant to all State, Local, and Federal Regulations; and contingent upon the State of Indiana approval for the roof covered patio. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rak and carried 6-0.

B. P.C. Case #25-9-17 Crossroads YMCA

General Location: 221 U.S. Hwy. 41 – Omni 41 First Addition, Part of East 854.92 ft. of Lot 1

Petitioner(s): Crossroads YMCA

Represented by: DVG Team, Inc. – Russ Pozen, P.E.

Request: Secondary Approval of a U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor Overlay District
Development Plan

Mr. Russ Pozen stated that there have not been any changes since primary approval except that because they were now at the construction level documentation on the buildings, he brought in more enhanced renderings to reflect the YMCA brand. Mr. Pozen proceeded to show the original design next to the proposed design and stated that with paint, new windows, and brighter brick it would make the building more enhanced and modern. Mr. Pozen said that was the only update and that he brought the architects for the project in case there were any questions. Mr. Anderson confirmed with Mr. Pozen that nothing major has changed. Mr. Jarvis made a motion to approve P.C. Case #25-9-17 pursuant to all State, Local, and Federal Regulations, any items from primary and that all fee paid to the Town of Schererville be kept current. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rak and carried 6-0.

**C. P.C. Case #25-9-18 Fountain Park Subdivision Commercial
(Proposed: Floor & Décor)**

General Location: 1516-1530 U.S. 41 – Fountain Park Subdivision, Lot 1 of the
Resubdivision of Lot 5 and Part of Lot 8

Petitioner(s): Floor & Décor – Caitlin Pipkin, Development Manager

Represented by: Torrenga Engineering – Don Torrenga, P.E.

Request: Secondary Approval of a U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor Overlay District
Development Plan

Mr. Anderson asked if there had been any changes since primary approval. Ms. Sulek replied there had not been. Mr. Rak made a motion to approve P.C. Case #25-9-18 pursuant to all State, Local, and Federal Regulations and that all fees paid to the Town of Schererville be kept current. This was seconded by Mr. Long and carried 6-0.

D. P.C. Case #25-11-21 143 W. Joliet St.

General Location: 143 W. Joliet St.

Petitioner(s): Town of Schererville – James M. Gorman, Town Manager

Request: Rezone from (R-2) Residential to (INST) Institutional Zoning District

Mr. Anderson asked if Proofs of Publication were in order. Attorney Bartholomew replied that item D and item E were both in order. Mr. Gorman stated that they are looking for a favorable recommendation to the Town Council for the rezone on the future fire station at 143 W. Joliet St. Mr. Gorman said that there are a total of five parcels for this project and that three of those five are currently zoned (INST) Institutional; adding that any public safety building or Town owned building should be INST zoning. Mr. Gorman went on to say that is why they are asking that the (R-2) Residential lot along Joliet St., as well as the southern portion of 135 Joliet St. be rezoned to make it all INST. Mr. Gorman added that they would be going before the board again soon for a 1-Lot Subdivision approval for those five lots. Mr. Anderson asked if there were any comments from the board. There were none. Mr. Anderson then opened the matter to the floor.

Mrs. DeAnna Garcia from 1742 Anna St. informed the board that she lives directly next to where the fire station was going to be built and where the engines would be coming and going. Mrs. Garcia added that she came across some information that said in the U.S. a Town does not have the general right to take away wild deer life because it is managed by the State not local municipalities; although the Town owns the vacant land, the deer are considered to be a resource held in the trust of the State and the Federal Government. Mrs. Garcia went on to say that this project has been going on for about three years; and since then, they have destroyed most wildlife for the deer, leaving only a small patch behind the church next to her backyard. Mrs. Garcia asked what the purpose was for the property to be rezoned. Mr. Anderson replied that any governmental building must be zoned INST. Mrs. Garcia responded that the parcel was already zoned INST and had a paper to present for someone to review, then handed it over to Ms. Sulek who then passed it along. Mrs. Garcia then asked if this would cause taxes to be raised. Mr. Anderson replied that it would not for a rezone. Mrs. Garcia repeated that she did not understand why it would need to be rezoned. Mr. Anderson responded that it was because some of the parcels are currently zoned R-2. Mrs. Garcia said that they would understand what

she was saying once the handout she provided was reviewed by the board. Mrs. Garcia continued to say that there are a lot of deer over in that area and did not believe it would be the right thing to do. Mrs. Garcia then said that there were other areas that were never considered such as the Illiana Speedway off of U.S. 30 or the Italian restaurant that backed out of development on Joliet St.; which is a large piece of property where fire engines could easily get in and out of instead of destroying wildlife. Mrs. Garcia stated that the fire station would also be right next to her existing pool where the firefighters would drive in; adding that for several reasons there could have been a better location, especially with taking wildlife away from all the deer that still go up to her house daily.

Mr. Gary Brandt from 145 W. Joliet St. stated that his property is just west of 143 W. Joliet. Mr. Brandt wanted to clarify that this would not cause his address to be rezoned. Mr. Anderson responded that his home would not be involved with the rezone. Mr. Brandt said that was all he wanted to know, and thanked the commission for their time. Mrs. Garcia went back up to the podium and stated she was against the fire station being built so close to her home, and was not in agreement because there are several factors that were not considered. Mr. Cody Garcia from 1742 Anna St. stated that he was also opposed to the fire station going at this property because of the future redevelopment of Joliet St, and then asked if the Town saw any problems with traffic at that location. Mr. Gorman replied that they did not see any problems with traffic. Mr. Garcia said that he foresees future traffic issues with the area becoming congested by the redevelopment and the fire station.

Mr. Anderson asked Mr. Gorman how the site was chosen. Mr. Gorman replied that there was a feasibility study done many years ago on what would be the best area, and this site was the one chosen. Mr. Gorman added that the Town started buying properties based on that study. Mr. Garcia stated that the Schererville Police Department runs up and down both Anna St. and Joliet St. all the time, which automatically creates a lot more traffic from just them alone; and that if the downtown area gets reconstructed, it would bring a lot more people creating a lot more traffic. Mr. Garcia then added that for that reason he did not agree with the rezone. Mr. Anderson asked if there were any more comments from the floor. Pastor Laurel Hamilton from Immanuel Presbyterian Church at 140 W US 30, asked if the plan for this project would still include building a road from Anna St. to the church parking lot. Mr. Gorman replied yes and that when the Town had purchased that property from the church, part of the contingency was to build access through the property to get to Anna St. Pastor Hamilton then asked if there was a timeline. Mr. Gorman then replied it would probably be within in the next thirty-six months for the entire project. Pastor Hamilton then thanked the board and Mr. Gorman. Mrs. Garcia reproached the podium and began to say that she wanted to mention one last time...; but finished with her back turned to the audience, away from the microphone, and was inaudible. Mr. Anderson reminded her that the meeting was being recorded and to speak into the microphone. Mrs. Garcia stated that when the study was done, it may have been a good idea at that time; but at this time, it was not a good idea for several reasons, such as the Town growing and the speed of the Police Department. Mrs. Garcia repeated that times have changed and it was not a good idea. Mrs. Garcia then asked what would happen with the deer by removing the "last little patch" of trees left for them, or what happens when the fire trucks are going in and out with all of the deer running around. Mr. Ira Zimmer from 1720 S Park Ave. asked if the feasibility study that had been done many years ago was done so prior to the decision to close down Joliet St. by Pete's RV Center. Mr. Gorman replied that it was. Mr. Zimmer stated that maybe it was time to do a new feasibility study because fire trucks will not have access going that way to the west. Mr. Zimmer added that the original Fire Department was located across the street and was part of the Police Department and that he had spent a lot of time there as a kid because his father was a volunteer fireman; going on to say that he understood the importance of a great central station where you could go in all directions, but not if a major road gets closed off. Mr. Zimmer concluded by saying the habitat would be another thing but the feasibility study is what should be considered.

Mr. Anderson asked if there were any more comments from the floor. Mrs. Garcia began to speak from the audience but was inaudible; then spoke louder "so, in other words it goes right through my property" then was once again inaudible for several more seconds. Mr. Anderson stated that the area in yellow on the projector screen was what it encompassed. Mrs. Garcia was once again inaudible. Mr. Anderson then confirmed that she lived at 1742 Anna St. and then stated that she would be right at the south end of the property line. Mrs. Garcia from the audience stated that is where the road was going and would butt up right next to her pool and that she would have to remove the pool. Mr. Anderson responded that he did not know where the road was going and that right now this meeting was just for the rezone. Mrs. Garcia began to say that is going right to where her property is to where they want her to take the pool down... Mr. Anderson stated that it was not on her property it was on the Town's property. Mr. Gorman stated from the podium that was correct. Mrs. Garcia was in audible. Mr. Anderson responded that they were not taking her property. Mrs. Garcia interrupted and stated that she was not

saying they were taking her property but was being told to move; they came out and told her that she had to take down her pool and fence. Mr. Gorman replied that was correct because it was on the Towns property. Mrs. Garcia stated that she had lived on that property for fifteen years and that she had bought the property with that on it.

Mr. Gorman and Mrs. Garcia began speaking directly to each other. Mrs. Garcia repeated again that it was on her property. Mr. Gorman responded that was fine. Mrs. Garcia still in the audience was again inaudible. Mr. Gorman said yeah. Mrs. Garcia questioned that he was telling her that they butted right up to her property and now want her to take down her pool and fence after fifteen years; adding that was what you did, you called me. Mr. Gorman replied yes, that he had called and told you that the driveway and garage or whatever that building was on our property; so yes I did tell you that. Mrs. Garcia said that after fifteen years you want me to take my pool down and my fence; is that what you're telling me sir. Mr. Gorman asked if her stuff was on the Towns property. Mrs. Garcia replied no. Mr. Gorman stated then we are good. Mrs. Garcia asked then why do you keep coming over to my house. Mr. Gorman replied that he had never gone to the house, not even once. Mrs. Garcia responded that she had pictures on her phone that he did go to her house. Mr. Gorman said okay. Mrs. Garcia went on to say that she had markers that they were in the backyard. Mr. Gorman repeated that as long as you are not on our property then we are good to go. Mr. Anderson stated that they were stopping the argument here. Mrs. Garcia replied that she was not arguing; but was then inaudible because she was still speaking from the audience. Mr. Anderson asked if there were any more comments from the audience. There being no comments the matter was closed to the floor and returned to the board.

Mr. Jarvis asked what the total number of acres are in the yellow area. Mr. Gorman replied that he was unsure off hand and then asked Mr. Hansen if he knew. Mr. Hansen replied that he could calculate it. Mr. Jarvis stated he was just curious. Mr. Gorman said that the part of it was where the water tower is located, and that it was going to be a 1-Lot Subdivision. Mr. Anderson asked if there had been any research into the fact of where Joliet St. was going to end by the bank. Mr. Gorman replied that they were still working on that with the engineers, and that they did not have a final plan on phase four of the Kennedy Avenue Project; so that is all in discussion on how it would turn out. Mr. Anderson questioned the access point. Mr. Gorman stated that the access to Route 30 would be from Anna St. Mr. Hansen replied that it would be 4.8 acres. Mr. Jarvis asked if most of the emergency vehicles would be heading to Anna St. then US 30 then out. Mr. Gorman replied that was correct depending on where the call was. Mrs. Garcia sitting in the audience asked if he said they would enter in and out on Anna St. Mr. Gorman replied that was not correct, and that he said there would be access to US 30 from Anna St. Mrs. Garcia said that would be coming out and asked what about going back. Mr. Gorman responded that it would tie to Joliet St. and Anna St. and whichever way they go, they go; adding that has not been decided yet. Mr. Gorman went on to mention that it was an in and out and they could go either way depending on the call.

Mr. Jarvis clarified that what they had before them was just for the rezone. Mr. Anderson replied that was correct and that the Proofs of Publication for both matters for both parcels have been presented. Mr. Anderson then added that subdivision or anything else would have to come back before the Commission. Mr. Jarvis made a favorable recommendation of P.C. Case #25-11-21 to the Town Council which was seconded by Mr. Rak and carried 6-0.

E. P.C. Case #25-11-22 0.370 Acre Parcel (Joliet St.)

General Location: 0.370 Acre Parcel East of 149 Joliet St., South of Joliet St.

Petitioner(s): Town of Schererville – James M. Gorman, Town Manager

Request: Rezone from (R-2) Residential to (INST) Institutional Zoning District

For discussion see item **D**. Mr. Jarvis made a favorable recommendation of P.C. Case #25-11-22 to the Town Council which was seconded by Mr. Long and carried 6-0.

III. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Findings of Facts:

1. P.C. Case #25-10-20 Appollo Group Addition, Lot 2
General Location: 847-997 U.S. 41
Petitioners(s): Rich Rueth
Represented by: Torrenga Engineering & Surveying – Don Torrenga
Primary Approval of a U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor Overlay District

Development Plan of the underground utility work, retention pond, removal of fencing from ditch, grading and landscaping

APPROVED W/CONTINGENCIES (6-0) 10/6/25

Mr. Robert Volkmann stated that he was there to assist Mr. Rich Rueth in addressing the contingencies that were placed on his primary approval on securing permits from IDEM (Indiana Department of Environmental Management) and the Army Corps of Engineers. Mr. Volkmann went on to say that Mr. Rueth had been in contact with Mr. Marty Maupin, wetland specialist from IDEM, which copies of the email correspondence have been handed out to everyone, and they do not have any jurisdiction about any of the questions that were brought up on that parcel. Mr. Volkmann added that the only suggestion that IDEM had was that if they were to go into the ditch that would kick in the Army Corps review of that petition; however, Mr. Rueth does not plan to or even touch the ditch and intends to stay completely out of it. Mr. Volkmann said that they were there to ask for the consideration of the commission to remove the contingencies so that Mr. Rueth could move forward with starting his site work because winter was approaching.

Mr. Volkmann went on to say that Mr. Rueth does have a pending permit with IDEM for the extension of utilities and that the Town had received acknowledgement that it is under review; there is no plan on doing the utility work without the IDEM permit and that there was typically a thirty day turn-around time on them. Mr. Volkmann stated that he hopes the commission gave consideration for him to do the additional work such as grading, building the retention pond, and removing the old fence; so that once the permit came in he could get started with the utility work. Mr. Jarvis stated that he was happy improvements were being made to the property because it helps the property owners who are adjacent, and agreed that as long as he stayed out of the ditch the commission should remove the contingencies. Mr. Rak stated that he was also in agreement. Mr. Anderson asked Attorney Bartholomew if Mr. Jarvis' motion would be sufficient to amend the Findings of Facts or remove the contingency on the vote. Attorney Bartholomew wanted to be clear that the only contingency that is being removed at that moment was the IDEM contingency given that it was not required at this point. Mr. Volkmann responded that was correct because the other contingency was for the Army Corps permit for a delineation of wetland; but they would not enter the wetland because it is contained within INDOT's (Indiana Department of Transportation) ditch along U.S. 41. Mr. Volkmann added that per the correspondence from IDEM, if we are not touching it then there is no requirement for a permit.

Mr. Jarvis stated that when the original motion was made it had two items that were in play, the IDEM permits and the Army Corp review; but if he doesn't go into the ditch then everything was "off the table". Mr. Jarvis added that he believed they need to make a motion to amend the contingencies on the Findings of Facts. Attorney Bartholomew agreed that it could be considered satisfied, but thought the better way would be to make a motion amending to remove the contingencies. Mr. Jarvis made a motion on Case #25-10-20 that given the new evidence on the contingencies placed they should be removed from the development. Mr. Rak seconded the motion and was carried 6-0.

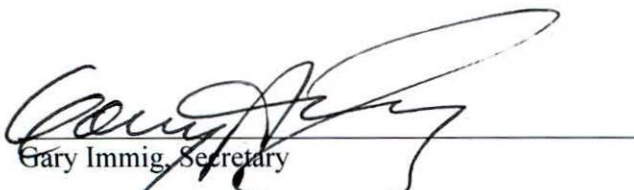
B. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:38 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,


Gary Immig, Secretary