

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF  
ZONING APPEALS PUBLIC MEETING  
APRIL 28, 2025**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Board of Zoning Appeals was called to order at 6:00 by Chairman Michael Davis at the Schererville Town Hall, 10 E. Joliet St.

**A. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**B. Roll Call**

Roll Call was taken with the following members present: Chairman Michael Davis, Vice-Chairman Tom Kouros, Mr. Michael O'Rourke, and Mr. William Jarvis. Staff present: Town Manager James Gorman, Director of Operations Andrew Hansen, Planning & Building Administrator Denise Sulek, Recording Secretary Megan Schiltz, and Attorney Christian Bartholomew. Absent was Secretary Rick Calinski. In the audience were Councilmen Caleb Johnson and Thomas Schmitt.

**C. Approve Minutes of the Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting of January 27, 2025**

Mr. Kouros made a motion to approve which was seconded by Mr. O'Rourke and carried 4-0.

**D. Cancellation of the May, 2025 Board of Zoning Appeals Public Meeting**

Mr. Kouros made a motion to approve which was seconded by Mr. O'Rourke and carried 4-0.

**II. PUBLIC ACTION AND PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**A. B.Z.A. Case #25-4-5 917-955 Eagle Ridge Dr.  
(Proposed: Indoor, Climate-Controlled Self-Storage Building)**

General Location: 917-955 Eagle Ridge Dr. – Golden Corral Addition, Lot 2, EX. N. 25ft.

Petitioner(s): Broadfield, LLC

Represented by: Attorney James L. Wieser, Wieser & Wyllie, LLP

Request: Variance of Use as required by Ordinance No. 2004, Title XVI, Section 5,  
Paragraph C (3)

Purpose: To allow the construction of an Indoor, Climate Controlled Self-Storage  
Building within the U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor Overlay District

Mr. Davis asked if proofs of publication were in order. Attorney Bartholomew replied that they were in order. Attorney James Wieser from Wieser & Wyllie, LLP represented the petitioners. Attorney Wieser stated Mr. Jonathan Lunn from Broadfield, LLC, has been in the field of developing property and constructing climate controlled indoor storage facilities for a number of years. Attorney Wieser said the parcel of property that Broadfield plans to develop is from the Home Depot Development adjacent to the rear portion of Golden Corral; it is an irregular shaped lot with a Phillips Petroleum Line bisecting the property. Attorney Wieser added that the property was challenging in terms of getting it properly developed and putting something up that would be a real benefit to the community and the tax payers. Attorney Wieser then stated that he would like to point out that this variance of use was just the first step; and with what Mr. Lunn had in mind, they would need to go before the Plan Commission for Resubdivision Approval and would need to bring in plans that would meet the requirement for being in the Overlay District. Attorney Wieser went on to say that the property is off of U.S. 41 bounded by Eagle Creek Dr. and abutted by the railroad tracks, adding that he believed would be beneficial to the use that he intends to develop. Attorney Wieser then stated that this would be a beautiful building with great access from several different directions such as U.S. 41, Eagle Ridge Dr., and 213<sup>th</sup> St; he then added that the traffic generation by these types of



facilities were among the lowest rated traffic generation of any facility, therefore it would not be a burden. Attorney Wieser said that this would be a gated facility open seven days a week from 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM. Attorney Wieser concluded by saying that given the style, size, and nature of how it would be constructed, it was estimated that it would generate about \$100,000 a year in real estate taxes for the community. Mr. Lunn stated that this proposal is for a climate controlled self-storage building with heating and cooling; the opposite of "traditional storage" where if it was zero degrees outside all your stuff would be freezing. Mr. Lunn went on to say that the next generation of storage is climate controlled which is a high-end self-storage that would be clean and controlled by security cameras for people going in and out. Mr. Lunn went on to say that this has become high demand for people looking for storage, and that there are a few other climate controlled facilities in the area that were full. Mr. Lunn added that they could get the price points down to where it's not an exorbitant price and would be a great asset to the community. Mr. Lunn then said that this "win-win" site was chosen because it had been vacant for many years, and that they could give it a productive use that people needed. Mr. Lunn stated that based off the size of the building, it is going to have a high tax bill; if this were to get denied and another use goes in it may only generate \$20,000 in taxes.

Mr. Davis asked why Schererville was the chosen location. Mr. Lunn responded that he had grown up in this area had been working on storage facilities since 1996. Mr. Lunn went on to say that the demand for the newer generation of storage has grown over the years and thought that the region could benefit from that. Mr. Lunn added that he had learned a lot over the years; and that from a business perspective, this site has the benefit of traffic as well as nearby retail establishments; the customer could go to Home Depot and then go straight to the storage unit. Mr. Kouros asked how many units there would be. After doing some math, Mr. Lunn replied approximately 700 units that would be anywhere from 80 sq. ft. to 100 sq. ft. Mr. Kouros then asked if that meant there would be different sizes. Mr. Lunn responded that there would be different sized units throughout the facility. Mr. Kouros questioned if there would be staff in the sales office. Mr. Lunn stated that technology is necessary for this operation given that it is climate controlled and that there would be access controlled keypads, apps to get in and out, to pay your bill, and apps to communicate. Mr. Lunn added that the office would be staffed 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., but the facility would be open 6:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M.; going on to say that there would be opportunities with that because you could rent a unit on the app without having to talk to anybody. Mr. Lunn said that if a customer already has a unit and needed access to it at 6:00 A.M., the computers could let them access the space. Mr. Kouros then asked if it would be a 2-story building. Mr. Lunn responded that it would actually be a 3-story building. Mr. Lunn went on to say that part of the design is a drive-thru situation; you can drive into the area and are under the inside which allows loading and unloading. Mr. Lunn stated that they offer a free cart system to help you roll items into the elevator to go on the third level. Mr. Lunn added that they also offer price point breaks where you receive a discount if your unit is located on the third floor in the way back and that it would be more money to have a unit in the front. Mr. Lunn said that at some of the other locations, they were 85% occupied after eighteen months due to decent rates.

Mr. O'Rourke stated that Mr. Wieser had mentioned something about a gas line. Mr. Lunn said that straight through the property is a 60 ft. easement with 30 ft. on each side of that of high pressure gas line that Buckeye Pipeline runs. Mr. Lunn added that the site naturally divides into 2 lots with the storage facility on the lot closest to U.S. 41 and can have another 1.5-1.8 acres with the open lot which they could sell to another business'. Mr. O'Rourke asked where the entrance would be. Mr. Lunn responded that this parcel is all covered by an easement from the original Home Depot Development from years ago with storm water management included. Mr. Lunn went on to say that there are access easements through the entire Home Depot parking lot as well as an access point in the pavement from Golden Corral. Mr. O'Rourke then asked if they would be putting up gates. Mr. Lunn replied that no gates or fencing is needed for this property because there was nothing on the outside of the building. Mr. Davis opened the matter to the floor. There being no comments from the floor the matter returned to the board. Mr. Jarvis asked what the height of the building would be. Mr. Lunn replied that it would be close to 40 ft. Mr. Jarvis then asked if there would be any outdoor storage. Mr. Lunn then replied there would not be.

Mr. Wieser stated for the record that if the proposal were to be approved, it would not hurt the public health, safety, or welfare; and that it would not negatively impact the value of adjacent property. Mr. Wieser added that this parcel had been undeveloped for many years and believes this would be a perfect use for it. Mr. Kouros made a favorable recommendation of B.Z.A Case #25-4-5 to the Town Council which was seconded by Mr. Jarvis and carried 4-0.



B. B.Z.A. Case #25-4-6 703 U.S. 41 (Proposed: Drive-thru Lanes)

General Location: 703 U.S. 41 – Shoppes of Schererville, Lot 2

Petitioner(s): Raising Cane's Restaurants, LLC & Premier Design Group

Represented by: Premier Design Group, Debbie Stosz & Raising Cane's –  
Project Manager, Felicia Bevins

Request: Variance of Use as required by Ordinance No. 2004, Title XVI, Section 5,  
Paragraph C (3)

Purpose: To allow drive-thru lanes within the U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor Overlay  
District

Mr. Davis asked if proofs of publication were in order. Attorney Bartholomew replied that they were in order. Mrs. Debbie Stosz from Premier Design Group represented the petitioners. Mrs. Stosz stated that Premier Design Group are the civil engineers for Raising Cane's and are seeking approval of a double drive-thru lane to be located on the existing TGI Fridays lot at 703 U.S. 41. Mrs. Stosz went on to say that the existing building would be demolished but planned to keep part of the parking with a double drive-thru lane addition. Mrs. Stosz said that the building would be about 3,300 – 3,400 sq. ft. and would have 50 parking spaces available; then added that 46 parking spaces was the requirement based on the number of seating and employees. Mr. Stosz stated that they would also provide 23 stacking spaces and that the second drive-thru lane would only be used during peak hours. Mr. Jarvis asked how much of their business would be done by drive-thru and how much by sitting. Mrs. Stosz replied that in the past about 60% -70% was drive-thru but that the number may have increased since COVID. Mrs. Stosz added that the typical drive-thru order would take three minutes from time of order to the time you pick up the meal. Mr. Davis opened this matter to the floor. There being no questions or comments the matter returned to the board. Mr. Jarvis made a favorable recommendation of B.Z.A Case #25-4-6 to the Town Council which was seconded by Mr. O'Rourke and carried 4-0.

C. B.Z.A. Case #25-4-7 8407 Burr St. – Gary L. Williamson

General Location: 8407 Burr St.

Petitioner(s): Gary L. Williamson

Request: Developmental Variance as required by Ordinance No. 2004, Title IV,  
Section 7, Paragraph A

Purpose: To allow the construction of a 1,120 sq. ft. detached garage

Mr. Davis stated that items C and D would be heard together but voted on separately. Mr. Davis asked if proofs of publication were in order. Attorney Bartholomew replied they were. Mr. Williamson stated that the town allows a garage maximum of 1,000 sq. ft. Mr. Williamson added that he would need an additional 120 sq. ft. for his for two cars, trailer, motorcycle and bikes. Mr. Williamson went on to say that he would like to put 10 ft. ceilings in the garage with trusses being 6 ft. for the proper roof pitch for shingles and with a ridge vent making it round 16 ft. 3 in. Mr. Jarvis asked what the size of the garage doors would be. Mr. Williamson replied there would be a double 16 ft. 8 ft. high and a single door to be 9 ft. wide and 8 ft. high. Mr. Kouros asked what was behind the garage. Mr. Williamson replied that he is on a 5 acre lot that is all open land, and that the impact of the size of garage would be minimal being that size. Mr. O'Rourke stated that the paper copy of the lot provided states "asphalt drive and an existing garage to the north". Mr. Williamson replied that was the neighbor's property. Mr. O'Rourke then asked how far away from the property line would the garage be. Mr. Williamson replied the garage would be 8 ft. off the property line. Mr. O'Rourke asked if there would be any running water, wetlands, or anything of that nature that would cause a problem for the neighbor to the north. Mr. Williamson said there were no problems. Mr. Jarvis asked Ms. Sulek if there was a second garage towards the back of the parcel and that it was all one parcel. Ms. Sulek replied that was correct but it is a shed located in the back. Mr. Jarvis responded that the plat stated a 1 1/2 story garage was located in the back. Mr. Williamson responded that it was a glorified shed. Mr. Davis opened the matter to the floor. There being no comments it was closed to the floor and returned to the board.



Mr. Jarvis made a motion to approve B.Z.A Case #25-4-7 pursuant to all State, Local, and Federal regulations. This was seconded by Mr. Kouros and carried 4-0.

D. B.Z.A. Case #25-4-8 8407 Burr St. – Gary L. Williamson

General Location: 8407 Burr St.

Petitioner(s): Gary L. Williamson

Request: Developmental Variance as required by Ordinance No. 2004, Title IV, Section 3, Paragraph B

Purpose: To allow a detached garage height of 16'6"

For discussion see item C above.

Mr. Jarvis made a motion to approve B.Z.A Case #25-4-8 pursuant to all State, Local, and Federal Regulations and that the size of the garage doors not exceed 8 foot. This was seconded by Mr. Kouros and carried 4-0.

### III. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Findings of Facts:

- 1) B.Z.A. Case # 25-1-1 751 Lincoln Hwy.  
(Proposed: Automotive Service Station W/Car Wash & Retail Development Center)  
Petitioner(s): Family Express, Corp.  
Represented by: Wieser & Wyllie, LLP – Attorney James L. Wieser  
Variance of Use as required by Ordinance No. 2004, Title XVI, Section 4, Paragraph C (2) – To allow the operation of an automotive service station within the U.S. 30 Commercial Corridor Overlay District, which shall include a retail development center  
UNFAVORABLE RECOMMENDATION TO THE TOWN COUNCIL (5-0) 1/27/25

Mr. Jarvis made a motion to approve which was seconded by Mr. O'Rourke and carried 4-0.

- 2) B.Z.A. Case #25-1-2 26 Maple Ct. – Ronald C. & Mane DeCastro  
Petitioner(s): Dimension Fence, Inc. – Ray Hall, III and Hannah Jackson  
Developmental Variance as required by Ordinance No. 2004, Title XVII, Section 14, Paragraph A – To allow construction of a 6-foot high privacy fence to extend 16-feet over the 20-foot building line on a corner lot  
APPROVED (5-0) 1/27/25

Mr. Kouros made a motion to approve which was seconded by Mr. O'Rourke and carried 4-0.

- 3) B.Z.A. Case #25-1-3 Brian Lantz-Proposed: Jarrett's Southern View, Lots 8 and Lot 23  
Petitioner(s): Brian Lantz  
Represented by: DVG Team Inc. – Engineer, Doug Rettig  
Developmental Variance as required by Ordinance No. 2004, Title IV, Section 4, Paragraph D (2) – To allow a reduction of the side yard setback from 30' to 20' on the corner lots 8 and 23 of the proposed development  
APPROVED W/CONTINGENCIES (4-0) 1/27/25

Mr. Kouros made a motion to approve which was seconded by Mr. Jarvis and carried 4-0.

- 4) B.Z.A. Case #25-1-4 Brian Lantz-Proposed: Jarrett's Southern View, Lots 14 to Lot 17  
Petitioner(s): Brian Lantz  
Represented by: DVG Team Inc. – Engineer, Doug Rettig  
Developmental Variance as required by Ordinance No. 2004, Title IV, Section 4, Paragraph C – To allow a reduction of the required 30' front yard setback to 25' on lots 14 through 17 of the proposed development  
APPROVED (4-0) 1/27/25

Mr. Kouros made a motion to approve which was seconded by Mr. O'Rourke and carried 4-0.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:52 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Calinski', is written over a horizontal line.

Rick Calinski, Secretary