

**PLAN COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION NOTES
MARCH 2, 2026**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Plan Commission Study Session was called to order at 6:15 P.M. by President Tom Anderson at the Schererville Town Hall, 10 E. Joliet St.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

President Anderson stated that the Pledge of Allegiance was already recited at the Plan Commission Public Meeting.

B. Roll Call

President Anderson said that Roll Call would stand from the Plan Commission Public Meeting.
** Mr. Tom Kouros arrived at 6:20 P.M. **

II. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Red Alert Addition, Lot 2 – Tauber Law Offices/Autism Care Therapy

General Location: 1415-1445 Eagle Ridge Dr. – Red Alert Addition, Lot 2

Petitioner(s): Tauber Law Offices

Represented by: Attorney Jared R. Tauber, Tauber Law

Request: U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor Overlay District Development Plan Review

Attorney Rhett L. Tauber from Tauber Law Offices represented on behalf of the petitioners. Attorney Tauber stated that the 2-story office building currently had Tauber Law Offices signage on the front the building which faced U.S. 41, as well as the south side of the building. Attorney Tauber said that currently there was no other signage on the outside of the building. Attorney Tauber went on to say that his new tenant, Autism Care Therapy, provides physical therapy for autistic children and would occupy the remainder of the first floor. Attorney Tauber added that currently on the first floor was a chiropractic care facility which operates 2,500 sq. ft. of tenant space and has been a busy practice for several years at the location with the entrance located on the west side of the building that faces Eagle Ridge Dr. Attorney Tauber informed the board that the ACT tenant would like a sign on the front side of the building; there currently is Tauber Law Offices signage on the upper half of the building, and that this would be directly above the front entrance. Attorney Tauber provided images on how the signage would look. Attorney Tauber continued that there currently was not any signage on the west side of the building that faced Eagle Ridge Dr. where the chiropractor's office entrance was located. Attorney Tauber said that ACT would like to add to the monument sign and place a sign on the west side of the building as well even though no signage has ever been there. Attorney Tauber shared that he believed having the sign on the front of the building above their entrance and the monument sign would be important; however, did not know what the Plan Commission would think about the west sign. Mr. Anderson asked if the sign were to go on the west side of the building if the chiropractic office would then want to have one there as well. Attorney Tauber replied that would be his concern and also with there being confusion with people entering the wrong entrance. Mr. Anderson said that his thoughts were that the monument sign and the sign on the south side above their entrance would be sufficient enough. Mr. Jarvis stated that it would be more than sufficient and that the building would look much better if the west side signage were to be eliminated. Attorney Tauber stated that as the landlord he would prefer not to have any signage on the west, but the tenant would like one there as well. Mr. Jarvis said that it would create too much confusion. Mr. Long agreed and stated the sign should go above where the entrance would be located. Mr. Anderson said that there was a consensus of all five members to have signage on the south side of the building above the entrance as well as the monument signage. Attorney Tauber thanked the board and stated he would be back for the public meeting on April 6th.

B. Family Express

General Location: 751 Lincoln Hwy. – Resubd. Of Lot 1 Von Tobel Addition, Lot 3

Petitioner(s): Family Express Corp. – Pete Andreou, Vice-President of Development and Patrick Lyp, General Counsel

Represented by: Wieser & Wyllie, LLP – Attorney James L. Wieser and DVG Team, Inc. – Engineer, James Hus, Jr.

Request: 3-Lot (C-3) Highway Commercial Subdivision and U.S. 30 Commercial Corridor Overlay District Development Plan Review

Engineer James Hus from DVG stated that along with him were Vice-President of Development Pete Andreou and Family Express Counsel Patrick Lyp. Mr. Anderson stated that before the meeting starts he has an email correspondence to read for the record from Property Manager John Teibel to Ms. Sulek:

I wanted to formally convey an update related to the shared parking status between the Grit Fitness facility and the proposed Family Express. As you know, there is presently a shared parking condition between the two properties. With Family Expresses' proposed construction of a car wash, they are proposing to terminate a through-way presently shared by these two properties. This termination will require us to "yellow line – do not park" at the end of this lane in order to provide a means for cars to turn around if all parking spaces are full. Our suggestion to Family Express was to move this existing through-way approximately 20 feet westward in order to maintain the existing traffic flow between the two properties. Family Express refused that proposal. My analysis of the circumstances is that if the Family Express development proceeds with retail/warehouse types of usage that have limited parking needs, the situation will be fine. However, if the Family Express development proceeds with traditional retail/restaurant usage, parking and traffic flow may be problematic. It has been conveyed that Family Express does not know what the future uses of the additional space on the site will be at this time. I appreciate that. With that being said, I hope that Schererville is keenly aware of the potential that parking needs and traffic flow may generate problems without further adjustments (additional parking) to the Family Express development plan.

Mr. Hus said that part of the approval process for a development would be to come before the commission for a study session. Mr. Hus added that they would come back with more detailed site information, signage, landscaping, and lighting plan. Mr. Hus stated that they would be happy to answer any questions but would focus more on the plat of subdivision. Mr. Hus went on to say that most of the site engineering co-mingles with materials related to the plat; and that there are site materials in the packet provided. Mr. Hus informed the board that in the briefest summary, the plat of subdivision splits what is currently 6.3 acres into 3 lots. Mr. Hus continued that Lot-1 would be occupied by Family Express and that it was approximately 2.73 acres. Mr. Hus added that Family Express would own and occupy the entirety of the existing structure, operating approximately 9,800 sq. ft. of storefront out of the eastern portion. Mr. Hus went on to say that the remaining 20,000 sq. ft. of building would be marketed immediately for lease to a user, which would comply with the C-3 zoning district. Mr. Hus said that Lot-1 would then immediately be compliant for the zoning regulations regarding parking. Mr. Hus continued that the 2 acres in the northwest corner would be Lot-2 with a 14,500 sq. ft. building to remain. Mr. Hus stated that the plan is to set the structure up to have three front doors with one on the north, west, and south sides; similar to Lot-1 the user is unknown but would be marketed for compliant uses. Mr. Hus added that Lot-2 would also be immediately compliant with parking regulations. Mr. Hus informed the board that Lot-3 is a landlocked parcel in the southern tip of the property made up of 1.6 acres and a 68,000 sq. ft. structure. Mr. Hus then said that this existing building was the most unique from a marketing perspective; while it is going to be a creative market, it is unknown what it was going to be. Mr. Hus went on to say that there will be visits to both the Plan Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals when that lot is ready for development for thoughts of what Family Express or another developer bring to the table for that property.

Mr. Hus reminded the board that they would like to separate 1 lot into 3 lots; and that Family Express would include all necessary utility and cross access easements needed to provide legal access out to the surrounding public right-of-ways. Mr. Hus went on to say that there is an existing cross access easement that connects Grit Fitness all the way back around to Trek Bicycle that will be maintained as needed. Mr. Hus added that there will be a slight adjustment to the Cline Ave. side by shifting over 5-10ft. simply because the proposed gasoline canopy overlaps the existing easement. Mr. Hus said that the plat subdivision demonstrates Family Express's commitment to grant an additional 5 ft. of right-of-way to Cline Ave. free of charge;

this would enable the capacity by increasing widening to occur on Cline Ave, which has been discussed at length with both staff and INDOT. Mr. Hus went on to say that it was discussed with the B.Z.A. that the widening of the south leg of that improvement will be performed by and at the cost to Family Express; that improvement will be done in conjunction with efforts being made by the Town and their Engineer to do the same to the north with as closely scheduled construction as possible. Mr. Hus stated that last week they had submitted such materials related to the engineering of the entire masterplan and what supports this platted subdivision to NIES Engineering. Mr. Hus said that they would follow up at subsequent meetings to backfill the architecture, lighting, landscaping, and the signage, which are all required for the site development; but believe that they underlying information behind the plat is what has been presented.

Mr. Hus went on to say that it had been discussed at length with the B.Z.A. and had received four developmental variances because this is a unique retrofit development; some related to the site and some related to the plat. Mr. Hus added that there were two critical items that were not mentioned to the B.Z.A. that need to be passed by the Plan Commission for waivers. Mr. Hus continued that Lot-3 is a landlocked parcel and **TITLE XI, Division 5, Section 10-254 (A)** describes that every platted lot must have continuity with a public right-of-way in order to develop and plat Lot-3, and they must receive a waiver from that requirement. Mr. Hus stated that this waiver, whether it was given or not, is what the Trek Bicycle/ Fleet Feet/ Aqua-Tots building relies on. Mr. Hus went on to say that this building has no direct connectivity to the public right-of-way, and because Lot-3 is landlocked a waiver would be necessary; Lot-1 and Lot-2 border the right-of-way so they would not need one. Mr. Hus continued on that the second waiver pertains to **Town of Schererville Code of Ordinances, Article 11 Storm Water Technical Standards Division III, Section 9-355 General: Methodology of Retention/Detention Storage Volumes** providing site detention; adding that this is a big waiver request because this is a retrofit, and the existing Von Tobel property was essentially fully paved without detention. Mr. Hus stated that providing detention on this property would almost certainly require the demolition of one or two buildings that we are trying to remain in place and the eventual tax revenue that would come from them. Mr. Hus informed the board that they had submitted documentation along with the request to NIES Engineering demonstrating that the master plan reduces the impervious area that Von Tobel had; and that the site will still drain to Turkey Creek but it will drain less than how it exists today. Mr. Hus said that although they do not intend to provide detention, they would provide a sizable hydrodynamic separator as part of the site plan for Lot-1 which will increase the quality of storm water discharged to Turkey Creek, with the expectation that when Lot-2 and Lot-3 bring in their own site development plan they would do the same. Mr. Hus went on to say that while they are not decreasing or slowing down the quality of storm water to Turkey Creek, they are increasing the quality of that runoff through the measures that will be undertaken during the development of lots 1, 2, and 3 at their respective development timelines. Mr. Hus added that although the drawings are still under review, Mr. Simstad expressed what he was looking for with this project. Mr. Hus concluded that the hope is to be able to advertise for the next public meeting.

Mr. Jarvis asked if there would be legal documents in place that give cross access from Lot-1 and Lot-2 to Lot-3, adding that he did not have an issue with giving a waiver as long as there was a connection to get to Lot-3. Mr. Hus replied that the legal documentation for the access only is the plat; this would be the site plan but there are a handful of hatches on the plat. Mr. Hus went on to say that almost every bit of the paved area on the plan that was not a parking area or a building would be platted as cross access easement; therefore, it would be very clear that anybody on Lot-3 has the right to go through Lot-2 to get to U.S. 30 or through Lot-1 to get to Cline Ave. Mr. Jarvis responded that they would need to make it clear in the findings of fact that the connections are there. Mr. Jarvis then asked where on the site plan was the connection to which Mr. Teibel was referring. Mr. Hus replied that the connection was south of where the proposed dumpster enclosure would be for Lot-1 because that was where a break in the line of parking existed. Mr. Hus went on to say that the existing parking spaces had a double row and that there was another row of parking on what is now Family Express's property, and that the cross-hatching did not exist. Mr. Hus said that someone from Mr. Teibel's lot could traverse the property line and use the parking on Family Express property. Mr. Hus informed the board that they had met with Mr. Teibel; and that although they would love to accommodate that, it would leave no area for the car wash queuing if the dumpster enclosure was shifted to the east, given how unique the site is they had agreed to disagree. Mr. Hus stated that there would be an opportunity that the area that had been the cut through lane could be stripped off and signed as no parking. Mr. Hus then added that if the customer for the fitness center had gone down there only to find that all those spots were taken, it would give them ample area to perform a three-point turn and then simply go back to the east and go south. Mr. Jarvis asked if the parking restrictions would be on Family Express property or the fitness centers. Mr. Hus responded that the southern row would remain partially on Family Express property and that they intend to allow Mr. Teibel to continue using them for that fitness center;

there would not be any signs, it would just be a cross-hatched area. Mr. Jarvis then asked if they would then have access. Mr. Hus replied that they would not have access but would have the opportunity to easily turn around because they could not go behind the fitness building because there was a dead end. Mr. Hus continued that if they traveled west only to find all the parking spaces were full, they could then turn right into that and then three-point turn back to find parking elsewhere. Mr. Hus believed that Mr. Teibels initial concern was that if someone went down there and there wasn't parking they would have to reverse all the way back out. Mr. Hus said that this would be the most efficient way to make sure that did not happen.

Mr. Anderson asked if it would connect if they were to take out the green area that is north west of the dumpster enclosure. Mr. Pete Andreou responded that Family Express has paid premium dollars for this lot and are trying to accommodate them the best they could. Mr. Andreou went on to say that there are about 4' or 5' of parking on Family Express property that they are allowing as well as 4' of that entire strip. Mr. Andreou stated that in regards to the comment on moving the trash enclosure over 20', that would not work because that would not allow enough queuing; then there would be a safety concern about the cars coming around that trash enclosure as cars are queuing into the carwash. Mr. Andreou said that the suggestion would be to use the hatched area that is wide enough where vehicles could pull in, back up, and then pull forward; if they could accommodate more they would, but for the safety and benefit of the customers they could not. Mr. Andreou stated that he believed Family Express allowing them 15 or 20 parking stalls was a great compromise. Mr. Anderson then verified that at the public hearing they would ask for a plat continuity waiver and another waiver for storm water detention. Mr. Anderson asked if they were changing any of the impervious area. Mr. Hus replied that they would decrease it very marginally. Mr. Anderson asked if there were any questions or comments from staff or board. There were none. Mr. Anderson asked when engineering had received the plans. Mr. Mike Helmuth replied that they had received them at the end of last week and are still under review. Mr. Anderson asked about the timeline. Mr. Hus replied that if the commission allowed, they want to be at the next public hearing, and would get the materials and packet together as quick as he could to satisfy the overlay district development plan. Mr. Anderson asked Mr. Helmuth if the engineering would be complete by the next hearing. Mr. Helmuth replied that it was still under review. Mr. Hus stated that as soon as they have the materials ready to submit they would be back.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

IV. ADJOURNEMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:49 P.M.