

Minutes - Goshen Plan Commission
Tuesday, July 20, 2021 - 4:00 pm
Council Chambers, 111 E. Jefferson Street
Goshen, Indiana

I. The meeting was called to order with the following members present: Josh Corwin, Tom Holtzinger, Hesston Lauver, Aracelia Manriquez, James Wellington, Richard Worsham, and Jim McKee. Also present were City Planner Rhonda Yoder and Assistant City Attorney James Kolbus. Absent: Caleb Morris, Rolando Ortiz

II. Approval of minutes of 6/15/21 – Holtzinger/Wellington 7-0

III. The Zoning/Subdivision Ordinances and Official Staff Reports were unanimously filed into record: Holtzinger/Wellington 7-0

IV. Postponements/Withdrawals
None

V. Rezoning (public hearing)

21-02R – A proposed annexation area with property owned by Ryan Thwaites, Douglas W. Thwaites and Nancy L. Thwaites includes a rezoning upon annexation to Industrial M-1, from existing Elkhart County zoning of Agricultural A-1. The property is approximately 163 acres, located east of and adjacent to the existing Goshen corporate boundary on the north side of County Road 36 (College Avenue) and including adjacent land on the south side of County Road 36.

Staff Report

Ms. Yoder explained this rezoning is part of an annexation which is being considered by the City Council. She went on to say that a public hearing for the rezoning is held by the Plan Commission between the first and second reading at Council, to ensure all affected parties are aware of the request. She noted the zoning will change from county Agricultural A-1 zoning to Industrial M-1 once annexed into the City. She provided details on setback requirements for M-1 properties adjacent to residential land use and noted that given the size of the annexation area, they are able to meet all of the M-1 requirements, including landscaping.

Ms. Yoder noted for the record that prior to today's hearing, the Planning Office received one inquiry regarding a traffic study for the development. She pointed out the study is underway and separate from the rezoning. She also noted that a letter in opposition to the annexation was received and is included in the packets.

She asked the Plan Commission forward a favorable recommendation to the Common Council and reminded Commission members the rezoning is a land use decision and the annexation is not part of this discussion.

Petitioner Presentation

Crystal Welsh, 1009 S 9th Street, spoke on behalf of the petitioner. She stated this is adjacent to an existing M-1 use in the City of Goshen and the intention is to develop a large industrial area. Development will happen in phases and the immediate area is the part already located within the City. She explained this rezoning is important because the water retention for the site will be located on the south side of County Road 36. She pointed out that the property owner recently met with neighboring property owners regarding his plans for the property and feels a lot of the questions and concerns were discussed at that time. She asked that the Commission forward a favorable recommendation to Council.

Audience Comments

Caryl Guth, 1409 Winsted Drive, spoke to the petition. She stated she is aware this hearing is regarding the land use, but wanted to offer comments about various neighborhoods and areas she visited and discussions she had with residents. She stated area residents are concerned with traffic, flooding, property values, and loss of agricultural land.

Jodi Salisbury, 16411 County Road 36 also spoke to the petition. She stated she lives on the north side of CR 36 and that if these parcels are rezoned, she will be completely surrounded by M-1 zoning. She voiced concerns that the road will be widened and she will lose a large portion of her front yard. She's also concerned about traffic and flooding. She asked that the land remain agricultural.

Ms. Welsh stated the property on the south side of College Avenue will be used for stormwater management and should help alleviate some of the issues neighbors currently have. There will also be road improvements to help with the traffic flow. She stated the proposed changes should work to make the area better than it is now. She also explained that the existing entrance to the fair property will be improved and utilized by the fair when they need it, and will also be part of this development.

Mr. Holtzinger asked what the timeline is for development if this project is approved.

Ryan Thwaits, 7133 Eli Lilly Road, Syracuse, spoke on behalf of the project. He stated that the traffic study is occurring in several different areas to determine if additional road improvements will be required. He stated that at this time the plan is to get the retention in place and the roads improved. He noted that regardless if this is annexed and rezoned, he plans to develop the already annexed area on the north side of CR36. He anticipates that construction could begin late spring or early summer, 2022.

Ms. Welsh reminded Commission members that the development will meet all of the M-1 standards. She also pointed out that manufacturing adjacent to residential has additional requirements and that is all included in the site development plans.

Stephen Salisbury, 16411 County Road 36, also spoke to the petition. He stated he lives along the north side of CR 36 and his concern is that when the road is widened, land will be taken from the north side of the road instead of the south side, noting that gas lines and telephone poles are currently along the south side of the road.

Ms. Welsh stated that the road improvements would be a City project and asked Mr. Corwin for his comments.

Mr. Corwin stated once the traffic study has been completed, they can determine what needs to be done to accommodate the anticipated traffic.

Reese Schmucker, 16660 County Road 36, also spoke to the petition. He stated he lives on the south side of CR 36 and his house and others on the south side of 36 will also be surrounded by Industrial zoning if this is approved.

Close Public Hearing

Staff Discussion:

Attorney Kolbus reminded Commission members that their role here is to decide on the zoning and not whether or not it should be annexed. He pointed out that listening to the speakers today, only one commented that she felt the zoning should remain agricultural. None of the other speakers commented on what the zoning should be.

Action:

A motion was made and seconded, Wellington/Holtzinger, to forward a favorable recommendation to the Goshen Common Council for 21-02R based upon the Staff Analysis. The motion passed by a vote of 6-1. (Holtzinger, yes; Corwin, yes; Lauver, yes; Wellington, yes; Manriquez, yes; Worsham, no; McKee, yes.)

VI. Audience Items
None

VII. Staff/Board Items
None

VIII. Adjournment – 4:40 pm Holtzinger/Lauver

Respectfully Submitted:

/s/ Lori Lipscomb
Lori Lipscomb, Recording Secretary

Approved By:

/s/ Jim McKee
Jim McKee, President

/s/ Tom Holtzinger
Tom Holtzinger, Secretary