

Minutes - Goshen Plan Commission
Tuesday, June 17, 2025 - 4:00 pm
Council Chambers, 111 E. Jefferson Street, Goshen, Indiana

I. The meeting was called to order with the following members present: Richard Worsham, Tom Holtzinger, Hesston Lauver, Doug Nisley, Dustin Sailor, Rolando Ortiz and James Wellington. Also present were City Planner Rhonda Yoder and Assistant City Attorney Don Shuler. Absent: Aracelia Manriquez

II. 2025 Plan Commission Appointments

- *Annual Appointment by the Board of Public Works & Safety - vacant*
- *Richard Worsham, mayoral appointment to the Plan Commission, was sworn in by Mayor Leichthy*

Ms. Manriquez joined the meeting at 4:01pm.

III. Approval of Minutes from 5/20/25 – Nisley/Holtzinger 8-0

IV. Filing of Zoning/Subdivision Ordinances and Official Staff Reports into Record: Holtzinger/Manriquez 8-0

V. Postponements/Withdrawals – None

VI. PUD Major Change & PUD Preliminary Site Plan Approval (public hearing items)

25-01MA – Meijer Stores Limited Partnership, First Federal Savings Bank, and Abonmarche request a PUD major change and PUD preliminary site plan approval to permit a bank with drive-through on an undeclared outlot. The outlot is proposed without street frontage and with access via easements. The proposed outlot is part of the subject property generally located at 4522 Elkhart Road, Lot 1 of Meijer Subdivision, and is zoned Commercial B-3PUD (Planned Unit Development), part of the Meijer PUD.

Staff Report

Ms. Yoder explained this is a recommendation to Council. She provided background information on the Meijer PUD, explaining it was annexed into the City of Goshen in January 1996. She went on to say the 1990 site plan did not include outlots and all outlots that have been approved since that time have been major changes to the PUD.

She discussed developmental requirements, including that the lot is proposed without street frontage and with access via easements. She explained this is consistent with a similar lot in Goshen Village Shoppes which is part of the Meijer PUD. She explained this will also be reviewed by all City departments to ensure safe access and maneuvering. Today's PUD major change and preliminary site plan is to approve the conceptual plan, noting that there may be changes based on the requirements of other departments. She went on to say that PUD districts do not require specific standards for lot size, lot width, building height, coverage and setbacks, but sites must be designed to have adequate space to meet all other developmental requirements such as landscaping and parking, and they must provide access for all services.

Onsite parking will meet Zoning Ordinance requirements, and the plans provided didn't allow signs to be evaluated, so it is unknown if signs will meet Zoning Ordinance requirements. Sign details will need to be provided at a later date, and this approval is recommended to be contingent on signs meeting Zoning Ordinance requirements. Landscaping will also be required, but details were not provided for review. Required landscaping will include the landscaped area for the freestanding sign along with street trees, and those details will need to be provided with the final site plan. No photometric plan will be required because there are no adjacent residential properties.

If the PUD major change is approved, subdivision approval will be required to create the outlot and establish the remainder of Lot 1 of Meijer Subdivision.

Staff recommends the Plan Commission forward a favorable recommendation to Council.

Petitioner Presentation:

Crystal Welsh, 303 River Race Drive, spoke on behalf of the petitioner. She stated this is a good opportunity to allow people to do banking and shopping in one area. She noted the final landscaping plan and sign package will be part of the

final site plan approval and they will work with staff to make sure all of those requirements are met.

Audience Comments:

There was no one to speak to the petition.

Close Public Hearing

Staff Discussion:

None

Action:

A motion was made and seconded, Wellington/Nisley, to forward a favorable recommendation to the Goshen Common Council for 25-01MA based on Staff analysis and with the conditions listed in the Staff Report. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

VII. Commitment Modification (public hearing)

25-01CM – NRG Holdings, LLC, Burton’s Laundry, and Ancon Construction request a modification to a Plan Commission Written Commitment to allow a reduction in the required on-site parking for a proposed laundromat, where the Written Commitment requires on-site parking meeting the Zoning Ordinance requirements. The subject property is generally located at 301 W Pike Street and is zoned Commercial B-2 District.

Staff Report

Ms. Yoder explained this request is a Plan Commission decision. She provided background information on the site, noting that it was rezoned to Commercial B-2 in 2020 and included a written commitment which established four commitments as a condition of the rezoning. Modification of the commitment requires a public hearing at the Plan Commission.

She explained commitments were required because the location is at the edge of the central business district, and for example, there are no public parking lots near the site, so one of the requirements was that onsite parking be provided for the proposed use. The remaining commitments were included to keep the impact on the residential area to a minimum.

This request is to allow a laundromat with associated parking and the proposal is for 44 washing machines. The Zoning Ordinance would require 48 parking spaces and 23 are proposed. The applicant provided a parking study which was taken over two different days at two locations similar to the proposed Goshen location and found that during peak times parking was available at both locations. Staff also looked at four other cities to see how laundromat parking is reviewed and found that three of the four cities review by spaces per gross floor area, and one reviewed by the number of washing machines. Compared to the other four cities, it appears Goshen’s parking requirements for laundromats may be excessive. Because of these comparisons, Staff recommends the commitment modification be approved and that the approval allow review of laundromat parking for 301 W Pike Street at one space per two washing machines. If the commitment modification is approved, it would only modify the onsite parking for a laundromat, not for any other uses.

She noted for the record, one email was received by a neighboring property owner in support of the use but asking for the City to enforce no parking restrictions in the neighborhood.

Petitioner Presentation:

Glen Kauffmann, 19248 Gentle Stream Circle, Goshen, spoke on behalf of the petitioner. He stated this is the third facility of this size that they would be building and that is how they were able to do the like-for-like parking study, noting that the other two locations are in Elkhart and South Bend.

Audience Comments:

Rose Marie Jorgensen, 307 New Street, spoke to the petition. She voiced concerns about limited parking on New Street and 2nd Street and worries that excess parking might impact access to and from her property.

Joelen Heflin, 324 N 2nd Street, also spoke to the petition. She stated she is opposed to this request stating it is not needed because there are several other laundromats in Goshen. She also voiced concerns that parking will be inadequate

and that the laundromat will add additional traffic to an already busy corridor.

Glenn Null, 319 Dewey Avenue, also spoke to the petition. He stated area traffic is a large concern and this laundromat will only add to that.

David Nufer, 2409 Mishawaka Avenue, South Bend, also spoke to the petition. He stated he is the potential owner of the property and has been in this business for 45 years. Goshen will be their fifteenth location. He stated their biggest day is on Sunday when they do about 30% of their business. Saturday is about 20% and the remaining 50% is spread throughout the week. He said the only time they would come close to 23 cars is on Sunday and it is anticipated there will be no more than 15-17 cars in Goshen on a Sunday. He stated he doesn't anticipate any vehicles parked in the street. Operating hours are 8:00 am to 9:00 pm, seven days/week, but closed on some holidays. The store will not be open 24 hours.

Gina Leichty, 412 E Purl Street, also spoke to the petition. She encouraged the Plan Commission to consider this infill investment being made in the community. She stated she hears the concerns of the neighboring residents but feels this can be an asset to the community.

Raymond Jorgeson, 307 New Street, also spoke to the petition. He stated there is a nearby laundromat and there are always people walking down the street with laundry baskets. He states there are a lot of rental properties in the neighborhood and a lot of people walk to the laundromat. He feels this is the best possible use for the lot.

Close Public Hearing

Staff Discussion:

Mr. Wellington stated the main concern here appears to be parking.

Ms. Yoder replied that there is no more room on the site plan for parking. Part of the issue is that there is only one access and the dumpster is straight ahead. Garbage trucks and emergency vehicles need space to turn around on site and the required onsite maneuvering takes away two parking spaces.

Mr. Holtzinger asked is she is comfortable with the results.

Ms. Yoder responded that the studies show parking is adequate during peak days. She also noted that compared to other jurisdictions, Goshen parking requirements for laundromats appear excessive and it is not reasonable to expect that many parking spaces. She also agreed with Mr. Jorgeson's comments that people in the neighborhood will likely walk there. She also pointed out this is a commercial site and whatever is built there will have to deal with the traffic issues.

Action:

A motion was made and seconded, Wellington/Holtzinger, to approve 25-01CM, following the process listed in the Staff Report. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

VIII. PUD Major Change (public hearing)

25-02MA – Ryan's Place, Inc., and SignArt, Inc., request a PUD major change to approve an illuminated monument sign, where sign illumination (internal and external) is prohibited adjacent to residential use/zoning, and where the approved PUD site plan was submitted with no sign illumination. The subject property is generally located at 1566 Regent Street and is zoned Commercial B-4PUD (Planned Unit Development), part of Waterford Commons PUD.

Staff Report

Ms. Yoder explained this is a recommendation to Council. This property, located on the south side of Regent Street, appeared before the Plan Commission approximately a year ago. Regent Street apartments is located to the west, Prairieview School to the east, and residential to the north. Development is currently underway on the property for a single-story office building and parking for Ryan's Place. When the PUD major change was submitted a year ago, the complete sign details were not provided. The petitioners were notified of the specific sign requirements at that time and because the location is adjacent to residential use and zoning, sign illumination is not permitted. She went on to say that the PUD preliminary site plan that was submitted with the major change and also submitted with the final site plan, included the note saying no sign illumination is permitted. The review for the illuminated monument sign is a major change because it a change in the use or the character of the development and the approved site plan specifically states that no sign illumination will be permitted.

Staff recommends an unfavorable recommendation be forwarded to the Council.

Mr. Holtzinger asked if there are any illuminated signs in the area.

Ms. Yoder responded none that she is aware of; none on Regent Street.

Petitioner Presentation:

Joseph Craven, 5757 E Cork Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan, spoke on behalf of the petitioner. He explained to Commission members how the sign would be illuminated, noting that the sign will merely be used to identify themselves and that the light would not be intrusive, comparing the illumination to a porchlight. He went on to explain that this is a four-way intersection and the sign will help direct traffic. He stated they can install a timer so the sign could be illuminated during the fall and winter hours. He went on to say Ryan's Place is generally open Monday to Friday, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, but they do have some afterhours events. The illuminated sign would help people find their way in the mornings and evening. He also pointed out that approval for the previous sign, 12' in height and sign area of 60 square feet, was much larger than the proposed sign which is 4'11" high, with a sign area of 25 square feet. He went on to say that doesn't speak to the illumination, but they feel they're very mindful in the design. He also stated without illumination, the sign they're constructing will appear to need maintenance. He also pointed out there are internally illuminated signs along Kercher Road which are adjacent to residential properties, as well as an internally illuminated sign at the nearby school. He summarized by saying the safety and wayfinding needs will not adversely affect the surrounding community.

Mr. Holtzinger questioned if illumination is necessary, pointing out hours of the facility are limited. He also commented that the area is residential, and area neighbors have voiced concerns about the lighting at the nearby baseball field.

Mr. Lauver questioned if only the letters on the sign would be illuminated.

Mr. Craven stated the logo and Ryan's Place name would be illuminated with diffused light which would present as a glow.

Mr. Wellington asked if it could only be illuminated after dark.

Mr. Craven stated a timer can be installed.

Ms. Yoder remarked that if the PUD major change is approved, it will include an ordinance and the ordinance can include conditions. If the Commission wants to recommend approval, she suggested that the illumination for Ryan's Place only be approved as presented by the petitioner, with diffused internal lighting only, and possibly on a timer. Any conditions can be included in the approval.

Audience Comments:

None

Close Public Hearing

Staff Discussion:

Mr. Nisley stated if we start allowing signs because they're made a little different, we're likely to be inundated with sign requests. He pointed out the City has denied other signs and feels we should stick to the ordinance.

Mr. Ortiz stated we might need to revisit some of that because of the lower-level lighting. He also pointed out with development in this area, we might see this request again.

Ms. Yoder agreed with Mr. Ortiz that technology is changing and perhaps we should look at how to regulate. She went on to say that currently internal and external illumination is reviewed the same in the ordinance.

Mr. Wellington stated he appreciates that the proposed sign is 1/3 the size of the original approval and feels even with the illumination this is a better sign.

Action:

A motion was made and seconded, Wellington/Ortiz, to forward a favorable recommendation to the City Council for 25-02MA, with the condition that the sign only be lit during Ryan's Place business hours. A roll call vote was requested with the following outcome: Holtzinger, No; Ortiz, Yes; Lauver, No; Wellington, Yes; Sailor, No; Manriquez, Yes; Worsham,

No; Nisley, No. The motion failed by a vote of 3-5.

A motion was made, Wellington, to forward no recommendation to the City Council for 25-02MA. The motion failed for lack of a second.

A motion was made and seconded, Holtzinger/Nisley, to forward an unfavorable recommendation to the City Council for 25-02MA. A roll call vote was requested with the following outcome: Holtzinger, Yes; Lauver, Yes; Wellington, No; Sailor, Yes; Manriquez, No; Worsham, Yes; Nisley, Yes; Ortiz, No. The motion passed by a vote of 5-3.

IX. Audience Items - None

X. Staff/Board Items

- Unified Development Ordinance Initiative

Mayor Leichty thanked the Plan Commission and Planning staff for their consistent work in supporting the development of the City of Goshen. She noted they have helped Goshen grow responsibly, by protecting property values, and making our community special. She stated the zoning and subdivision ordinances are nearly 40 years old, although there has been a considerable amount of effort to update the ordinances over the years. She stated we are lagging behind and our ordinances have become quite complex and difficult to navigate for staff, residents, and developers.

She explained she would like to develop a modern, unified development ordinance which would be a combination of the subdivision ordinance and zoning codes into one document. She stated the new version would use plain language, modern visuals, and provide a digital access point for community members. She stated this will make government more efficient, accessible, and user friendly.

She asked that the Plan Commission grant approval for Staff to begin the UDO process. This would include forming a task force, which would include Plan Commission members, Council members, Board of Zoning Appeals members, and community members. Advisory groups would convene as needed and input from the community will be necessary. She stated that staff will hire a qualified planning consultant, estimating that this will be a two-year process with public engagement throughout the entire time. She asked that the Plan Commission pass the motion to allow staff to initiate this work.

Action:

A motion was made and seconded, Wellington/Holtzinger, to allow Staff to initiate the UDO process.

Mr. Nisley asked why this is being brought before the Commission today.

Ms. Yoder responded that the Plan Commission initiates changes to the Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances and then makes a recommendation to the Council.

Mr. Nisley also asked if the Plan Commission has the authority to spend money to hire a consultant.

Mayor Leichty replied that the Council has already approved the funding for this project as part of the 2025 budget.

The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

- Resolution 2025-PC01, Resolution of the Goshen Plan Commission Adopting a Policy to Provide Public Notice of Meetings

Ms. Yoder referred to a memo from the Legal Department that has been included in Plan Commission packet. She explained the first resolution is based on new statutory requirements for public meetings. It applies to our annual meeting notice, rescheduled meetings, meeting changes, and special meetings. It will require some changes to the Plan Commission Rules of Procedure and those will be presented later. Because this resolution is based on statutory requirements, it should be adopted, and the rules will be updated and brought back to the Plan Commission.

Action:

A motion was made and seconded, Wellington/Lauver, to approve Resolution 2025-PC01 as presented. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 8-0.

Ms. Yoder advised that all Commission members will need to sign the resolution.

- Resolution 2025-PC02, Resolution of the Goshen Plan Commission Adopting an Electronic Meetings Policy to Allow Members of the Plan Commission to Participate in Meetings by an Electronic Means of Communication

Ms. Yoder explained that 2025-PC02 would allow electronic participation for Plan Commission members. She explained this is a voluntary policy and electronic participation is allowed with certain rules. She stated if this is adopted we need a method to ensure we have a quorum of in-person attendance to keep customer petitions on schedule. She further explained that half of the membership must be present at the meeting to have a quorum, so Staff would need to know ahead of time if someone plans to attend remotely. She noted that details can be added to the Plan Commission Rules of Procedure so we know who will be participating electronically.

Mr. Holtzinger asked if one day notice is sufficient.

Ms. Yoder replied that she is not sure how much notice will be necessary, but probably one week. She went on to say if there is an emergency, we would have to take that into consideration.

Mr. Nisley stated that he is not in favor of this resolution, pointing out if a member is attending remotely they must be seen and heard and if they cannot be seen, they cannot vote.

Ms. Yoder pointed out that all meetings with electronic participation require roll call votes.

Action:

A motion was made and seconded, Wellington/Lauver, to approve Resolution 2025-PC02 as presented. A roll call vote was requested with the following outcome: Holtzinger, yes; Ortiz, yes; Lauver, yes; Wellington, yes; Sailor, yes; Manriquez, yes; Worsham, no; Nisley, no. The motion passed by a vote of 6-2.

Mayor Leichy stated she doesn't have the policy in front of her but asked if the statute requires a roll call vote if members are attending electronically.

Ms. Yoder replied that even if it is not in the policy, roll call vote is required by statute, and if adopting the policy what is required by statute must be followed.

XI. Adjournment – 5:30 pm; Holtzinger/Lauver 8-0

Respectfully Submitted:

Lori Lipscomb, Recording Secretary

Approved By:

Richard Worsham, President

Tom Holtzinger, Secretary