

PLAN COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION NOTES
JULY 3, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Plan Commission Study Session was called to order at 6:48 P.M. by Vice-President William Jarvis at the Schererville Town Hall, 10 E. Joliet St.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-President Jarvis stated that the Pledge of Allegiance was already recited at the Plan Commission Meeting.

B. Roll Call

Vice-President Jarvis stated that the Roll Call would stand from the Plan Commission Public Meeting.

II. COMMISSION BUSINESS

A. Memory Lane

General Location: 6305 W. Lincoln Hwy.

Petitioner(s): First Baptist Church of Hammond

Represented by: Contractor Kevin Hart of Custom Design

Request: U.S. 30 Commercial Corridor Overlay District Development Plan Review

Mr. Gary Torrenga from Torrenga Engineering represented the petitioners. Mr. Torrenga stated that inside Memory Lane Cemetery is an existing building that is located on the west side of the entrance that holds the maintenance equipment for the cemetery, which is no longer big enough to house and maintain. Mr. Torrenga stated they are proposing to build a second building to the east of that and is facing the existing building where the graves are not located. Mr. Torrenga added that the new proposed building will be built onto the hillside of a 1.79 acre Lot on the northwest corner with a 3ft retaining wall. Mr. Torrenga stated it will be drained by underground perforated pipes that will also be behind the retaining wall and that sanitary sewers are not necessary. Mr. Torrenga said the proposed building will be located on the northwest corner that is currently sand; and they will direct the water down the hill to the west going under U.S. 30 where there is a large pipe. Mr. Torrenga concluded they will not be putting in any concrete, just a 3ft. stone Unilock wall to the south, east, and north side of it, and it will share the same existing road as the existing building; and they are now looking to subdivide.

Mr. Jarvis asked how many feet off of U.S. 30 this will be due to the fact that it is located in the Corridor Overlay and has certain requirements; Ms. Sulek added that the front of building must be 1 of the 3 elements: stone, brick, or glass. Mr. Kevin Hart from Custom Design stated that the building will look identical to the existing. Mr. Jarvis stated the exterior must follow the Ordinance and would need to be “dressed up” unless there is a waiver and that the other building was grandfathered in. Mr. Jarvis added if nothing else then some kind of buffer would need to be in front. Mr. Hart stated there was talk with the Landscaper about there being arborvitae to hide the building as the plants grow. Mr. Jarvis suggested to have the landscape drawing show exactly what is going to be done, and that would lower the cost to the church for getting it built. Mr. Jarvis then asked if there will be parking adjacent. Mr. Hart responded that right now it is only being used for the maintenance equipment and parking for the one worker. Mr. Jarvis stated that the one thing that really needs to be worked on is how nice it can look in the front with the landscaping; this will be on the main corridor through Schererville so the Board needs to be touchy on this so that it looks good.

Ms. Sulek added that she believes they will need an access easement added to that in case the Lot is sold later, there would need to be an access agreement. Ms. Sulek continued to say that they may get an access from the State at a later date, but for now there should be an access easement. Mr. Torrenga stated the problem is that you can't give yourself an easement; the Baptist church is going to own both Lots and this is only getting subdivided to satisfy the two

buildings on one Lot. Mr. Jarvis recommended to check with an Attorney. Mr. Torrenga said this is according to the State laws of Indiana. Mr. Jarvis stated that when he built a building in Valparaiso, he had to grant himself a cross easement to go across because the City of Valparaiso wanted a frontage road so he had to allow that. Mr. Jarvis informed Mr. Torrenga to check into it and “just give us the documentation and we are good with it.”

Mr. Torrenga stated if that is what the Commission would like to see, we can write an easement following the curve of that road from where it enters off of U.S. 30. Mr. Jarvis asked Ms. Sulek if it would not be active, the road or easement. Mr. Sulek responded that is correct. Mr. Jarvis stated that what Ms. Sulek is saying is that if this portion would ever get sold off for any reason there has to be an access for the future. Mr. Torrenga stated he fully understands that but if it were to be sold off in the future, it would have to be a reason for coming in off of U.S. 30 and that would be somebody else’s problem with dealing with the State highway to get an access from U.S. 30. Mr. Jarvis said to give Ms. Sulek what she is looking for that way this could move right along when it gets to a public meeting.

B. U-Haul of Pine Island

General Location: 5048 W. Lincoln Hwy.

Petitioner(s): Foster 81st LLC/U-Haul Co. of Northern Indiana and South Cook County
Rick Rottweiler, Area District Vice President

Represented by: Michael D. Cook, P.E. – Cook Engineering Group

Request: 2-Lot (B.P.) Business Park Subdivision

Mr. Michael Cook from Cook Engineering represented the petitioners. Mr. Cook stated that part of the package they submitted is related to the U.S. 30 Overlay plan, some of these ordinances have taken effect after there was an old storage facility that was put on the property before U-Haul acquired it. Mr. Cook continued to say that the Town had asked to create a subdivision to bring this up to code with the ordinances; as part of this they are looking to get a waiver of the storm water ordinance knowing the only improvements they are making are to the exterior of the building and are not changing any grading. Mr. Cook added that there is a vacant parcel on the east side that sits on the land next to the old railroad tracks that is now a pathway that runs north/south across U.S. 30. Mr. Cook continued to say that U-Haul currently owns both parcels and are trying to clean up the property and bring it to code and compliance with the subdivision and the exterior improvements with the showroom warehouse building that was discussed earlier at the Plan Commission public hearing. Mr. Cook stated they have an existing cross access to this property where you can get from point A to point B with the signalized entrance on U.S. 30; there will not be an access to the east side parcel from U.S. 30, it must come from that signal. Mr. Cook added everything on the east side of the ditch is a flood plan that is remaining as is because there will only be exterior improvements to the showroom. Mr. Jarvis stated that they will need to make sure that the ditch is functioning well.

III. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:11 P.M.