

City of Crawfordsville Plan Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

The Crawfordsville Plan Commission met in regular session on May 16, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. Members present for the meeting were Andy Biddle, Bernard Thompson, Joyce Burnette, Gerry Turner, and Troy Swan. Others in attendance were: Tyler Nichols, City Attorney of Taylor, Minnette, Schneider, and Clutter; Megan Huckstep, Director of Planning & Building Services; Kathryn Vice, Executive Assistant, Department of Planning & Building Services; as well as Mayor Todd Barton and Julie Smith, Land Entitlement Manager of Arbor Homes.

Plan Commission President Joyce Burnette called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and the roll was called.

Election of officers was requested for 2023. After some discussion, Joyce Burnette suggested the election of officers as follows: Joyce Burnette as President, Bernard Thompson as Vice President, and Andy Biddle as Secretary. Troy Swan made a motion to elect the officers as suggested for 2023. Andy Biddle seconded. Motion approved 5-0.

Meeting minutes from May 17, 2022 were presented. Andy Biddle moved to approve the minutes as presented. Bernard Thompson seconded. Motion approved 5-0.

Sterling Minor

Julie Smith, Arbor Homes

SUB 0030/RZ 0020

There were no items of old business, therefore the Commission proceeded with items of new business. Director Megan Huckstep presented the portion of the staff report concerning petition SUB 0030 submitted by Julie Smith, Land Entitlement Manager of Arbor Homes, who was requesting primary and secondary plat approval for a minor subdivision of three (lots) located at vacant land ½ mile south of County Road 150 South on US Highway 231 South. Ms. Huckstep explained the property is currently zoned B-3, business and used as agricultural/farming land. She reported that the property is surrounded by R-1, residential to the north; B-3, business to the northwest; and two parcels are zoned I-1, industrial to the southwest. Ms. Huckstep explained that the property was recently annexed into the City in December 2021. Land to the east, west and south is located outside the City limits and continues to be used for agricultural/farming purposes. Ms. Huckstep reported that the Petitioner would like to divide the 70.18 acre parcel into three parcels and would then like to rezone 59.32 acres, known as block one on the plat from B-3, business to R-2, residential. The remaining two blocks that line US Highway 231 South would persist as B-3, business. Ms. Huckstep noted that the Petitioner had submitted a Statement of Commitments that indicates duplex and single-family attached dwellings would not be permitted in their residential subdivision development. Ms. Huckstep explained the property is accessed from US Highway 231, a heavily traveled state highway and main corridor through the city, noting that any right-of-way changes and access would need approval through INDOT. Ms. Huckstep reported no known traffic, environmental, or emergency issues anticipated. She explained the concept plan includes 173 single-family homes on individual lots with two potential accesses off US Highway 231. Ms. Huckstep stated if the minor subdivision and rezone are approved, the Petitioner will proceed with development plans for the residential subdivision and the Plan Commission will hear a separate petition for a major residential subdivision. The Commission may grant the Primary Plat Approval upon the following findings of fact:

1. ***The Petitioner has submitted all items necessary for primary plat approval as listed in §152.015 of the Subdivision Control Ordinance.***
Yes, the petitioner has submitted all items necessary for primary plat approval.
2. ***The proposal meets the Primary Plat Specifications in §152.016 of the Subdivision Control Ordinance.***
Yes, the plat meets the primary plat specifications.

3. ***The proposal substantially complies with the Design Standards of §§152.024 – 152.037 of the Subdivision Control Ordinance.***

Most of these standards do not apply, because this is a simple lot split into three lots.

4. ***The proposed subdivision substantially conforms to the City's future land use map.***

The City's Future Land Use Map shows this property as Agricultural Preservation. According to the Comprehensive Plan, Agricultural Preservation areas are "primarily located outside of the municipal limits, inside of the 2-mile ETJ. Agricultural preservation should be used to encourage development in areas serviced by the City's existing infrastructure. Parcels within this designation should minimize development. Exceptions include single-family dwellings, accessory buildings on large lots and buildings related to agriculture or other uses which do not conflict with the rural character of the areas.

Development in these areas should be single, large lot residential developments not less than one (1) dwelling unit for every one (1) acre. Most of the City is served by piped water and sewer. However, there are area inside of the ETJ that are serviced by well and septic systems. It is preferable that new developments utilize City water and sewer systems. Lot splits from the parent tract should be limited in this area unless a rezoning and land use change has occurred. As a general rule, residential subdivisions should not be permitted until the area is served by the necessary infrastructure and has, or will be, annexed into the City following a rezoning process. All residential development within the Agricultural area should be required to incorporate the following Right-to-Farm Statement in the site development plan approval process." The property was annexed into the City in December 2021. The Comprehensive Plan was drafted prior to this area being annexed and prior to city utilities being extended to this area. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan states that "it is also the intent of this character area to discourage single-lot development along county roads within the 2-mile extra-territorial jurisdictional." The Petitioner has plans to come back to the Plan Commission for a planned major residential subdivision, therefore this concern will be eliminated.

The Commission may grant the Secondary Plat Approval upon the following findings of fact:

1. ***Whether the petitioner has properly received primary plat approval from the Crawfordsville Plan Commission and whether the secondary plat substantially conforms to the approved primary plat.***

Yes, the plan commission will only consider secondary plat approval if the Commission approves primary plat approval.

2. ***Whether the primary plat has expired.***

No, the primary plat has not expired.

3. ***Whether the petitioner has properly submitted all items necessary for secondary plat approval as listed in Section 152.015 of the Subdivision Control Ordinance.***

Yes, the petitioner has submitted all items necessary for secondary plat approval.

4. ***Whether the petitioner has met the Secondary Plat specifications in Section 152.017 of the Subdivision Control Ordinance.***

Yes, a construction/maintenance guarantee will not be necessary because there are no public improvements being constructed at this time.

5. ***Whether the proposed subdivision substantially complies with the design standards of Sections 152.024 – 152.037 of the Subdivision Control Ordinance.***

Most of these standards do not apply, because this is a simple lot split with no new public infrastructure at this time.

6. *Whether the proposed subdivision meets the Construction Plan specifications in Section 152.019 of the Subdivision Control Ordinance;*

No public improvements will be constructed. This is simply a parcel split.

7. *Whether any required performance guarantee and/or maintenance bond has been approved.*

N/A - there are no public improvements being constructed at this time.

Julie Smith, Land Entitlement Manager of Arbor Homes came forward with a presentation. After briefly reviewing the history of Arbor Homes, Mrs. Smith displayed a highlighted image of block one, the 59.32 acres of the property the Petitioner is requesting to rezone. Mrs. Smith introduced the project as Hawkview, reiterating that there would be 173 lots, or 2.9 dwelling units per acre. She identified the two access points, one on the northern edge and one located more centrally. Mrs. Smith noted that the northeast and northwest corners of the property are in the floodplain, so the Petitioner does not anticipate any development in these areas. Mrs. Smith identified the detention ponds depicted in blue, as well as the general layout of the parcels. She noted there would be approximately 30% or 18 acres of open space, as well as a playground in the northeast corner. Mrs. Smith displayed some examples of standard Arbor homes, explaining that they have 13 floor plans with up to 8 elevation options, including single and two-story homes ranging from 1,200 to 3,200 square feet. Mrs. Smith reported that the average sales price for the homes in the Hawkview community would be \$285,000. She explained that each buyer is invited to their design center in Indianapolis to make their specific selections with a representative in order to make each home and the community as a whole unique.

At this time the meeting opened to questions from the Commission. Mrs. Burnette questioned whether or not Arbor Homes would own each of the three parcels or just block one. Mrs. Smith reported that Arbor Homes would only own block one, pointing out the easement which would be used for access. Ms. Huckstep reiterated that the Commission was hearing a simple minor subdivision at this time, stating that a more detailed major residential subdivision would come to the Commission at a later time. Joyce Burnette moved to grant Primary and Secondary Plat Approval. Troy Swan seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Ms. Huckstep presented the remainder of the staff report concerning the RZ 0020. She reviewed the findings of fact as follows:

The Plan Commission is to consider the criteria contained in I.C. §36-7-4-603; the statute requires the Commission to pay reasonable regard to (1) the comprehensive plan; (2) current conditions and the character of current structures and uses in each district; (3) the most desirable use for which the land in each district is adapted; (4) the conservation of property values throughout the district; and (5) responsible development and growth. The Zoning Ordinance also requires the Plan Commission to consider the following factors as identified in Section 153.063:

1. *Whether the rezoning will fulfill a public need for that type of land use;*

There is a need for residential development in this community. The city has access to a few housing studies that support this finding.

2. *Whether the rezoning is appropriate in the area requested or if the public interest would be better served by rezoning another area of the jurisdiction;*

This area has a wide variety of uses including single-family residential, office, storage, retail, and agricultural. Because of the mixture of uses that already exist near this property, Staff feels that the rezoning would not be problematic since the plan is to develop a single-family residential subdivision behind two commercial outlots. However, it should be known that plans are underway to extend Purple Heart Parkway from US Highway 231 to Ladoga Road which could potentially open up additional residential and commercial development in the near future.

3. *Whether the rezoning conforms to the future land use map in the Comprehensive Plan;*

This property is identified as Agricultural Preservation on the Future Land Use Map. The property was located in the two-mile area outside of the city limits that the city had jurisdiction over for many years until Montgomery County adopted zoning. However, the property was annexed into the city in 2021 and at the time of annexation it was zoned B-3, Business.

4. *Whether the new land use will complement the present and future traffic flows or would the rezoning cause an adverse impact;*

There are multiple uses along US Highway 231 South, and it is already a heavily traveled thoroughfare. If the property is developed as proposed with 173 new single-family residential homes there will be an increase in traffic on US Highway 231. The developer would be required to meet INDOT safety standards for access. In addition, Purple Heart Parkway extension will also be completed next year, which may relieve some of the traffic flow in this area. Also, currently a study on CR 150 South improvements being completed that could further help the traffic flow situation.

5. *Whether adequate off street parking will be provided if the rezoning request is granted;*

Off street parking should not be an issue if the rezoning request is granted. Each dwelling unit constructed will require off-street parking.

6. *Whether potential inconveniences and nuisances (such as noise, lights, odors, etc.) of the rezoning request on adjacent landowners have been adequately considered;*

The residential zoning district will not be more of an inconvenience or nuisance to the adjoining properties than the business zoning district. The existing residential neighbors would likely prefer single family residential homes to the business development. However, Staff would like to make it clear that the lots fronting US Highway 231 would remain zoned B-3, Business, for future commercial development in the area; therefore existing and future residents should be aware that there is potential for additional mixed residential and commercial growth in the area, especially with the expansion of Purple Heart Parkway.

7. *Whether there are adequate public utilities and services available to the land if rezoned, and whether the local government will have to pay the cost of any such installation, and;*

The City is already in the process of expanding some of its utilities to the area with plans of extending Purple Heart Parkway. There are also already permits to extend the sanitary sewer south for an industrial property. The Petitioner will be responsible for some infrastructure installation and costs.

8. *Whether it is assured that the rezoning request is not spot zoning, a violation of precedents, or arbitrary and capricious.*

No, this area is currently a mix of residential, commercial and agricultural uses.

Ms. Huckstep stated since the plat was approved, staff recommends forwarding the rezoning request of the 59.32 acre parcel from B-3, business to R-2, residential with a favorable recommendation. This recommendation would include the Petitioner's Statement of Commitments that would be recorded with the property.

At this time the meeting was opened to public comment. Mayor Barton came forward to speak on the request. He explained that when the property was annexed into the City, it was zoned with the most intense use, so it could be backed off from that point. He cited the City's housing shortage backed by several studies and the need for workforce housing. With no further comment, Troy Swan made a motion to forward the rezoning request as presented with the conditions to Council with a favorable recommendation. Andy Biddle seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Minutes Approved: 06.20.2023

Joyce Bennett
President

Member

Karen Crawford
Member

Katherine Haffner
Member

Paul Z 7
Member

Andy B. Miller
Member

David M. Burges
Member

[Signature]
Member