



Board of Zoning Appeals City of Crawfordsville, Indiana

City Building
300 E. Pike Street, 2nd Floor
Crawfordsville, IN 47933

August 20, 2025 at 7:00 PM Meeting Minutes

The City of Crawfordsville Board of Zoning Appeals met as scheduled on Wednesday, August 20, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers of the Municipal Building. Board members present were: Malcolm Petty, Joyce Burnette, Allen Slight, Ron Henricks, and Shelle Wheeler. Other in attendance were: Megan Huckstep, Director of Planning & Building Services; Attorney Taylor Powell; and Katie Fisher, Executive Assistant, Planning & Building Services.

Joyce Burnette called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the roll was called.

Meeting minutes from July 16, 2025 were presented for consideration. Ron Henricks moved to approve the minutes as presented. Shelle Wheeler seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

400 Parke Avenue – Montgomery County 4-H Inc. – SE 0070

Continuing with items of new business, Planning Director, Megan Huckstep reviewed the staff report concerning petition SE 0070 submitted by Montgomery County 4-H Inc. who was requesting a use special exception from the schedule of uses to allow overnight camping in a C-1, conservation zoning district at 400 Parke Avenue. The findings of fact are as follows:

1. *Whether the special exception is listed as such in the Official Schedule of Uses?*

Yes. Campground is a special exception in a C-1, conservation zoning district according to the Schedule of Uses.

2. *Whether the special exception will not involve any element or cause any condition that may be dangerous, injurious, or noxious to any other property or persons?*

The fairgrounds property is located in a conservation zoning district with residential zoning and uses surrounding the fairgrounds property, in addition to a local neighborhood school building that is immediately across the street. While allowing occasional camping would likely not be dangerous or injurious to the other property or persons, it could be noxious with noise, traffic, lights, as well as visual appearances to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

3. *Whether the special exception is a manufacturing or industrial/processing facility that will comply with all of the performance standards of Section 153.023?*

n/a. The proposal is not for a manufacturing or industrial processing facility.



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4. *Whether the special exception will be sited, oriented, and landscaped to produce a harmonious relationship of buildings and grounds to adjacent buildings and properties?*

Site plans have been provided. The H-frames for electrical services are already on the property for other uses at the fairgrounds. Campers would be situated at each location according to the electrical service that is existing on-site. It does not appear that any site improvements would be made to the property to landscape or screen the campers from the residential neighborhoods. However, campers would not all be in one location. They would be spread out throughout the property so someone might not see campers at all 5 sites due to existing trees and buildings on the property.

5. *Whether the special exception will produce a total visual impression and environment which is consistent with the environment of the neighborhood?*

Staff does not feel the special exception will produce a total visual impression and environment consistent with the environment of the residential neighborhoods that surround the fairgrounds property.

6. *Whether the special exception will organize vehicular access and parking to minimize traffic congestion in the neighborhood?*

The petitioner has spread the campers out throughout the property according to their submitted plans based on where existing electrical services are provided on the property. There would be adequate parking for the number of campers they plan to allow although sites will not necessarily be clearly marked with a concrete pad or gravel. Staff has noted that there is congestion in this area when school is in session during drop-off and pick-up times. Traffic would be traveling through the residential neighborhoods to get to the Fairgrounds property.

7. *Whether the special exception is for a home occupation?*

n/a. The special exception is not for a home occupation.

8. *Whether the special exception will preserve the purposes of this chapter?*

The Comprehensive Plan for the city has this property listed as conservation and parks. The goal is to preserve these conservation and natural resource areas within the city for park and recreational activities. While approval of the special exception to allow camping would likely follow the goals of the comprehensive plan to expand amenities that are crucial to enhancing the life of residents and the community, this should be done in an organized and planned fashion and



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meet the requirements and specifications for a campground or travel trailer park, which also includes approval from the State for a campground.

Ms. Huckstep stated based on the findings Staff would recommend denial of the request however, if the Board would be inclined to approve the request Staff would recommend the following conditions:

1. Limiting the number of camping events per year (ie. Eight events per calendar year);
2. Limit the number of nights for each camping event such as no more than six (6) nights at a time;
3. Quiet time be strictly enforced to the city's noise ordinance;
4. No open burning;
5. No more than 14 campers at one time;
6. No tent camping;
7. Every Camper, RV or travel trailer must be self-contained and disposal of all waste must be disposed of properly;
8. An emergency or severe weather plan must be in place;
9. On-site supervision;
10. Obtain approval from the State Health Department.

Jon Swick, Montgomery County 4-H Inc. Vice President was present representing the petition. Mr. Swick stated as part of the on-site safety plan, the big 4-H building and the smaller exhibit hall would be available as storm shelter and could remain unlocked during times campers are on-site. Board members raised questions concerning proximity to property lines, frequency of events, on-site supervision, noise, and congestion.

The meeting was opened for public comment at 7:30 a.m. Thomas Garrett, 712 Binford Street, came forward with concerns. Thomas and Bambi Garrett had provided a letter to the Board prior to the meeting. Mr. Garrett's verbal concerns echoed his written concerns.

Cynthia and Joseph Lewis, 801 Fairview Avenue, came forward in opposition. Mrs. Lewis stated camping is already taking place, there are noise concerns, alcohol, police activity, security concerns. Mr. Lewis added that he was concerned for their property value.

Dell Wilson, 805 Fairview Avenue, came forward in opposition. Ms. Wilson asked who would be vetting the campers. She had concerns about appearances especially after rain, timeframe between events, noise, drinking, sewage, and taxes.



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The meeting closed for public comment at 7:47 p.m.

Jon Swick came forward for rebuttal. He clarified that campsites would be monitored several times per day, he is immediately made aware of any police activity in the area, the open buildings and wooded areas are monitored daily, and that alcohol is permitted at the fairgrounds except during the fair.

After Board deliberation, Shelle Wheeler moved to table the request for further information, such as finalized rules, onsite supervision, and the 4-H Boards review of such. Allen Slight seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Minutes Approved: 9/17/65

Joyce Burnett
President

Don Dornell
Member

Shelle Wheeler
Member

Mac Petty
Member

Member