



## Board of Zoning Appeals City of Crawfordsville, Indiana

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

### October 15, 2025 at 7:00 PM Meeting Minutes

The City of Crawfordsville Board of Zoning Appeals met as scheduled on Wednesday, October 15, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers of the Municipal Building. Board members present were: Joyce Burnette, Ron Henricks, and Allen Slight. Members Shelle Wheeler and Malcolm Petty were not present. Others in attendance were: Megan Huckstep, Director of Planning & Building Services; City Attorney Tyler Nichols of Taylor, Minnette, Schneider and Clutter; and Kathryn Fisher, Executive Assistant, Planning & Building Services.

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

September 17, 2025 meeting minutes were presented for consideration. Ron Henricks moved to approve the minutes as presented. Allen Slight seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

#### **2518 Lafayette Road - TKC Properties, LLC - DSV 0149-0151**

Continuing with items of new business, Planning Director Megan Huckstep reviewed the staff report for petitions DSV 0149-0151 submitted by TKC Properties, LLC who were requesting three development standard variances from the signage standards of the City Zoning Ordinance in a B-3, business zoning district at 2518 Lafayette Road for a Starbucks. The findings of fact are as follows:

**1. *The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.***

Approval of the sign variances as proposed should not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community.

**2. *The need for the variance was not self-created.***

The need for the variance(s) could be considered self-created due to the amount of signage, the sizes and height. However, this development has an access on two thoroughfares. In addition, this location is relatively close in proximity to Interstate 74, which has initiated other sign variances to be approved in the past for high-rise signage. The parcel was existing and due to the nature of the size and shape this is cause for the shorter width of the building to be along the main thoroughfare, which is US Highway 231 North in this instance. We typically use this frontage or building width for the total allowable square footage. Had the longer side been on the front, it would have allowed additional square footage without a variance.

**3. *The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.***



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The use and value of the area adjacent to the property will not be affected in an adverse manner. The proposed use and signage will be cohesive to the neighboring business uses along US Highway 231 North and the lighting of the signage will be managed to avoid affecting adjacent properties. Staff will also note there have been variances for high rise signage approved in the past and some pylon signs that were even existing prior to zoning regulations.

**4. *The strict application of the terms of this Chapter will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property.***

The strict application of the terms of this chapter of the zoning ordinance could result in practical difficulties. However, the proposed signs are necessary to help with the flow or direction of traffic from I-74 as well as along US Highway 231 North and Phil Ward Boulevard.

Ms. Huckstep stated based on the findings, Staff would recommend the following:

1. Approval of the variance to allow two (2) free-standing pylon signs;
2. Approval of the variance to exceed the total allowable sign size or square footage, not to exceed 326 square feet, and
3. Approval to allow one (1) pylon sign to exceed the height and square footage requirement for a second free-standing pylon sign, as well as the height requirement for directional signage.

Attorney Bill Niemeyer of TKC Properties, LLC came forward representing the petition. Mr. Niemeyer noted that the two parcels could not be combined due to requirements of the Assessor's office, beyond the control of the owner and developer. Additionally, he noted underground gas lines on the adjoining property to the east, which pose practical difficulty in developing the currently vacant lot and necessitating the site to be designed in the manner presented. Mr. Niemeyer briefly reviewed the findings of fact.

There were no members of the public present for comment.

The Board proceeded to deliberate. After some discussion, Allen Slight moved to approve each of the three development standard variances. Ron Henricks seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

**315 S Washington Street - Sanders Funeral Care - SE 0071 & DSV 0152**

Continuing with items of new business, Ms. Huckstep presented the staff report for petitions SE 0071 and DSV 0152 submitted by Sanders Funeral Care who was requesting a special exception from the schedule of uses of the City Zoning Ordinance to allow a crematory and a development standard variance from the lot and yard



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requirements of the City Zoning Ordinance in a B-2, business zoning district at 315 S Washington Street. The findings of fact are as follows:

### SE 0071

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

Yes, crematory is listed as a special exception in the official schedule of uses.

**2. 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.**

Crematories can cause nuisances such as air pollution, odor, noise and aesthetic or emotional concerns that could potentially be dangerous, injurious and noxious to other property and/or persons.

**3. If the special exception is for a manufacturing or industrial/processing facility, the petition will comply with all of the performance standards of Section 153.023 of this Ordinance.**

Not applicable.

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

The crematory will be an expanded service to the existing funeral home that is already operating. As noted, an addition will be added to the existing structure for the added crematory services. This would be at the back of the property and a setback variance would be necessary for the new addition and this is a separate variance for the Board to consider. There is an existing fence along the south side of the property where the addition will be constructed. Staff would recommend that this fence be repaired or replaced or a combination of fencing and landscaping be provided as a screen to the neighboring residential property. Based on other improvements the Petitioner has made to improve the property, Staff believes it would be completed in a harmonious relationship with the existing structure as well as the neighboring buildings and properties.

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

The special exception will operate completely within the existing structure and the addition that is proposed. Elevation drawings were not provided with the submittal, but based on improvements the owner and Petitioner has made, Staff feels that they would be aesthetically pleasing and in character with the existing structure as well as the surrounding neighborhood. However, air pollution, odors and noise could disrupt the current environment of the neighborhood.

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



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The Petitioner has a parking agreement with the neighboring property owner(s). However, the special exception will be conducted entirely within the existing structure and the proposed addition. The addition will be connected to the existing structure; therefore there should not be any cause for any changes to the already existing traffic patterns that are used for the funeral home.

**7. If the special exception is for a home occupation, the petition will comply with all the requirements of Section 153.030 of the Zoning Ordinance.**

The Petitioner does reside in the structure, but this is an expansion of the existing funeral home services that are already operating on-site and is not considered a home occupation.

**8. The special exception will preserve the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.**

A crematory is a special exception according to the Zoning Ordinance. There are concerns regarding air pollution, odors, and noise. If done appropriately to eliminate these risks and nuisances while also obtaining all the required local, state and federal approvals and permits, Staff feels the special exception could preserve the purpose of the zoning ordinance. Staff understands that crematory services are needed in the community as well as surrounding communities.

### **DSV 0152**

**1. The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.**

Approval of the development standard variance from the setbacks should not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community.

**2. The need for the variance was not self-created.**

The need for the variance(s) could be considered self-created; however, the funeral home has been operating at this location for many years. The existing structure does not meet the current setbacks and variances from the setbacks have already been approved by the Board for already completed improvements to the structure.

**3. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner.**

The use and value of the area adjacent to the property should not be affected in an adverse manner by the addition. The addition is a mere expansion of what is already existing on the property and Staff believes it would be aesthetically pleasing and in character with the existing structure as well as the neighboring properties based on past improvements that have been made.

**4. The strict application of the terms of this Chapter will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property.**



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The strict application of the terms of this Chapter of the zoning ordinance could result in practical difficulties. An addition could be added that meets the setbacks, but it would likely be smaller and not allow for the accessible ramp that is proposed or would create other difficulties and potential variances. This would be an expansion of services that are already provided by the funeral home.

Ms. Huckstep stated based on the findings, Staff would recommend denial of the special exception to allow the use of a crematory; however, if the Board is inclined to approve the special exception, Staff would recommend the following conditions:

1. Provide documentation concerning the emission controls that will be used to eliminate or reduce air pollution and odors, as well as soundproofing barriers for noise;
2. Repair or replace the fence on the south side of the property or provide an acceptable combination of a fence and landscaping on the south side of the property; and
3. Obtain all local, state and federal approvals and permits prior to any construction taking place and any occupancy or use of the crematory.

Jake Parduhn with Cremation Systems came forward representing the petition. Mr. Parduhn stated they would be the equipment supplier for Sanders Funeral Care. He stated the company has been around for 57 years and has engineered and designed a state of the art cremation chamber that does keep the environment and their neighbors at the forefront of their consideration. Mr. Parduhn reviewed the State of Indiana's and the Federal EPA's emissions requirements and stated that even if their cremation chamber ran 24 hours a day all week long for the entire year, they would still fall well below the thresholds. He stated when the retort is operating as it should be, there would be absolutely no smoke or visible emission, absolutely no odor, and minimal noise, comparable to a large air conditioner which could be routed in a manner to minimize that further.

There were no members of the public present for comment.

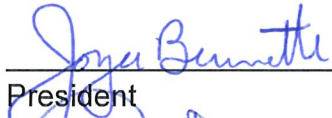
The Board engaged in discussion with Mr. Parduhn and Dave Sanders of Sanders Funeral Care, clarifying the emissions and the standards they would be required to meet, as well as what creates the need for the crematory.

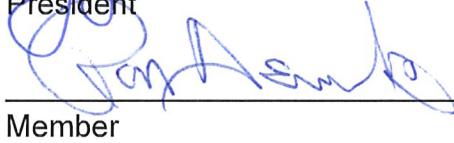
After some discussion and having determined the crematory would not be dangerous, injurious or noxious to the public, Allen Slight moved to approve the special exception. Motion passed 3-0.

Ron Henricks moved to approve the development standard variance. Allen Slight seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

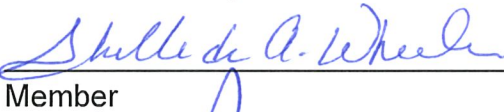
With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

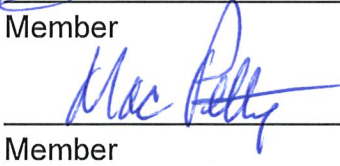
Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

  
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President

  
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