Town of Griffith
Plan Commission
September 18, 2023

The September 18, 2023, Plan Commission meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Vice Chairman; Rob Bubala with members, Rob Bubala, Dan Blount, Dave Maglish, Jim Marker, Rick Ryfa, and Larry Stassin. Also present was Plan Commission Engineer Jake Dammarell, Attorney; Bob Schwerd, and Building Commissioner; Steve McDermott. Absent was Larry Ballah

The minutes from the August 21, 2023, meeting were approved as written.

OLD BUSINESS

Item #1 Indi Homes 200 LLC; 1001 E 40th Pl., Rezone property from R2 to R3 to build townhomes. MOU conditions continued.
Mr. Patrinos emailed the Commission he may be late. ***Mr. Ryfa made a motion*** to move this item to the end of the meeting allowing Mr. Patrinos to still be heard. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. All favored, motion carried.***
Mr. Patrinos arrived late, and was heard at the end of the meeting…
Mr. Patrinos distributed new plans. Additional parking has been added, there are less units, and each unit has more square feet. Mr. Bubala asked what the new unit count is. Mr. Patrinos stated he has two fewer units for a total of 16. Mr. Stassin asked what the minimum square footage is of the units. Mr. Patrinos stated they are just over 1,500 square feet, not including the garage. The garages are also larger than previously proposed. Mr. Dammarell stated he would like more time to review the plans. There were issues before with the length of the drives and garages. Mr. Bubala asked Mr. Schwerd about the MOU agreement. Mr. Schwerd stated it will have to be revised based off of the new plans, there should not be an issue. ***Mr. Ryfa made a motion to continue*** Indi Homes 200 LLC; 1001 E 40th Pl. to the October 16, 2023 meeting. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. All favored, motion carried.***

Item #2 Turnberry at Trail Creek; Turnberry Rd., & Glasgow Dr. Rezone the property from R1 to R3. The public hearing has been closed.
Mr. Kovich appeared before the Commission. The plans have changed to better fit the Town of Griffith ordinances. Mr. Kovich asked to remove the item. ***Mr. Ryfa made a motion to drop*** Turnberry at Trail Creek; Turnberry Rd., & Glasgow Dr., rezone the property from R1 to R3. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Marker. All favored, motion carried.***

Item #3 Turnberry at Trail Creek; Turnberry Rd. & Glasgow Dr. Preliminary Site Plan Review.
Mr. Kovich appeared before the Commission. The wetland issue with IDEM has been resolved, the area in question has been removed, a verification letter from IDEM will be sent. The new plans allow for units in that area. Mr. Kovich continued in stating he would like to drop the request for a rezone. There are new specs (lot size, setbacks, and street width) which comply with R1 zoning ordinances. Mr. Dammarell stated it appears as though the setbacks and lot sizes are in order. Mr. Stassin asked if the new plot would require a new public hearing. Attorney Schwerd noted that Chairman Ballah indicated he preferred that. Mr. Kovich explained he has already had 3 public hearings and the new plot changes comply with town ordinances. The previous plans allowed for 70' wide lots, they are now 80' lots, as ordinance requires. Mr. Ryfa asked if a public hearing is necessary. Mr. Schwerd stated if the plans follow ordinances, it is not necessary unless there are details our engineering isn't comfortable with. Mr. Dammarell stated the plot plan has been received, but he would like to continue to review. Preliminary approval could be granted which would allow time for a technical review before Final Site Plan Approval. Mr. Ryfa asked when construction will begin. Mr. Kovich stated it will be weather permitting now. Mr. Dammarell retracted his previous statement recommending preliminary approval. There has not been subdivision approval yet because with the initial proposal there would have been changes to zoning. Now that there isn't a need for a zoning change, an application for subdivision approval must take place along with site plan approval. Both can be done concurrently. The subdivision will be recorded at Lake County. There was discussion about the difference between a subdivision and lot layout. Mr. Kovich stated he will look into that. ***Mr. Stassin made a motion to drop*** Turnberry at Trail Creek; Turnberry Rd. & Glasgow Dr. Preliminary Site Plan Review. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Ryfa. All favored, motion carried.*** Mr. Ryfa asked Mr. Kovich to work with Engineers and Building Dept.

Item #4 Tac Auto Sales, 928 W Ave H; Change of Use to open a used car dealership. Property is zoned I2. The petitioner is no longer interested in pursuing this location.
Mr. Stassin made a motion to drop Tac Auto Sales, 928 W Ave H; Change of Use. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Blount. All favored, motion carried.***

Item #5 Tac Auto Sales, Inc., 928 W Ave H; Preliminary Site Plan Review to open a used car dealership. The petitioner is no longer interested in pursuing this location.
Mr. Stassin made a motion to drop Tac Auto Sales, 928 W Ave H; Preliminary Site Plan Review. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Maglish. All favored, motion carried.***

Item #6 Patriot Gaming, 217 N Lindberg St.; Final Site Plan Review to construct a new storage facility.
Mr. Ryan Torrenga and Mr. Jeff Swan appeared before the Commission. Mr. Torrenga stated there have been changes to the site since the previous meeting. The concrete swail has been removed and replaced with a manhole catch basin to gather water. Water and sanitary services have been added to the proposed building for a washroom at the southwest corner. Landscape bushes are now shown. Site grading has been manipulated to control the stormwater to hold detention within the parking lot while it's being gathered in the catch basins. Lastly, there is a slight expansion (2'-3') to the paved area at the southwest area. Mr. Bubala asked if Mr. Torrenga had received comments from BF&S. Mr. Torrenga stated he did. Mr. Dammarell acknowledged a fair amount of items from the letter have been addressed. The parking lot is being proposed to hold detention (which is allowed), however the plan allows for 7" of storage but there is about 12" there. There are concerns with the property on the corner as to not shed water on them. Per the town's stormwater manual there cannot be any detention around a utility power pole. Mr. Swan stated that there is a power pole on Columbia, and the existing pole will be removed. They are waiting for NIPSCO to make the new connection. Mr. Dammarell stated final plans need to be stamped, there will need to be an erosion control plan prior to construction, parking plans. Mr. Dammarell asked if there is an arrangement with anyone for offsite parking. Mr. Swan stated all parking is contained on site, there may be an additional 3 employees with the expansion, but that will not effect parking. Mr. Dammarell noted there are standards for the utility patch that will cross over Columbia. Make sure to contact the Building Department regarding the

addition of the restrooms. Mr. Dammarell stated he is recommending final approval contingent upon meeting the requirements of the comment letter and that the stormwater is net zero, or a positive influence to the adjoining properties. ***Mr. Ryfa made a motion*** granting Final Site Plan approval contingent upon meeting the requirements of the comment letter and that the stormwater is net zero, or a positive influence to the adjoining properties. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Marker. All favored, motion carried.***

NEW BUSINESS

Item #1 Fiesta Mexican Restaurant; 511 E Glen Park Ave. by Carlos Barragan. Change of Use to open a Mexican Restaurant. Property is zoned B2.

Mr. Carlos Berragan appeared before the Commission. Mr. Barragan stated he would like to open a Mexican Restaurant. He has hired a contractor to install a kitchen hood and install plumbing water lines. Mr. Ryfa informed Mr. Barragan to contact the Building Department regarding that work, then explained why a Change of Use is needed. Mr. Ryfa then asked if there would be enough parking. Mr. Barragan stated there are 20-25 parking spaces next to the shopping mall. Mr. Bubala asked if he was referring to the lot on Elmer. Mr. Barragan stated that was correct. There are five additional spaces in front of the store. Mr. Stassin asked if there would be any improvements made to the parking lot. Mr. Barragan stated he can provide a sign for parking. Mr. Ryfa suggested granting Change of Use contingent upon proper signage and they are compliant with town parking lot regulations. Mr. Dammarell stated parking is the main issue, but informed Mr. Barragan that a State Design Release may be needed before interior work could begin. The restaurant requires 20 parking stalls and it seems that the lot on Elmer allows the petitioner to meet that requirement. Parking signage should be looked into so patrons are not using the entire strip mall's available parking. Mr. Ryfa asked if the mall owner also owns the parking lot. Mr. Dammarell stated that should be determined before adding signage. ***Mr. Ryfa made a motion*** granting Change of Use to Fiesta Mexican Restaurant; 511 E Glen Park Ave to open a Mexican Restaurant contingent upon the parking lot on Elmer is compliant with the town's parking lot regulations. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin***. Mr. Ryfa asked Mr. Schwerd if a written agreement is needed to allow parking at the side lot. Mr. Schwerd stated it is advised. ***Mr. Ryfa amended the motion to include*** a written document from the landlord allowing the tenant to utilize the parking lot on Elmer. ***All favored, motion carried.***

Item #2 BEX Furniture Outlet; 120 W Ridge Rd., by Chris Cook. Change of Use to open a retail furniture store. Property is zoned B3.

General Manager; Mr. Chris Cook appeared before the Commission. Mr. Cook stated there are currently 5 locations in the Chicagoland area, Griffith will be #6. The store will sell new mattresses and furniture. There isn't any resale or refurbished furniture. Mr. Cook then distributed a store flyer. Mr. Dammarell asked what the total square footage is of the showroom. Mr. Cook stated it is 8,600 square feet. Mr. Dammarell stated the business requires 14 stalls, and there are more than enough available. There are no issues. ***Mr. Marker made a motion*** granting Change of Use to BEX Furniture Outlet; 120 W Ridge Rd., by Chris Cook to open a retail furniture store. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. All favored, motion carried.***

Item #3 Upright Iron Works, Inc.; 1941 N Woodlawn Ave., by Charlie Bias. Preliminary Site Plan Review for a building addition. Property is zoned I1.

Mr. Charlie Bias appeared before the Commission. Mr. Bias stated the company is growing and he would like to propose a 3,200 square foot addition to the facility. Mr. Dammarell stated a staff review was held a few weeks prior. The most recently submitted plans have been reviewed and the only comments are that an erosion control plan and drainage calculations will be needed before final approval, and that the final plans are stamped by an engineer. Mr. Dammarell then recommended preliminary approval. ***Mr. Stassin made a motion*** granting Preliminary Site Plan Approval to Upright Iron Works, Inc.; 1941 N Woodlawn Ave. for a building addition subject to the conditions set forth by the town engineers. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Blount. All favored, motion carried.***

Item #4 Castle Cuts & Co Barber Shop. 1929 W Glen Park Ave., by Noel Castillo. Change of Use to open a Barber Shop. Property is zoned B3.

Mr. Castillo appeared before the Commission. Mr. Castillo stated he has been a barber for 18 years. The unit he is interested in is a 1500 square foot, open concept space with a break room/restroom. Mr. Castillo intends to paint. There will be 10 stations max, to start he will be the only one working. There are 140 parking stalls, so there should not be a problem. Signage will be provided by Econo Sign. They offer a standard 15' x 2' barbershop logo. Mr. Dammarell stated there shouldn't be any issues with parking. ***Mr. Stassin made a motion*** granting Change of Use to Castle Cuts & Co. Barber Shop; 1929 W Glen Park Ave. to open a Barber Shop. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Maglish. All favored, motion carried.***

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

BILLS AND EXPENDITURES

Mr. Maglish made a motion to approve a claim for meeting minute preparation for the meeting held August 21, 2023, in the amount of $65.00. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. All favored, motion carried.***

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Plan Commission, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38p.m.

Dave Maglish

Dave Maglish, Secretary

Veronica L. Horka, Recording Secretary