

Town of Griffith  
Plan Commission  
February 19, 2024

The February 19, 2024, Plan Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chairman Rob Bubala with members, Dan Blount, Rob Bubala, 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 member Larry Ballah.

The minutes from the December 18, 2023, meeting was approved as written.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Ryfa made a motion to retain Larry Ballah as Chairman. Motion was seconded by Mr. Marker. All favored, motion carried. Mr. Marker made a motion to retain Rob Bubala as Vice Chairman. Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. All favored, motion carried. Mr. Maglish made a motion for Larry Stassin to become Secretary. Motion was seconded by Mr. Marker. All favored, motion carried.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Item #1 Indi Homes 200 LLC: 1001 E 40<sup>th</sup> Pl., Rezone property from R2 to R3 to build townhomes: MOU conditions continued.

Mr. Patrinos has requested a continuance to the March 18, 2024, meeting. **Mr. Stassin made a motion to continue Indi Homes to the March 18, 2024, meeting, Motion was seconded by Mr. Maglish. All favored, motion carried.**

Item #2 Westpark Development, Inc.: Turnberry Rd., & Glasgow Dr. Final approval for subdivision approval of Turnberry 2.

Mr. Kovich has requested this item is dropped from the agenda. **Mr. Ryfa made a motion to drop Westpark Development, Inc.; Turnberry Rd., & Glasgow Dr. final approval for subdivision approval of Turnberry 2. Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. All favored, motion carried.**

Item #3 Westpark Development, Inc.: Turnberry Rd., & Glasgow Dr. Acceptance of the Irrevocable Letter of Credit for release of the bond for Turnberry 2.

Mr. Kovich appeared before the Commission. Plans for the turnaround have been submitted, town engineer has reviewed and requested changes. Mr. Bubala asked if he had received a letter detailing the required changes. Mr. Kovich stated he has and will review the comments with his engineer and plans to reappear in March. Mr. Dammarell stated 11 minor items were noted, then read them aloud. Mr. Schwerd stated he has reviewed the letter of credit and noted the items listed.

1. The date on the letter of credit must be adjusted.
2. The letter must clearly state the hammerhead will be finished with a final coat of asphalt and must be approved by the town engineer.
3. A deadline for completion must be added and a provision that the amount of the credit is payable if not completed by that date.
4. The amount of the credit must include a minimum contingency of 25% for unknown factors.

Once the letter of credit has been revised, it will need to be reviewed by Mr. Schwerd. **Mr. Ryfa made a motion to continue Westpark Development, Inc. to the March 18, 2024, meeting. Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. All favored, motion carried.**

#### NEW BUSINESS

Item #1 Don Zuidema: 87 South Rensselaer aka 45-11-02-129-010.000-006. A Public Hearing to rezone to B4. Property is currently zoned R2.

Mr. Zuidema appeared before the Commission. The property in question is located at 87 S Rensselaer, his business/shop, ReStore Works, is located at 115 S Rensselaer. The request to change the zoning is for future development of office space and warehouse. Mr. Bubala then opened the Public Hearing portion of the meeting. Mr. George Schulp; 220 E Ave A stated he had submitted a written remonstrance with pictures which included a list of nearby neighbors that are also against the request to rezone. Mr. Schulp is concerned with a decrease in property values, the land is unkempt (concrete pieces), the historic building is used for storage, the driveway was installed possibly without permits, the concrete on site could hold asbestos, there is a fuel tank and shipping container sitting out in the residential area. There are also concerns with an increase in traffic and noise. Mr. Ryfa asked when the zoning was changed from residential to a storage area. Mr. Schulp suspects the land was previously owned by the railroad. Mr. Ryfa asked if the building has always been used for storage. Mr. Schulp stated that was correct. Mr. Ryfa asked if there was ever a home on the property. Mr. Schulp stated there was not. Mr. Ryfa asked what the property is zoned. Mr. McDermott stated the property is zoned residential. Mr. Ryfa asked how long Mr. Zuidema has owned the land. Mr. Zuidema has owned it for 2.5 years. Mr. Ryfa asked if the property was full of debris when purchased. Mr. Zuidema acknowledged Mr. Schulp's comments. He had cleaned the property when it was purchased, the grass is kept up, the railroad used the shed for storage. There will not be a lot of added traffic, there are 5 office employees, workers will only park their vehicles on site during the workday. Mr. Ryfa asked if he was aware of the R2 zoning when he purchased it. Mr. Zuidema stated he did. Mrs. Nancy Stout; 720 N Broad St. appeared representing the Griffith Historical Society. Mrs. Stout asked what type of business he owns. Mr. Zuidema stated he

performs masonry restoration, preservation, and repairs in Chicago and NWI. Mrs. Stout asked the hours of operation and if there are weekend hours. The hours are generally 7:00am - 5:30pm Monday thru Friday, typically not many Saturdays. Mrs. Stout asked if a fence will be installed. Mr. Zuidema stated there are no immediate plans, the request is for future expansion; 2-4 years from now. Mrs. Stout asked if there will be truck traffic and how big would the trucks will be. Mr. Zuidema stated his vehicles are vans and pickup trucks. Mrs. Stout asked where the employees would park. Mr. Zuidema stated there might be a small parking lot or they could park at his current shop location. Mr. Marker asked if there are plans to tear down the existing building. Mr. Zuidema stated there are no plans to tear it down until approval is given to build a new building. Mr. Maglish stated the current business location (on Rensselaer) can get unsightly and asked what can be done to ensure the same thing won't happen with this lot. Mr. Zuidema stated the property has been improved since his purchase, he will reevaluate the appearance. Mr. Stassin confirmed there are no immediate plans to build anything. Mr. Zuidema stated his plans are 2-4 years down the road. Mr. Stassin stated his concern with a favorable rezone, and the property is then sold and has a business zoning classification which may not be beneficial to the town/neighborhood. Mr. Zuidema stated he doesn't have any plans to sell the property and understood the concern. He asked if there is a special use he can receive for that scenario. There was then a brief discussion about a piece of vacated land near Mr. Zuidema's property. Mr. Schwerd stated Mr. Schulz's letter of remonstrator will be included with the meeting minutes. Mr. Ryfa stated the request is tough because the lot is located in a residential neighborhood. Mr. Ryfa suggested the property goes before the Unsafe Building Committee or the Safety Committee to further look at maintaining the value of the homes. Mr. Ryfa asked Mr. Schwerd if a letter could be drafted between the landowners with stipulations on what would be done. Mr. Schwerd stated if the item is continued that would allow time for them to come up with an agreement. Mr. Ryfa asked if a permit was received for the storage box. Mr. Zuidema stated there was not. Mr. Ryfa noted that a permit defines how long something like that can be on the site. Mr. Schwerd stated all legal requirements for the public hearing were in order. Mr. Marker agreed with an agreement between landowners and Mr. Zuidema. No further remonstrators appeared. Mr. Butbala closed the Public Hearing. *Mr. Marker made a motion to continue* Don Zuidema; 87 S. Rensselaer to the March 18, 2024 meeting. *Motion was seconded by Mr. Blount.* Mr. Ryfa asked that the Building Department is kept informed of any discussions that occur. Mr. Maglish; opposed. *Motion carried.*

Item #2 Ministering Hearts: 2053 W Glen Park Ave. Requesting a Change of Use to open a Home Care Agency Office for seniors.

Maria Cooper appeared before the Commission. Ms. Cooper runs a home care agency. The location will be used as an office space only, staff will consist of 1-3 employees. Caregivers will go to the homes of senior citizens. Mr. Ryfa asked if a body piercing shop previously occupied the space. Ms. Cooper stated that was correct. *Mr. Ryfa made a motion* granting Change of Use to Ministering Hearts; 2053 W Glen Park Ave. to open a Home Care Agency for seniors. *Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. All favored, motion carried.*

#### COMMUNICATIONS

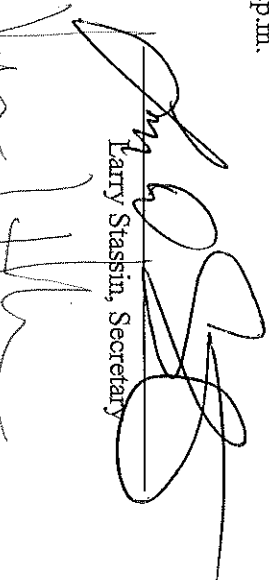
None.

#### BILLS AND EXPENDITURES

*Mr. Maglish made a motion* to approve a claim for meeting minute preparation for the meeting held December 18, 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 7:42p.m.

  
Larry Stassin, Secretary

Veronica L Horka, Recording Secretary

Building Department  
Town of Griffith  
111 N. Broad St.  
Griffith, IN 46319

Elizabeth and George Schulp  
220 E. Ave A  
Griffith, IN 46319  
219-742-4180

Ref: Petition Number 2024-001

Dear Members of the Plan Commission,

This letter is in response to the rezoning request of 87 S. Rensselaer St. Griffith from R2 to B2.

We are opposed to the development of this property into a business location. Our concerns begin with past practices from this company and fears for the future after receiving a B2 zoning.

It has a zoning of R2 and the owner of this property has been using it for his business storage already. The property, until lately, has been left uncared for as seen in pictures. (Attachment 1.)

They were storing all types of recovered building materials as seen in (Attachment 2) some of those items as seen in (Attachment 3) have some concern to me as in past concrete products were made with Asbestos (Attachment 4). I am not sure if any environmental impact studies were done for this property and company, but after seeing a fuel tank in a R2 property (Attachment 5) I hope one will be done.

Before the Code Enforcement officer contacted them of the building materials being against code, one day a large shipping container was dropped off on the property (Attachment 6) and I don't believe a permit was issued.

Most concerning for the change in zoning are PROPERTY VALUES, traffic, employee parking and noise and all that building materials to be scattered again. It's already a problem with noise we can't keep our windows open on nice days due to the squealing of train wheels across the street from us.

Respectfully submitted,

The undersigned



Wm Helms 300 E. AVE A

Edw. Kati-Schulz - 220 E. Ave. A

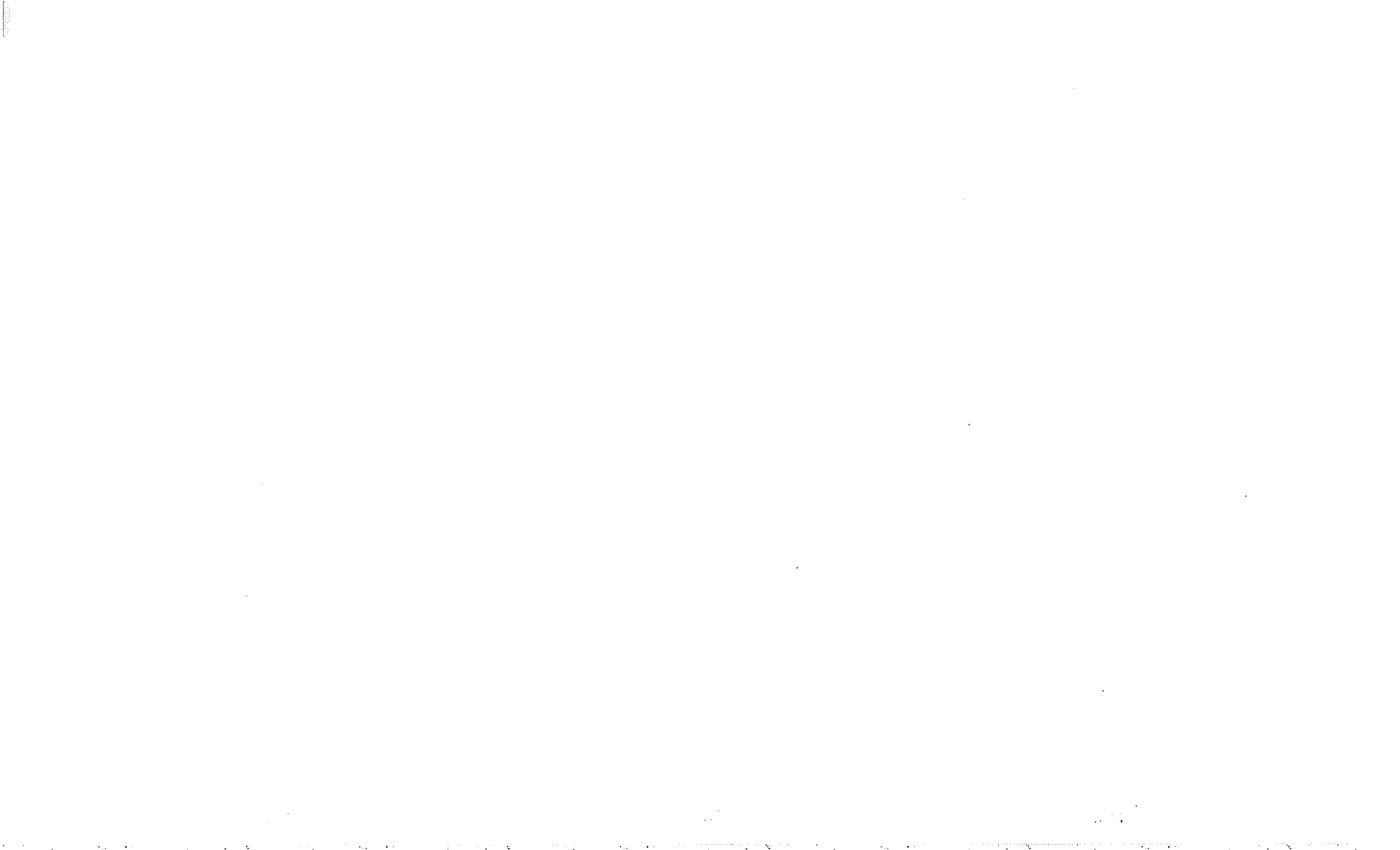
Grace M. Rogers — 222 E. Ave. A

Mat Kar 114 S. Kesselor

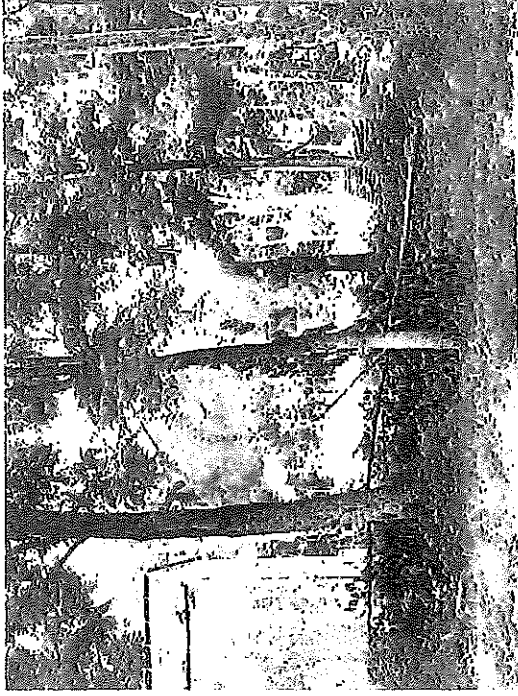
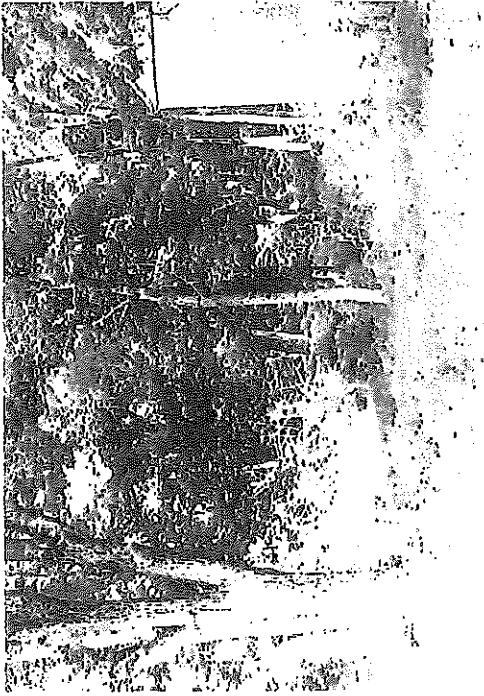
Anna D. Ditt - 200 E. Ave. A

Dan D. Ditt 208 EAST AVE. A

W. Chas. Ditt 208 East Ave A



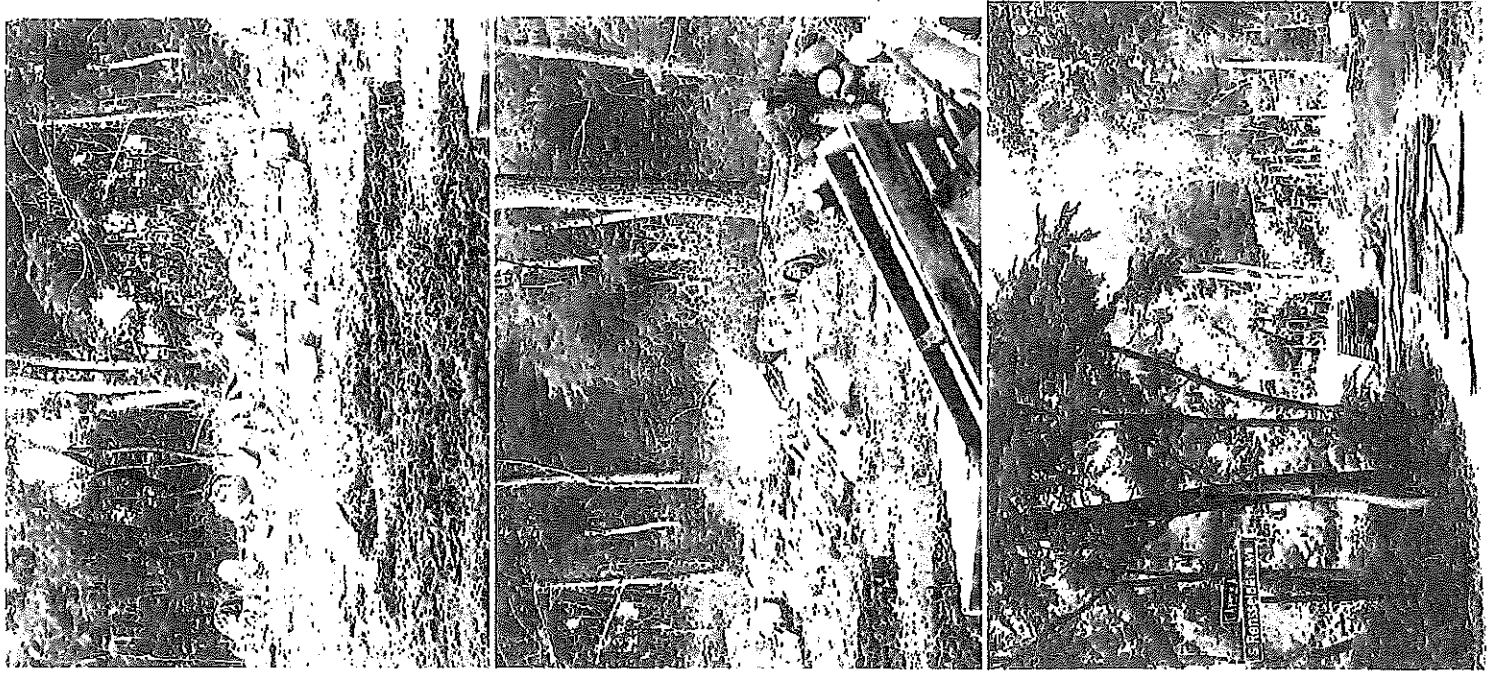
Attachment 1





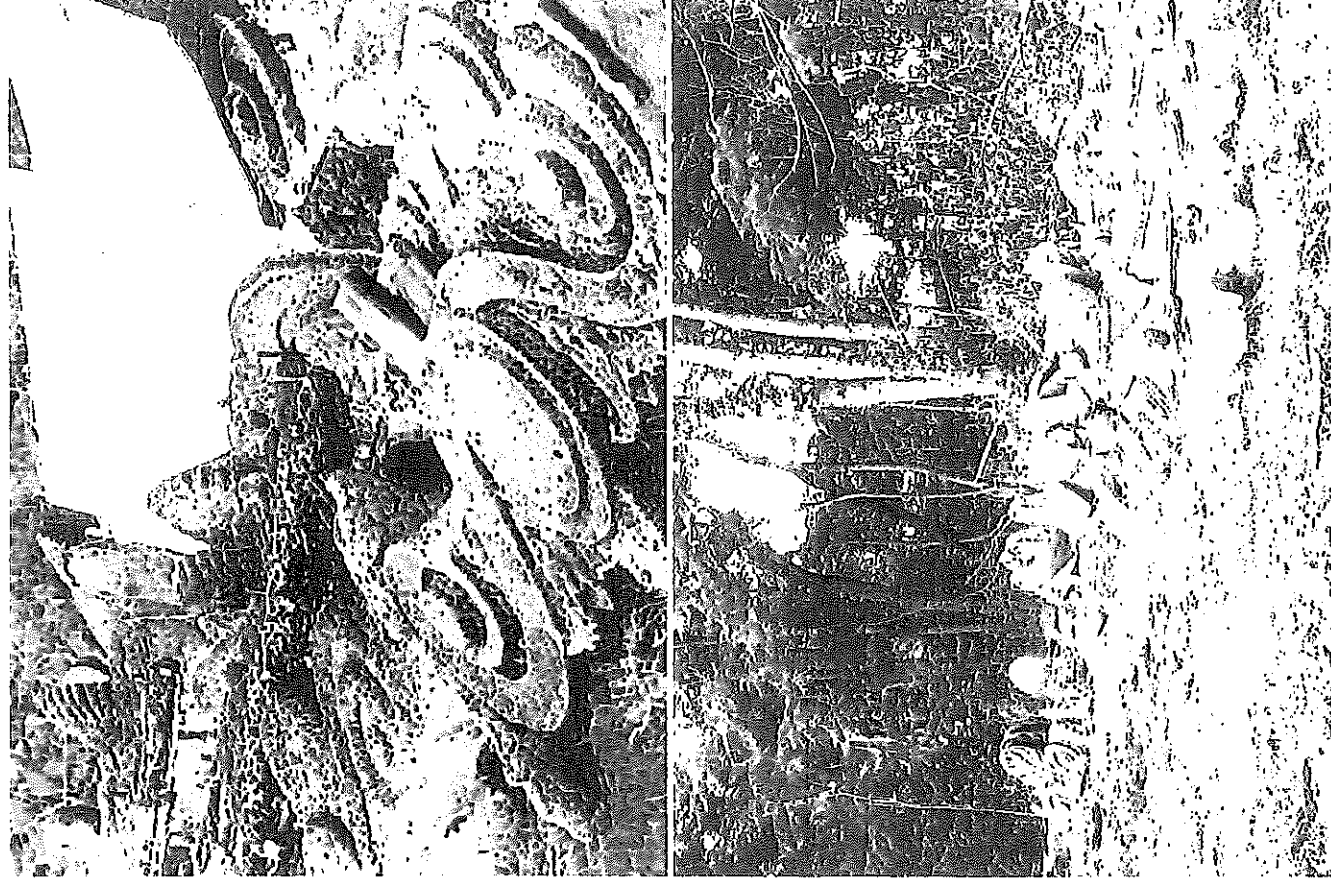


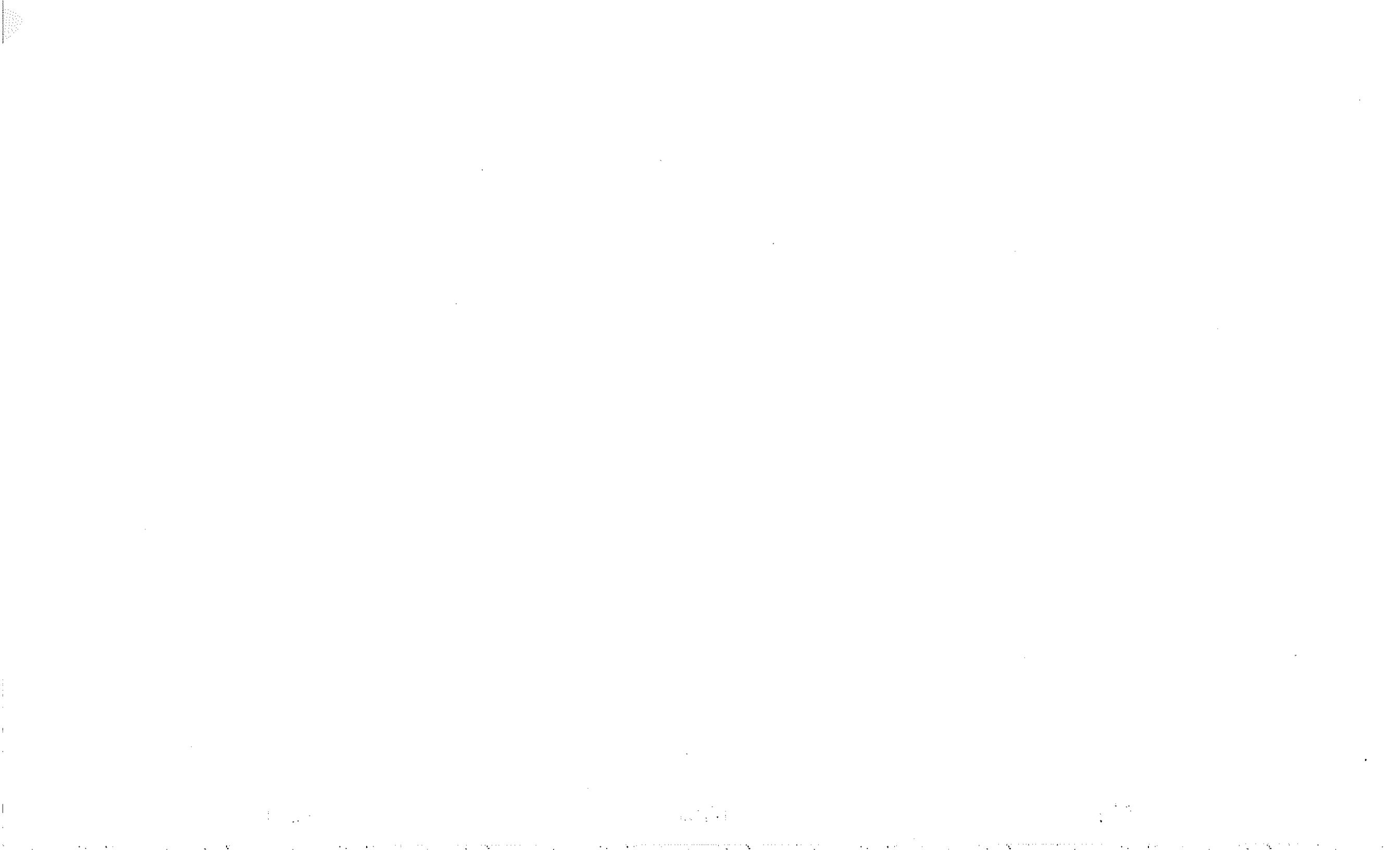
Attachment 2



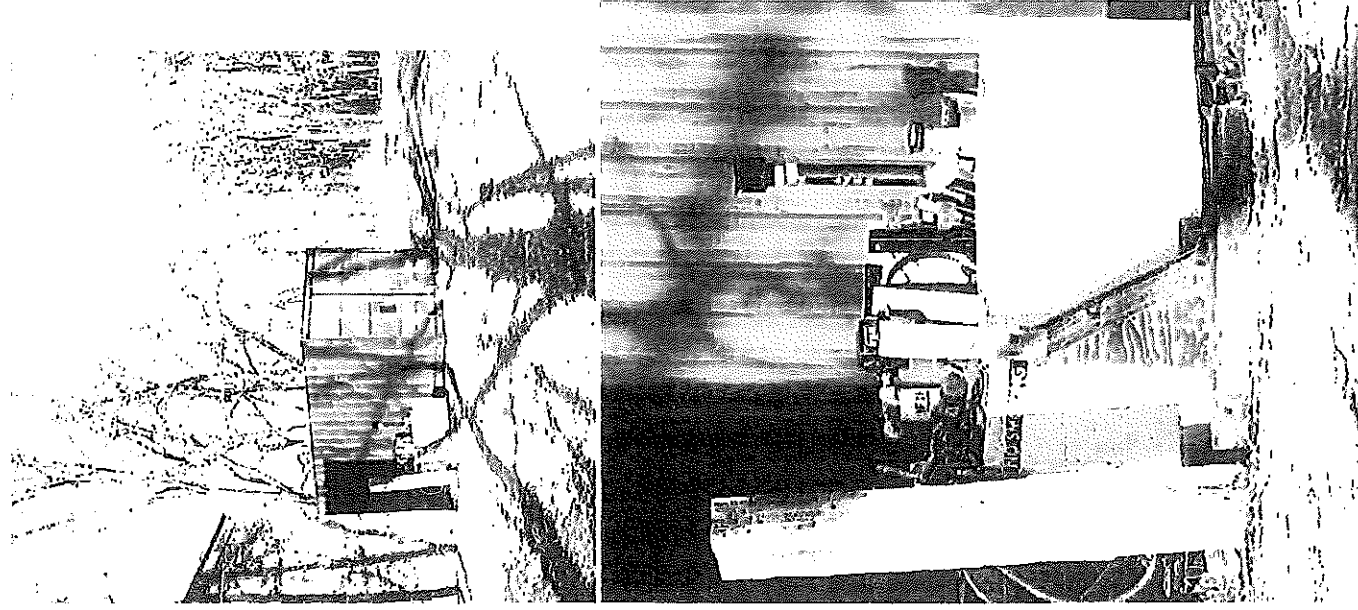


Attachment 3





Attachment 5





Attachment 6



