

Town of Griffith
Plan Commission
March 18, 2024

The March 18, 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, Rick Ryfa, and Larry Stassin. Also present was Plan Commission Engineer Jake Dammarell, and Attorney; Bob Schwert. Absent were members Larry Ballah and Jim Marker.

The minutes from the February 19, 2024, meeting was 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.

The petitioner has requested a continuance to the April 15, 2024 meeting. **Mr. Stassin made a motion to continue Indi Homes to the April 15, 2024 meeting. Motion was seconded by Mr. Ryfa. All favored, motion carried.**

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

Mr. Kovich appeared before the Commission. Attorney Schwert stated most of the changes requested from the February meeting had been satisfied with the exception that the deadline for the completion of the hammerhead is not clear. The new Letter of Credit uses the term “substantially” completed by the expiration of the Letter. The Letter should state that the hammerhead must be completed 30 days before the expiration. Also, the Town needs to be inserted as beneficiary and we need to name a representative for the Town. Mr. Kovich explained that he cannot do anything about that until the Town completes the work at the bike path crossing and through the wetlands and extends Avenue H. Mr. Kovich then asked what the status is with NIPSCO. Mr. Ryfa stated that item is for Town Council. Mr. Ryfa explained that he is referring to a developmental agreement as opposed to the Irrevocable Letter of Credit. Mr. Ryfa suggested that should be an agreement in writing. Attorney Schwert agreed. Mr. Ryfa suggested continuing this item until there is a better handle on these items with NIPSCO. Mr. Schwert suggested a continuance to the May 20th meeting for discussion. **Mr. Maglish made a motion to continue Westpark Development Inc., Turnberry Rd., & Glasgow Dr. Acceptance of Irrevocable Letter of Credit to the May 20, 2024 meeting. Motion was seconded by Mr. Blount. All favored, motion carried.**

Item #3 Don Zuidema: 87 South Rensselaer aka 45-11-02-129-010-000-006. Request to rezone to B4. Property is currently zoned R2. Public Hearing is closed.

Mr. Don Zuidema appeared before the Commission. Mr. Zuidema stated that the Commission asked if there could be an agreement between himself and Mr. & Mrs. Schulp. The Schulp’s stated they were going to stand firm on their position. Mr. Zuidema distributed a letter he composed dated March 18th with pictures supporting his request. Mr. Zuidema stated the property has been improved, the brush has been removed and the grass is regularly mowed. The claims of asbestos are unfounded. There is cast stone being stored that contains Portland cement and aggregate. The fuel tank on site is not permanent, it rests on a truck bed. Mr. Zuidema continued in stating he does not agree the property values would be adversely affected. The property has a history of being used for storage. Provided the property is kept neat and visually appealing, Mr. Zuidema would like to continue to use it in the same manner. Mr. Bubala stated the Commission received a letter from the Schulp’s dated March 13th stating there had not been any discussion. Mr. Zuidema stated he approached them after the February meeting and was told they intend to stand firm. Mr. Maglish asked who from the neighborhood had been approached. Mr. Zuidema stated he spoke with the neighbor Matt. Mr. Matthew Korneck; 114 S Rensselaer Ave., appeared before the Commission. Mr. Korneck stated that he did sign the original petition against decreasing property values, but he feels Mr. Zuidema has made improvements to the property and is receptive to discussion about lighting and an alarm system. Mr. Korneck continued in stating if Mr. Zuidema continues to maintain the property, he is now in favor of the request to rezone. Mr. Ryfa stated his concern is that the Town agrees to a favorable rezone, and the property is then sold with the business zoning classification. What if the new owner/business doesn’t run a quiet, well-kept operation like Mr. Zuidema. The Commission has to consider the homeowners. Mr. Ryfa suggested Mr. Zuidema attempts to get together with the nearby property owners and come to an agreement. Mr. Schulp stated Mr. Zuidema has not reached out since the last meeting, and there is now a trailer on the lot. Mr. Zuidema stated he has met with a landscape contractor in hopes of getting a rendering for the meeting. Mr. Maglish suggested everyone meets to come together in an agreement. Mr. Zuidema asked if a Special Use permit was available. Mr. Ryfa asked Attorney Schwert if a MOU or Special Use would be an option. Attorney Schwert a written commitment could be made. Mr. Bubala asked when a landscape rendering would be available. Mr. Zuidema stated they should be ready within a few days. Mr. Bubala suggested meeting with the neighbors and have the landscape renderings available for them to view. Mr. Zuidema agreed. Mr. Ryfa asked Mrs. Horka to contact Code Enforcement to get a report of what is on site and if there are any violations. **Mr. Maglish made a motion to continue Don Zuidema; 87 S Rensselaer for a B4 rezoning, to the May 20, 2024, meeting contingent upon a meeting has taken place with neighbors and there is some type of resolution. Mr. Stassin seconded the motion. All favored, motion carried.**

NEW BUSINESS

Item #1 Quality First Motors: 1581 N Cline Ave., by Namik Oner. Request for a Change of Use to add additional business to location, increasing the number of vehicles for sale and removal of entrance off of Ridge Rd.

Mr. Nick Oner appeared before the Commission. Mr. Oner stated he would like to close off the first ingress/egress off Ridge Road. Mr. Oner stated he had submitted a site plan showing the separation of vehicles for sale and the cars being repaired. The vehicles for sale will not have banners, flags, or balloons. It will not look like a dealership. The request to add additional business will allow the cars to be sold to anyone, not just individuals that he has done business with previously. Mr. Bubala stated the Commission is in receipt of a letter from a resident that is against the petitioner's request. Mr. Maglish asked if there would be up to 10 cars for sale. Mr. Oner stated that was correct. Mr. Maglish questioned the parking for sold vehicles and what is for sale. Mr. Oner does not expect to reach the 10-car limit. Mr. Maglish asked how the vehicles would be advertised. Mr. Oner stated there will be a sign, and a piece of paper on the side window detailing work done, etc. Mr. Stassin asked when the improvements would begin if approval were granted. Mr. Oner stated he would like to begin ASAP. *Mr. Stassin made a motion* to approve the Change of Use to Quality First Motors; 1581 N Cline Ave. to add an additional business to the location and increasing the allowable number of vehicles for sale and removal of an entrance on Ridge Road. *Motion was seconded by Mr. Ryfa. All favored, motion carried.* Mr. Ryfa asked Attorney Schwerd if this item needs to be heard before the Town Council. Attorney Schwerd stated it does not.

COMMUNICATIONS

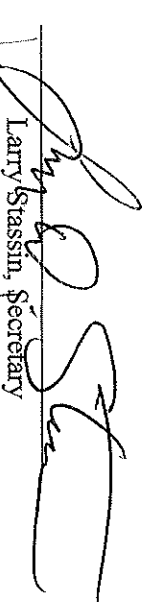
None.

BILLS AND EXPENDITURES

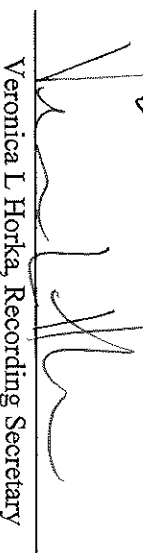
Mr. Stassin made a motion to approve a claim for meeting minute preparation for the meeting held February 19, 2024, in the amount of \$65.00. *Motion was seconded by Mr. Maglish. All favored, motion carried.*

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 7:29p.m.



Larry Stassin, Secretary



Veronica L Horka, Recording Secretary