

Town of Griffith
Plan Commission
July 21, 2025

The July 21, 2025, Plan Commission meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairman Larry Ballah, with members, Dave Maglish, Rick Ryfa, Dan Blount, Larry Stassin, Rob Bubala. Also present was Attorney Bob Schwerd, Engineer Jake Dammarell, Building Commissioner Veronica Horka. Absent was member, Jim Marker.

Minutes from June 16, 2025, meeting were approved as written.

Rob Bubala read aloud the new July 1, 2025, state law regarding the Plan Commission appointment information and live streaming Town Hall meetings, via YouTube.

OLD BUSINESS

Item #1 Indi Homes 200 LLC; 1001 E 40th Pl., Preliminary Site Plan Review; MOU to build townhomes. Petitioner has requested a continuance to the August 18, 2025, meeting due to engineering. ***Mr. Bubala made a motion*** to grant a continuance to the July 21, 2025, meeting due to engineering. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. All favored, motion carried.*** Mr. Ballah requested that the Building Commissioner inform the Petitioner of this decision.

Item #2 Westpark Development; Turnberry Phase 2 – Update. Mr. Kovich appeared before the Commission to provide an update regarding infrastructure improvements (haul route, mass grading and site utilities). Mr. Kovich stated that the project has not started. Mr. Kovich stated that it is critical to complete the curbs and asphalt by Thanksgiving 2025. Mr. Ryfa advised Mr. Kovich to call the Building Department the following week regarding utility allocation agreement and Sanitary Board Meeting. ***Mr. Ballah advised that no further action was to be taken.***

Item #3 Vennequity Lake Shore LLC, by Gary Warfel; Rensselaer Place. A Public Hearing to rezone the property from R2 to a PUD for the construction of 3 duplex homes and 1 quadplex home. Mr. Ballah asked Mr. Schwerd if mailings and newspaper ad was sufficient, and Mr. Schwerd said all were submitted and met the criteria. Mr. Warfel appeared before the Board to discuss his plans. He said he has acquired (8) lots and plans to combine the north and south lots to R2 zoning. Mr. Warfel advised that the north portion of land is (1) parcel and south parcel is (8) blocks. Mr. Warfel said he wants to combine the northern portion and southern portion of land (3.01 acres), which puts the acreage over the threshold for the PUD. He said that by connecting roadways, Rensselaer St. and Indiana St., it would help with public safety and create a roadway for emergency vehicles. Mr. Warfel stated that his plan was to build (10) town homes; three duplex's and one quadplex. Adjacent zoning is R2 and R3 and a Right of Way which gives a transitional use. Mr. Warfel said he would maintain the road 30' curb to curb and a 10' easement for public sidewalks for either side of the road. Mr. Warfel said that the duplex town homes are around 2,000 square ft. and have a 2-car garage and the smaller ones would be around 1,700 square ft. Mr. Warfel said that the duplex's and quadplex's would sell at market price, which the current range would be mid-to-high \$300,000. Mr. Ballah advised the residents in attendance that they can look at housing and layouts at their leisure. Mr. Ballah then opened the Public Hearing for each resident to express their concerns. Resident AJ Lewis at 303 Manor, said that she had concerns regarding the PUD rezoned to a R2, due to the amount of vehicles in the area, the moratorium in this area due to it being a flood area, HUD financing, Area 5, and will this project be landlords or owners. Resident Tom Hentush at 1215 Rensselaer, stated he was concerned with the flooding and increase of traffic. Resident Todd Doctor at 306 Manor, stated he was concerned if there would be rezoning on (1) side of the field or both sides. Mr. Dammarell stated that it would only be the northern half and (1) lot. Resident James Harrington at 1133 N. Lafayette, stated he was concerned about the flood zone and what this property will become in the future. Mr. Ballah asked Mr. Dammarell about the floodplain improvements and Mr. Dammarell advised that there have been improvements due to the DNR and Cady Ditch. Resident Kevin Easton who owns several properties in this area, stated he was concerned about what will happen to all his properties. Resident Keith Kozup at 1137 Lafayette, stated he was concerned with flooding, flooding insurance and the moratorium. Resident Don Doctor at 1151 Lafayette, stated he was concerned with the road access and traffic. Resident Ryan Blank at 215 Manor, stated he was concerned about the last assessment that was done in this area. Mr. Ryfa advised that it was several years ago, however, this is at the top of the list to be looked at. Mr. Ballah then closed the Public Hearing. Mr. Maglish asked if R2 was a possibility. Mr. Warfel replied that completing this project would lift up rent and market value in the area. His product would be (2) bedroom with a den for a duplex and a (2) bedroom for a quadplex. Flood zone standards are more rigid with a detention basin and no added elevations or fill. He also said that the buildings would be built 2' above the base flood elevation. Mr. Warfel stated that he would abide by all FEMA regulations and Griffith ordinances. Mr. Warfel said that R2 transitional zone due to being adjacent to the tracks and R3 to connect to Rensselaer and Indiana. Lot #9 is actually lot #3 and it is open space, which is less dense than anything else. Mr. Warfel said that this will bring up tax revenue to help each resident. Mr. Ryfa asked if 6-8 people would live in the building and would they be for rent or sale. Mr. Warfel said that the units will be for sale, and it will be owner occupied. Mr. Ryfa asked about greenspace. Mr. Warfel said that anywhere

without buildings would equal greenspace. Mr. Ballah asked if the detention area has been looked at by the engineers. Mr. Warfel replied, yes that has been done, and he is waiting for approval. Mr. Ryfa stated that all ordinances will be followed. Mr. Ballah then closed the public hearing. Mr. Ryfa asked if there would be more control over PUD. Mr. Schwerd replied yes. Mr. Maglish stated that he is concerned about the future of this property and potential of these buildings to turn into rentals. Mr. Warfel said that if the Town would like to put in a resitution for no rentals, then he would follow that. Mr. Mr. **Bubala made a motion granting permission for Preliminary Site Plan Approval to rezone the property from R2 to a PUD for the construction of 3 duplex homes and 1 quadplex home. Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. All favored; motion carried.**

Item #4 Venequity Lake Shore LLC, by Gury Warfel; Rensselaer Place. A Public Hearing on a 4-lot subdivision for the construction of 3 duplex homes and 1 quadplex home. Mr. Bubala made a motion granting permission for Preliminary Site Plan Approval on a 4-lot subdivision for the construction of 3 duplex homes and 1 quadplex home. Motion was seconded by Mr. Ryfa. All favored; motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

None

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 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted



Larry Stassin, Secretary

Tricia Hamrath, Recording Secretary