Town of Griffith
Plan Commission
October 20, 2025

The October 20, 2025, Plan Commission meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chairman Larry Ballah, with members, Rob Bubala, Dave Maglish, Jim Marker, Rick Ryfa, and Larry Stassin. Also present was Attorney Bob Schwerd, Engineer Jake Dammarell, and Building Commissioner Veronica Horka. Absent was member Dan Blount.

Minutes from September 15, 2025, meeting were approved as written.

OLD BUSINESS

Item #1 Indi Homes 200 LLC: 1001 E 40th Pl. Preliminary Site Plan Review: MOU to build townhomes.

Mr. Patrons requested a continuance due to engineering. Mr. Bubala made a motion to grant a continuance to the November 17, 2025, meeting. Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. All favored, motion carried.

Item #2 West ark Development; Turnberry Phase 2 — Update.

Mr. Kovich appeared before the Commission to discuss the haul route for construction equipment. Mr. Ballah asked how the trucks are going to get to the back of the subdivision. Mr. Kovich stated the trucks can take a right and go east. Mr. Bubala asked if they intend to go in and out the same way. Mr. Kovich stated that will be determined by the excavators. Mr. Stassin stated the trucks need to coordinate their route with the school buses and suggested a conversation with the schools. Mr. Kovich stated that was understandable. Mr. Maglish asked if there will be stockpiling or grading. Mr. Kovich stated they will be grading and the equipment that goes in initially will stay there for the duration of the project. Mr. Maglish asked if the grading will be done as the loads are dropped. Mr. Kovich stated the grading needs to be done first so they can bring in fill. Mr. Kovich stated there will be approximately 150 trucks. Mr. Ryfa asked Attorney Schwerd and Mr. Dammarell if there are an ordinance or restrictions regarding haul routes. Attorney Schwerd stated he was unaware of one. Mr. Dammarell stated the Town can require bonding to ensure damages are repaired. Attorney Schwerd added the Town can determine the haul route and hours. Mr. Ryfa asked what the weight of the trucks are. Mr. Kovich stated he was unsure, but they will be triaxles and understood if there were damage to the roads, he would be responsible for repairs. Mr. Kovich asked if a letter of credit would be sufficient because bonds are hard to get. Mr. Ryfa stated a bond is preferred. Attorney Schwerd stated he would review either a bond or letter of credit. Mr. Ryfa asked who the receiver would be of a Letter of Credit. Mr. Kovich stated it would go to the Town; directly paid to the Town of Griffith. Mr. Marker stated his concern with dust and dirt. Mr. Kovich stated the area is currently in a drought and he is unsure when this will take place. Mr. Maglish stated a street sweeper must regularly go around the neighborhood. Mr. Dammarell stated the SWPPP and all MS4 requirements must be met. Mr. Dammarell added the documents will be reviewed again, and there may be a need for adjustments to the original plan. Mr. Schwerd suggested a before and after video of the truck route. Mr. Ryfa asked if preliminary approval could be made without the Letter of Credit, SWPPP, etc. Attorney Schwerd stated a motion could be made. Mr. Ballah asked Mr. Kovich if he has received the pipeline permits. Mr. Kovich stated he has one of three, the other two are pending. ***Mr. Ryfa made a motion*** granting Preliminary approval with the following contingencies:

1. A truck route must be submitted so the Bond or Irrevocable Letter of Credit can be established.
2. A Bond or Irrevocable Letter of Credit must be submitted for review prior to the Town's acceptance.
3. A written update on the status of all pipeline permits and submit copies of those that have been granted.
4. The delivery of fill must be scheduled to avoid conflicts with the school bus schedules.
5. A video of the streets and other infrastructure is required both before and after fill deliveries are complete in order to establish if there has been any damage to the infrastructure.
6. A street cleaner must be on hand to see that all roads along the haul route are always kept clean and clear of debris.
7. All regulations and requirements of both the Storm Water Technical Manual and MS4 Authorities must be followed.

Mr. Bubala seconded the motion. All favored, motion carried.

Item #3 Vennequity Lake Shore LLC. by Gary Warfel; Rensselaer Place. Final Approval to rezone the property from R2 to a PUD for the construction of 3 duplex homes and 1 quadplex home.

Mr. Gary Warfel appeared before the Commission. Mr. Ryfa asked if there have been any changes since he last appeared. Mr. Warfel stated there have not. Mr. Dammarell stated he did not find any changes to the plans. ***Mr. Bubala made a motion*** granting Final Approval to Vennequity Lake Shore LLC, by Gary Warfel; Rensselaer Place to rezone the property from RI to a PUD for the construction of 3 duplex homes and 1 quadplex home. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin***, Mr. Maglish abstained from vote. ***Five members voted in favor, motion carried.***

Item #4 Vennequity Lake Shore LLC, by Gary Warfel: Rensselaer Place. Final Approval on a 4-lot subdivision for the construction of 3 duplex homes and 1 quadplex home.

Mr. Gary Warfel appeared before the Commission. Mr. Warfel stated there are no changes to the plans. Mr. Dammarell clarified per Ordinance section 86-193 additional engineering review will be required. Mr. Dammarell asked if Mr. Warfel has received a CLOMR. Mr. Warfel stated it has not been started yet. ***Mr. Bubala made a motion*** granting Vennequity Lake Shore LLC, by Galy Warfel; Rensselaer Place final approval on a 4-1ot subdivision for the construction of 3 duplex homes and 1 quadplex home. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin.*** Mr. Maglish abstained from vote. ***Five members voted in favor, motion carried.***

Item #5 Jessica Nix: Central Park. 600 N. Broad St. Final Site Plan review for Central Park Ball Field Improvements.

Park Board Member: Tony Terzarial appeared before the Commission. Mr. Bubala asked if there have been any changes since last month. Mr. Terzarial stated there has not. Mr. Ballah asked when the project would start, Mr. Terzarial stated they would like to begin as soon as possible. Mr. Stassin asked what the timeline is. Mr. Terzarial stated he was unsure. There are already plans in place for next season with the Town of Schererville. Mr. Ballah asked if the fields will be used next summer. Mr. Terzarial stated they will not. ***Mr. Stassin made a motion*** granting Final Site Plan Approval to Jessica Nix; Central Park 600 N. Broad St., for Ball Field Improvements. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Bubala. All favored, motion carried.***

Item #6 Mance Consulting, LLC/Greg Mance, 200 Ave B. Public Hearing to rezone from OS: Open Space to Il: Light Industrial.

Mr. Don Torrenga appeared before the Commission on behalf of Mr. Mance. Mr. Ballah asked if Mr. Mance has a letter from the property allowing him to speak on behalf of the property. Mr. Torrenga stated there is an agreement. Mr. Ballah asked that the agreement is submitted. Mr. Maglish asked if Marathon has provided an agreement yet. Mr. Torrenga stated they have not. Mr. Maglish asked if a large area of trees will come down for the development. Mr. Torrenga stated that was correct. Mr. Maglish asked if the lot will be gravel. Mr. Torrenga stated that was correct. Mr. Ballah then opened the Public Hearing portion of the meeting. Mr. Ryfa asked if all notifications and publication were done. Attorney Schwerd stated both legal advertisement and public notices were done and are compliant. Mr. George Tagler; 425 S Griffith Blvd.stated he is against the proposal and has concerns about light pollution and neighborhood safety. He added that he doesn't want to look at RV's from his backyard. Mr. George Tagler also complained that he felt all neighbors did not receive the notice and the sign on the property is too small. Mr. Maglish asked Mr. Tagler if he had received the notice. Mr. Tagler stated he did. Mr. David Shutz; 114 Ave B stated he is against the proposal for all the same reasons as Mr. Tagler. Mr. Carl Gora; 120 W Ave B, questioned if there will be a fence and stated he is against the proposal for all the previous reasons mentioned. Mr. Ballah stated there will be a chain-link fence with slats. Mr. Ryfa asked if any of the residents present have tried to purchase the land. The residents collectively stated they didn't know it was for sale. Mr. Ballah then closed the Public Hearing portion of the meeting. ***Mr. Ryfa made a favorable recommendation*** to the Town Council for Mance Consulting, LLC/Greg Mance; 200 W Ave B to rezone the property from OS; Open Space to Il; Light Industrial contingent upon: Receipt of authorization of purchase agreement and authorization from Marathon allowing use of the property. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Ballah.*** Mr. Maglish voted against; Mr. Marker abstained from voting. ***Four members voted in favor, motion carried.*** Mr Ryfa asked if Town Council has the final decision on this item. Attorney Schwerd stated that was correct.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #1 Mance Consulting LLC/ Greg Mance: 200 W Ave B. Requesting final approval on a 1-lot subdivision to develop land to be used as a secure RV storage facility and construct a pole barn. (Preliminary approval granted through Minor Subdivision Committee on 9/3/2025).

Mr. Don Torrenga appeared on behalf of Greg Mance. Mr. Torrenga stated the notes regarding the side yard, front yard, detention pond, easement, and right-of-way have been addressed. Mr. Ryfa asked Attorney Schwerd and Mr. Dammarell for comments. Mr. Dammarell stated after review he recommends approval of a 1-lot subdivision. ***Mr. Ryfa made a motion*** granting Mance Consulting, LLC/ Greg Mance; 200 W Ave B final approval on a 1-lot subdivision to develop land to be used as a secure RV storage facility and construction of a pole barn. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin***. Mr. Marker abstained from voting, Mr. Maglish voted against. Mr. Ryfa requested a roll call vote. Mr. Ballah; in favor, Mr. Bubala; in favor, Mr. Maglish, against, Mr. Stassin; in favor, Mr. Ryfa; in favor, Mr. Marker; abstain. ***Four members voted in favor, motion carried.***

Item #2 Mance Consulating, LLC/Greg Mance: 200 W Ave B. Preliminary Site Plan review for the construction of an RV storage facility and construct a pole barn.

Mr. Torrenga stated final engineering is not complete. Mr. Stassin questioned the proposed lighting. Mr. Torrenga stated that it has not been done yet, but it will follow the ordinance. Mr. Marker asked if the lighting will be LED. Mr. Torrenga stated it would and overflow lighting will have shields; KSA Lighting will handle the details and installation. Mr. Stassin asked what the hours would be. Mr. Torrenga stated he thought the site would be open 7AM to either 7 or 8PM. Mr. Ryfa asked if the stormwater had been addressed. Mr. Torrenga stated the property is mostly sand, there is a lot of percolation. Stormwater will be addressed. Mr. Ryfa asked how far the railroad is from the property. Mr. Torrenga stated it is approximately 25'-30'. Mr. Bubala asked about landscape improvements along the street for neighbors. Mr. Torrenga stated that would be up to Mr. Mance. Mr. Marker questioned the tree line. Mr. Torrenga stated a lot of trees will come down. Mr. Marker asked for a landscape rendering including the tree line. Mr. Ryfa stated there is a conflict and asked Mr. Marker if he was voting or abstaining from a vote. Mr. Marker stated he is choosing to abstain. Mr. Ryfa asked Mr. Marker if he is obtaining because it's not a good project for neighbors. Mr. Marker agreed. Mr. Ryfa asked for a google image with landscape shown. ***Mr. Stassin made a motion*** granting Preliminary Site Plan approval to Mance Consulting, LLC/Greg Mance; 200 W Ave B for the construction of an RV storage facility and construction of a pole barn. Contingent upon the Town Council's decision on the rezoning. ***Motion was seconded*** by Mr. Bubala. Mr. Marker abstained from voting, Mr. Maglish voted against. ***Four members voted in favor, motion carried.***

Item #3 Eric & Jennifer Gluth: 301 W 35th Ave. Requesting final approval on a 1-lot subdivision. Preliminary approval granted through Minor Subdivision Committee on 10/1/2025).
Mr. Eric Gluth appeared before the Commission. Mr. Ballah asked if there was a house on the property now. Mr. Gluth stated there is not. ***Mr. Maglish made a motion*** granting Eric & Jennifer Gluth; 301 W. 35th Ave. Final Approval on a 1-lot subdivision. ***Motion was seconded*** by Mr. Marker. ***All favored, motion carried.***

Item #4 Griffith Car Wash LLC; 213 E Ridge Rd., by John Adreani. Seeking permission for a Change of Use to open a car wash. Site was vacant over a year: Zoning is B3.
Mr. Nicholas Dizonno appeared before the Commission. Mr. Dizonno stated he and his business partners recently purchased the property with the intentions to remodel the interior/exterior for the same use. Cleanup has already started, and they are hoping to open in November or December. Mr. Bubala asked if they have other car washes in Illinois. Mr. Dizonno stated they do not, but Michael LaCalamita (business partner) has built many locations in Illinois. This however will be their first physical location. Mr. Stassin asked if the facility would offer touchless washes. Mr. Dizonno stated it will not. Mr. Maglish asked what the operating hours will be. Mr. Dizonno stated the car wash will be open 7AM-8PM. Mr. Dizonno added they already have applied for a fence permit. Mr. Maglish asked where the fence will be located. Mr. Dizonno stated the entire fence will be replaced around the building, approximately 412'. ***Mr. Ryfa made a motion*** granting Griffith Car Wash LLC; 213 E. Ridge Rd. Permission for Change of Use to open a car wash. ***Motion was seconded by Mr. Stassin. 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 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Larry Stassin, Secretary

Veronica L Horka, Building Commissioner

TOWN OF GRIFFITH
PLAN COMMISSION

REQUEST BY PETITIONER MANCE CONSULTING, LLC TO CHANGE THE ZONING FOR THE PROPERTY HE IS DEVELOPING AT 200 W. AVENUE B FROM OS OPEN SPACE TO L-1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL.

1. On October 20, 2025, a Public Hearing on Petition Number 2025-002 filed by Petitioner, Mance Consulting, LLC, the developer of the property located at 200 W. Avenue B requesting that the property be rezoned from OS Open Space to L-1 Light Industrial was held.

   The property is more particularly described as follows:

   > Part of the Northwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 2, Township 35 North, Range 9 West of the Second Principal Meridian being 394.53 feet x 274.30 feet x 312.20 feet x 259.45 feet containing 2.025 acres more or less, all in the Town of Griffith, Lake County, Indiana.
   >
   > Commonly known as: 200 W. Avenue B

2. Upon being informed by the Plan Commission Attorney that all required legal notices were in order the Chairman opened the Public Comment portion of the Public Hearing.

3. Don Torrenga, of Torrenga Engineering, appeared before the Commission on behalf of Mance Consulting, LLC. A question was raised by the commission as to whether the Petitioner had authority to speak on behalf and if said authorization has been submitted. Mr. Torrenga said the Petitioner had the property under contract.(note: a written authorization has since been submitted).Petitioner in its Application to Rezone stated that it wanted to develop the property, consisting of approximately 2.133 acres located in the area bounded by EJ&E Railroad to the North, Town of Griffith Water Department parcel to the West. Marathon Petroleum pipeline to the South and vacant land to the East. The Petition intends to develop the land to be used as a secure recreational vehicle storage facility and build a pole barn on the property to be used as a business office as well as premium storage for his renters. Mr. George Tagler: 425 S Griffith Blvd. spoke against the proposed rezoning and had concerns about light pollution and neighborhood safety, nor does he want to look at RVs from his back yard. Mr. Shutz: 114 Ave, B raised the same issues. Mr. Carl Gora: 120 W Ave. B asked about a fence and said he was against the rezoning for the same reasons stated by the previous remonstrators. Mr. Torrenga addressed the questions asked by the remonstrators as well as questions from the Commissioners.

4. There being no further remonstrators either for or against the Chairman closed the Public Comment portion of the Public Hearing.

EXHIBIT A

5. To obtain a zoning change the Petitioners are required under the Town of Griffith Zoning.

Ordinance and the Indiana Code §36-7-4-603, to demonstrate the following:

a. The request is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
b. The current conditions and the character of current structures and uses in each district will be maintained because the structures have been built or will be built to applicable standards.
c. The zoning change for this property does contain the most desirable uses for which the land can be adapted because the redevelopment of the property should not negatively impact on the surrounding residential uses.
d. The proposed zoning change will preserve the conservation of property values throughout the Town because the land will be developed to current standards and will be in active use; and
e. The change in zoning of the property is more compatible with the surrounding properties and reflects responsible growth and development.

6. Mr. Ryfa made a motion that a favorable Recommendation be made to the Town Council to grant Mance Consulting, LLC, Petition to rezone the Property from OS Open Space to L1 Light Industrial. The Motion was seconded by Mr. Ballah. A vote was taken; Mr. Maglish voted against the recommendation; Mr. Marker abstained from voting. Mr. Ballah, Mr. Ryfa, Mr. Bubala and Mr. Stassin voted in favor of the recommendation. Motion carried.

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The Plan Commission then made the following Findings:

a. The proposed change is in conformance with the general intent of the comprehensive master plan. It was never the intention of the Town to leave the property OS Open Space forever, as that would not be in the Town's interest. The Comprehensive Plan provides for the orderly development of the Town, which the proposed development would do.
b. An amendment to the requirements of Chapter 86 of the Zoning Ordinance is warranted by the fact that there is little chance for residential development due to the location of the property next to the railroad, and between a pipeline and Town of Griffith Water Department. The overall conditions and character and use of the property surrounding the proposed development will be maintained. Further, rezoning the property would bring tax dollars to the Town to the benefit of all residents.
c. The use proposed will not be detrimental to present and potential surrounding usages and reflects responsible growth and development thereby being a benefit to the Town by bringing in tax revenues and giving citizens a location to store RVs.
d. The rezoning contributes to the growth and vitality of the Town while conserving the property values of the surrounding property. The property development will be done in accordance with the Town's landscape ordinance to preserve the adjacent property values.

be done in accordance with the Town's landscape ordinance to preserve the adjacent property values.

e. The change in zoning of the property is more compatible with the surrounding properties than previously suggested developments and reflects responsible growth and development.

These Findings of Fact are approved and adopted this 15th day of December, 2025.

TOWN OF GRIFFITH
PLAN COMMISSION

President/Chairman, Larry Ballah