

Wabash County Plan Commission

Wabash County Courthouse • One West Hill Street, Suite 205 Wabash, IN 46992

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Wabash County Plan Commission Board

Board Members: Randy Curless, Jeff Dawes, Sam Hann, Mark Milam, Doug Rice, Christian Rosen, Geoff Schortgen, Cheri Slee, Joe Vogel

Staff: Mark Frantz, Board Attorney; Brian Campbell, Plan Director; Amanda Lyons, Administrative Assistant

Meeting Minutes of Thursday, May 2, 2024

Roll call was taken with the following present:

Board Members: Randy Curless, Jeff Dawes, Sam Hann, Mark Milam, Doug Rice, Cheri Slee, Joe Vogel

Staff: Mark Frantz, Board Attorney; Brian Campbell, Plan Director; Amanda Lyons, Administrative Assistant

Absent: Christian Rosen, Geoff Schortgen

Others present: Nicky Burnsworth, Suzanne Peebles, Lisa Evans, Brittany Evans, David Blocher

The Wabash County Plan Commission Board met on Thursday, May 2, 2024 in the Commissioners Meeting Room at the Wabash County Courthouse. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Board Chairman Mr. Randy Curless.

Mr. Curless stated first on the agenda was a review of the minutes from the April 4, 2024 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Mr. Hann, second by Ms. Slee. Roll call vote was taken; motion passed 6-0-1, with Mr. Curless abstaining due to being absent at that meeting.

Next on the agenda was an update on the property located at 25 N. Perch Drive in Pleasant Township. Mr. Campbell reminded board members this property was discussed in the April meeting, where the board requested that he obtain a couple rough estimates for the clean-up. Mr. Campbell informed the board he had received estimates from a couple contractors and had a resident of the area express an interest in purchasing the property and cleaning it up. Mr. Frantz reviewed some information about the property with board members, stating the owner is deceased, no estate has been opened, no heirs have any intentions with the property, and the property has been previously in foreclosure. The sheriff's sale on the property was cancelled after the mobile home burnt, and that this time Mr. Frantz believes the bank has no intention to proceed with foreclosure. Board members discussed various options with Mr. Frantz, including if the property would be considered for tax sale soon, if the interested party could possibly negotiate a purchase with the bank, or if Plan Commission moved forward to clean up if any funds could be recovered. Mr. Frantz responded that since the bank has not taken ownership, they would not be able to negotiate the sale, and without the bank taking ownership the Plan Commission could not recover expenses from the bank or hold them responsible for the clean-up. He also cautioned the board that if the Plan Commission moves forward with clean-up, they would most likely not recover any of the costs. There was discussion about waiting to see if the property would be up for tax sale this fall, but board members were concerned about letting the property sit through the redemption period when it is a public nuisance and potential safety risk. Mr. Frantz informed board members the process would be to first issue the Unsafe Premise Order then proceed to the formal bid process for clean-up. Mr. Rice made a motion to issue the Unsafe Premise Order; second by Mr. Hann. Roll call vote was taken; motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Campbell then provided the board with an update on the Unsafe Premise Order for the Curt Arnett property located at 23 W Branson St, Liberty Township. Mr. Campbell spoke with Mr. Arnett prior to the meeting and was informed the material is ordered to cover up the steps leading to the basement. Contractors are currently working on the interior of the structure. Mr. Arnett anticipates the work will be completed by the June Plan Commission meeting.

Mr. Campbell then provided the board with a complaint update, stating:

- 88 total complaints
 - 43 complaints rolled over from 2023
 - 45 new complaints have been received in 2024, with an additional 12-14 that have not been logged in yet
 - 21 complaints have been resolved in 2024

Mr. Milam asked if there was any other business to be brought before the board.

Mr. Campbell added:

- Senate Bill 242, requires the county to have a certified floodplain manager. He has completed 2/3 of the classes. Classes have been offered online, free of charge, during the work day. The last class is scheduled for next week.
- Informed the board he may need to ask County Council for additional appropriations for the legal ads and mailers for Special Exception and Variance applications as there has been an increased number of applications so far this year.
- He will be assisting the Wabash County Sheriff's Department on Wednesday, May 8 with processing the tagged vehicles at Sandy Beach.
- The board will need to repeal old ordinances that were added to the new zoning ordinance. He is providing copies of those to Mr. Frantz for review before beginning that process.
- There is currently a vacancy on the Plan Commission Board and Board of Zoning Appeals. The vacancy on the Plan Commission is for the trustee's representative. He has contacted the trustees, will get their recommendation, and get commissioner's approval. Regarding the opening on BZA, he is working through that with BZA members and commissioners.

Mr. Blocher inquired about the review process that was used to create the new ordinance. Mr. Frantz shared that public hearings were held, there was considerable discussion by Plan Commission, and upon completion the Commissioner's adopted the new ordinance. He added that it can be reviewed and amended at any time. Board members discussed areas of the ordinance they felt could use review including the 5/12 roof pitch requirement and the junk auto portion; as well as the intent of the ordinance compared to the interpretation. Mr. Blocher asked how the public could help; Mr. Campbell indicated suggestions on items to review in the ordinance could be brought to the Plan Commission office.

There being no further business, Mr. Curless asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Mr. Vogel to adjourn; second by Mr. Rice. Vote taken; motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Amanda Lyons
Secretary, Wabash County Plan Commission
(bac)

**If any names are incorrect, spelled incorrectly, or omitted from the attendance in these minutes, we apologize.*