The Plymouth Board of Zoning Appeals met in regular session in the Council Chambers of the City Building, 124 North Michigan Street, Plymouth, Indiana on January 3, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. Board President Art Jacobs called the meeting to order for Board Members Mark Gidley, Brandon Richie, Alan Selge and Paul Wendel. Alternatives Fred Webster and Linda Secor were in attendance but not needed. Others present were Building Commissioner Keith Hammonds and City Attorney Sean Surrisi.

Board Members Wendel and Selge moved and seconded to approve the minutes of December 6, 2022. The motion carried.

Commissioners Wendel and Gidley moved and seconded to retain the current slate of officers. The motion carried by roll call vote.

Yes:

Gidley, Selge, Richie, Wendel and Jacobs

No:

None

Absent:

None

Current Officers:

Art Jacobs, President Mark Gidley, Vice President Alan Selge, Secretary

City Attorney Surrisi reviewed the dates and times for the Board of Zoning Appeals meetings for the calendar year of 2023. Board Members Gidley and Selge moved and seconded to retain the current schedule of the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. or immediately following the Plymouth Plan Commission meeting. With the exceptions of the July meeting and the November meeting being changed to the following day. The motion carried.

Changes in Meeting Dates:

July 5th, 2023

November 8, 2023

The following legal notice was advertised in the Pilot News on December 21, 2022:

City Building, 124 N. Michigan St. (Garro St. entrance), Ply-mouth, Indiana on the following

BZA 2023-01; Joseph E. and Patricia A. Adams, 10715 Muckshaw RD, Plymouth, IN 46563: A Variance of Develop-ment Standards to reduce the standard lot width from 210 ft. to 100 ft. at parcel 50-32-08-000-133.000-018 lo-

cated at 10715 Muckshaw RD, Plymouth, IN 46563, zoned R-2

tial District telephone #5/4-936-2124. Writ-ten objections to the proposal filed at the Clerk-Treasure's of-fice will be considered and oral comments will be heard. The hearing may be continued from time to time as may be found

NOTICE OF **PUBLIC HEARING**

<u>BZA 2023-01:</u> Joseph E. and Patricia A. Adams, 10715 Muckshaw RD, Plymouth, IN 46563: A Variance of Development Standards to reduce the standard lot width from 210 ft. to 100 ft. at parcel 50-32-08-000-133.000-018 located at 10715 Muckshaw RD, Plymouth, IN 46563, zoned R-2 Suburban Residential District.

City Attorney Surrisi reviewed the findings of fact and the request from the applicant. He read the applicant's letter aloud. See attached letter below.

Letter of Indent

With regards to the Z. 2

zoning district. I am

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width of 210 feet be reduced

to 100 feet in order for my

Saughter and herfamily to purchase

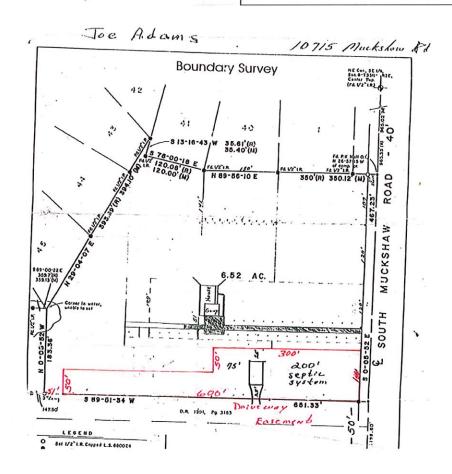
land from me and build a

Panily home.

Letter of Intent

With regards to the R-2 zoning district. I am requesting the minimum lot width of 210 feet be reduced to 100 feet in order for my daughter and her family to purchase land from me and build a family home.

Joseph E. Adams



Joseph Adams (10715 Muckshaw RD, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Adams states that the neighbor to the south of him has offered to put an easement from his driveway for safety reasons and as an interest to this new house. He states that it is hard in Plymouth to find some land that fits the requirements to fulfill for single family housing. He states that he has spoke to all of the realtors and you just can't find properties. He states that his house is on 6 ½ acres and he thought he could partition off one acre for the building and that is what he is asking.

Adams steps away from the microphone and discusses details of the house with the Board.

Board Members Selge and Richie moved and seconded to open the public hearing. The motion carried.

Katherine Foust (15440 Menominee Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563):

Foust states that she is the daughter of Joseph Adams and she is in favor of building a home there. She states that it is a little close to her parents but she believes that they will be okay.

Sara Naylor (10771 Muckshaw RD, Plymouth, IN 46563):

Naylor states that her home is just south of the property. She asks if this is for a 110-foot easement.

Jacobs responds by stating that it is for a setback off of Muckshaw Road.

Naylor asks if they want a setback to build a building 110 feet closer to her property instead of 110 feet closer to his house.

Jacobs states that it is from Muckshaw Road. He states that there is an easement for setback and they are trying to move it closer to Muckshaw Road and that is his understanding.

Naylor states that she thought it was because of parcel reasons.

Surrisi and Gidley states that this is for the minimum lot width and not an easement for setback.

Surrisi addresses that along the roadway the lot width is only going to be 100 feet wide when normally the requirement is 210 feet wide.

Naylor states that on the paper she received that it did not really explain that. She asks about not finding property in the Plymouth area and is wondering what happened with the last parcel that they divided to build a house for his daughter on that was approved by the BZA.

Jacobs responds by stating that since he has been here that it has never came before him so he is unsure what case she is speaking to.

Gidley asks Adams if he has ever divided off any other parcel.

Naylor states that it was not his but it was another neighbor.

Adams responds by stating it was the neighbor that had offered the driveway easement for this property. He states that he was going to partition off some property about 3-4 years ago and that didn't work out even though it was divided off and surveyed. He states that they came back to him this year and he decided to keep it.

Naylor states that they came before this board to have it divided and got an easement for along that driveway previously.

Surrisi states that he remembers that from a couple of years ago.

Board Members Selge and Wendel moved and seconded to close the public hearing. The motion carried.

Board Members Richie and Selge moved and seconded to approve BZA 2023-01 as presented. The motion passed by roll call vote.

Yes:

Gidley, Selge, Richie, Wendel and Jacobs

No:

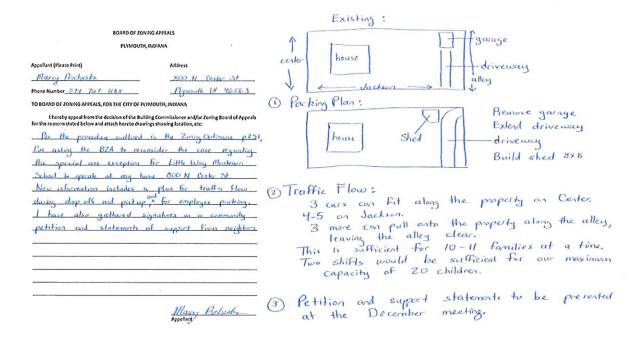
None

Absent:

None

<u>BZA 2022-02:</u> Marcy Prochaska, 800 N. Center St., Plymouth, IN 46563: A reconsideration of a Special Use request to have a Montessori School for up to twenty (20) students, at 800 N. Center Street, on parcel 50-42-92-303-258.000-019, zoned R-3 Traditional Residential District.

City Attorney Surrisi reviewed the findings of fact and the request from the applicant. He read the applicant's letter aloud. See attached letter below.





Little Way Montessori School PO Box 1232 Plymouth IN 46563 (574) 540-5466

Letter of Intent

10/15/2022

We intend to use the property at 800 N Center Street in order to operate our early childhood education program there. The full legal description of this property is POLK & SERING ADD LOT 224 \$172

Little Way has been providing high fidelity Montessori education for children ages 2.5-6 since the 2019-2020 school year. I am the lead teacher of the program and hold a certificate from the Center for Guided Montessori Studies, a MAACTE-approved Montessori teacher education program. Prior to founding Little Way, Linterned at Marquette Montessori Academy, part of the South Bend public school system, and co-laught at Chesterton Montessori School. I also have a Master's in Teaching from Virginia Commonwealth University and earned undergraduate degrees in English and Linguistics from the College of William and Mary.

Montessori education is hands on and holistic. Children work independently within the boundaries of grace and courtesy in a mixed-age group that fosters leadership and supports individual differences. Teaching staff offer individualized instruction and adjust the environment to meet the needs of each child. We spend some time outside every day except when the temperature with wind chill is below 20°.

Our maximum capacity with one classroom assistant is 20 children; we currently have 15 enrolled for the coming school year. Parents will drop off and pick up children at the property and may also attend occasional special events such as prospective family open houses or parent education evenings. The program hours are 8-11:30am, Monday through Friday, with another 15 minutes before and after for drop off and pick up. We follow the same calendar as Plymouth Community Schools. Because the program is less than 4 hours daily, we are a legally license exempt provider.

On behalf of our families and staff, thank you for your consideration.

Mary Prochaska, Director



Marcy Prochaska (800 N. Center Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Prochaska states that she did bring with her six statements of support from people in the neighborhood within 300 feet. She adds that she has 19 local signatures as well as 150 on the online petition in which some of them are local people. See attached statements and signatures below.

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Name: Lukey Exiling Address: 705 Ar Clenter &

Yesl I support granting a special use exception for Little Way Montessori School to operate at 800 N Center St.

- A little impact on traffic flow for 15-20 minutes twice a day is a small price to pay for ensuring a much needed alternative preschool stays in the community.
- The tranquility of the area will not be disturbed. We welcome the sound of children playing outside as an expected feature of a residential neighborhood.

Additional commonts: This, weeks not

Name: Jennelle Wide Address: 1814 D. Center St.

Yes! I support granting a special use exception for Little Way Montessori School to operate at 800 N Center St.

- A little impact on traffic flow for 15-20 minutes twice a day is a small price to pay for ensuring a much needed alternative preschool stays in the community.
- The tranquility of the area will not be disturbed. We welcome the sound of children playing outside as an expected feature of a residential neighborhood.

Additional comments: love the idea for alternative

My name is Marcy Prochaska. You can reach me at marcy@littlewaymontessori.org or 574-767-1188. We are looking to move our early childhood education program to our new home at 800 N Center St, and we're hoping for your support.

Little Way Montessori School was brought forth from seeds planted in the 1990s when working in an after-care program introduced me to the captivating beauty, peace, order, and independence of Montessori. Years later, my own child attended Montessori preschool and kindergarten in Mishawaka; what a shame there wasn't a Montessori option closer to home!

In 2017, when divorce pushed me into the workforce, I took Montessori training. I interned at Marquette Montessori in South Bend, then taught at Chesterton Montessori. Commuting an hour each way was not sustainable. There's the impact on the environment, the cost of fuel, the wear on the car— and there are much better uses for two hours. More importantly, I wanted to work in and serve my own community. I wanted more Plymouth folks to have access to this education so respectful of children, so effective at supporting their natural growth and development.

Changes at the Chesterton school led me to finally start a school in Plymouth. I gathered interested friends, researched sources for furnishings and materials, and presented the idea to our church vestry. We rented space in the parish hall and started school in the fall of 2019 with five students.

We had grown to nine by the time COVID shut down on-site schooling. We finished spring with Zoom classes, "Wednesday Wave" drive-by visits, and how-to home activity guides for parents. In the turmoil and uncertainty of the pandemic few were ready to commit for the next school year; I wasn't sure we would have enough children to continue. It's a sign of the strength and value of our program that we survived that time, and by late summer had six ready to go.

Name: Miles wiers Middle Wish

Yesl I support granting a special use exception for Little Way Montessori School to operate at 800 N Center St.

- A little impact on traffic flow for 15-20 minutes twice a day is a small price to pay for ensuring a much needed alternative preschool stays in the community.
- The tranquility of the area will not be disturbed. We welcome the sound of children playing outside as an expected feature of a residential neighborhood.

Additional comments: work not bother me.

Name: Ovette Husband. Addres: 822 N. Walnut St., PLymouth

Yesi I support granting a special use exception for Little Way Montessori School to operate at 800 N Center St.

- Allittle Impact on traffic flow for 15-20 minutes twice a day is a small price to pay for ensuring a much needed alternative preschool stays in the community.
- The tranquility of the area will not be disturbed. We welcome the sound of children playing outside as an expected feature of a residential neighborhood.

Additional comments: I would welcome

Three weeks before the first day, the vestry voted to end our rental agreement. One COVID-interrupted year in business, a passion for accessibility that keeps tuition low, and a recently divorced director with few financial resources and little employment history meant we were unable to purchase the one suitable building we found, so we scurried to find another willing church. The United Church of Christ took us in for two years.

That lease was not renewed, so this spring we began the search again. We exhausted all possible resources: no other churches had feasible space, commercial property is still beyond our means, and most affordable houses offer insufficient space. We looked at many houses and tried unsuccessfully to buy five. Many sellers didn't want to walt for the zoning contingency.

The zoning ordinance requires childcare providers to apply for a special use exception to operate at a residential property. Such special use is allowed in residential areas; the actual zoning of the property doesn't change. Paperwork and the \$100 application fee is due on the 15th of one month, and the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) decides the case at the next month's public hearing. Neighbors within 300' are notified of the meeting, where anyone can speak for or against the proposed use.

With nothing else available, we applied for special use to hold school at my residence, while my family applied for the least expensive apartment we could find, pending the zoning approval. Our exception there was approved. We were required to put up a fence we could barely afford even with nearly half the panels donated by one of the school families. We also had to change our operating hours to conflict less with Washington Academy traffic, which left me little time to get to my afternoon job at Parrett Veterinary Clinic. I do not yet take a salary from the school, so I depend on the clinic job to make ends meet.

We've done wonderfully adapting to the smaller space on Lake Ave, Enrollment is eleven strong with three more to start mid year, and parents are happy with what we're providing. Nevertheless, it is a small

space; there's no room for our beloved triangle climber, and not a lot of floor space for our individual work rugs. In addition, the apartment rent has taken a toll on my family's finances.

When the house at 800 N Center came on the market with such a reasonable price, we jumped to make an offer. We could live comfortably upstelrs and have school on the main floor. We made the offer conlingent on the sale of the Lake Ave house, and at the time I was under the impression that we would not need the special use application since we would be living there. It turns out that the zoning ordinance allows in-home care for fewer than six children only. Because the new house is not on a major road like Lake where traffic safety would be a concern, we felt it highly unlikely that our zoning application would be denied, and took the calculated risk of not amending the purchase agreement to include a zoning contingency. The real estate market has been very difficult for buyers and I didn't want to risk losing the house because of added slipulations.

The BZA met on 11/2 and, due to two neighbors' concerns about tranquility, traffic flow, and parking, denied our application. We requested a mulual release from our purchase agreements. One party agreed but the other did not, so we have had to move forward with the sale of our house on Lake and the purchase of the other.

We are not ready to give up. We will petition the zoning board to reconsider our application. That process requires two public hearings, bringing us to January before the school could operate at the new location. During this time we will operate from a temporary location. We have a few possibilities and will be making the decision later this week.

She states that she does also have a statement of support from someone on her phone and wished to read it aloud.

"We are Tim and Ashton Taylor, residents of Plymouth, and parents of a student in this school. We can go on and on about the wonderful things this school and Marcy have done for our son's social skills, education and imagination. While providing a safe and fun place to explore and learn, it is only a brief time in the morning. A quick pickup and drop-off but the benefits are immeasurable. We understand that there are many parties to please in this situation and it is a virtually impossible job. However, this school is such an asset to the community and future generations of Plymouth kiddos and it is hard to imagine how putting the school and Marcy in a situation where she may have to close because she is not allowed to use her property as a benefit to the community rather than just the peace of neighbors who already border a busy street and an entire other school. Marcy has provided many solutions to the presented problems and all of the parents have agreed to work on staggering pickup and drop-off times to avoid traffic problems. Solutions have been presented and benefits to the community are clear. Someone's livelihood is in the balance, the choice seems clear."

Jacobs asks if there is going to be any outdoor playing and what is she going to do to keep the kids in the yard and not have them go into the streets.

Prochaska responds by stating that there will be outdoor playing and she would use some type of fence. She explains that it was discussed previously whether they would make recommendations and last time they talked about what the ordinance states for front-yard fencing and what it says for side-yard fencing and then there was also what the Board may believe is necessary. She adds that there are also the childcare licensing standards which is 42 inches as a minimum.

Selge asks when play time is.

Prochaska responds by stating that generally it would be towards the end so they would go out around 11:15 or so for 15-20 minutes.

Wendel asks if she cooks in the home. He asks if they have a full kitchen in there.

Prochaska responds by stating that they do as it is a home.

Gidley asks how many rooms will be utilized on the first floor for the school.

Prochaska responds by stating that they have an open concept living area that is quite big. She states that there are two smaller squares open to that space plus the kitchen and the bathroom. She states that it is mostly the entire first floor other than where the former front porch used to be on Center Street.

Gidley asks about ADA compliance as she is opening up her place for public use. He states that when you make it a public accommodation that you have to make accommodations for ADA compliance. He states that he was aware that the previous owner had a mobility problem. He asks if there is a ramp or anything. He states that she may need a ramp to be ADA compliant.

Prochaska responds by stating that there is not a ramp. She states that she does not believe that a ramp applies to her situation given how small of a group they are.

Gidley restates that she is opening up her house to a public accommodation.

Prochaska asks if the school makes it a public accommodation.

Gidley responds by stating that he believes that it does.

Prochaska states that for her previous meetings at the last location that this was never brought up.

Hammonds states that since it is a private school and not a public school that it does not need to be ADA compliant.

Gidley states that it is a public accommodation.

Surrisi states that with it being a existing building that it wouldn't have to be. He states that if you were getting a permit to do something new for it then it would kick it into having to be updated or if you had a child that had needs that needed to be met then that would be something to allow a ramp.

Jacobs states that since it is private that he does not think it needs to be ADA compliant.

Richie states that if there is no ramp then you just wouldn't be able to accommodate that student. He states that with his wife operating a state licensed daycare for 20 years, they never had to have a ramp. He states that since it was in their home, the state came in and looked it over and never once was it an issue even with a second floor.

Wendel states that as far as fencing, he does want to see a fence in that backyard. Prochaska agrees. Wendel asks Hammonds if there are any rules against that.

Hammonds responds by stating that there is no other than the height. He states that with them having two front yard setbacks since they are on two streets that it can't be taller than 42 inches and it cannot be a privacy fence.

Gidley asks if it has to chain link or do you have to just be able to see through it.

Selge asks if she could have a taller fence in the back grassy area.

Hammonds responds by stating that she can. He states that she can have one along the alley and the north property line and it can go up to six feet and be privacy.

Wendel states that he would want it to be six feet above ground fencing and he will leave the option up to her on whether or not that is chain link or privacy. He clarifies in the back yard.

Surrisi states that from his understanding he wants to see if that is going to accomplish what he is thinking. He asks if only two sides of the fence will be tall and the other two on the east and north side will be low.

Jacobs asks Prochaska if 42 inches is what she is required to do.

Prochaska responds by stating that she thinks the licensing may have been 48 inches instead of 42 inches.

Wendel asks even if it is on that back end of that yard that it can't get up to six feet.

Hammonds states that when you run down that whole south side that it has to be 42 inches or four feet. He states that when you go north on the east property line that it then can be six feet. He states that you could also have a visible triangle where the alley and the street meet so you measure off the right feet.

Jacobs asks how they help her out if she has to be higher than they allow for an ordinance.

Hammonds responds by stating that most fences are 48 inches.

Prochaska states that she is legally licensed exempt so she offers that as what the standard is but she is not obligated to meet it.

Wendel states that he is settling on a 48-inch fence on all sides and it does not have to be put in concrete but it has to be in the ground stable where it is not going anywhere. He states that at the top of the 48-inches that there will have to be some sort of cover over the chain link and they make plastic stuff that goes over that.

Selge asks what if the fence starts at the back of the house.

Wendel asks if there is a door on the back of the house.

Prochaska responds by stating that both doors face Jackson Street and they can be identified where the sidewalks are. She states that there is also a door on the north side that is halfway down the basement stairs so it is not really practical as far as the school goes.

Selge asks if it would be enough room to have a fence that starts right at the corner of the house.

Prochaska responds by stating that she was going to include the house in the fence so that the fence would not separate so that it would start at one end of the house and go down.

Jacobs asks what she had planned for the fence.

Prochaska responds by stating that she was thinking of a wood fence, probably picket style. She states that they also spoke about the garage and she really does think that it is too close to the alley to have people park alongside. She states that she thought it was far enough back to have people park alongside it. She states that if this application is approved that the garage would go and they would put in angled parking along that driveway/ alley.

Selge asks if she can have a larger fence.

Prochaska adds that she is curious about that as far as setbacks go for how much room she can use.

Selge clarifies from starting from the end of the house and going towards the driveway.

Hammonds responds by stating that if she starts at the back of the house on the east side and goes straight back that she could have a six-foot fence there.

Jacobs clarifies that as long as it is not along the road that it can be six feet. He states that they could look into putting that in the stipulation if they want.

Wendel asks if they said chain link or PVC. Prochaska adds wood as an option.

Hammonds responds by stating that wood is also an option.

Wendel states that he does not want a picket fence. He states that there is too much of a chance for a kid to get their hand stuck in those.

Prochaska states that it can't be privacy across the front though.

Wendel explains that is why he also brought up chain link.

Gidley asks for clarification that on the two street sides that Wendel wants it to be chain link. Wendel agrees. Gidley asks that between her and her neighbor that he would allow a privacy fence.

Wendel responds by stating that is up to her.

Prochaska states that with picket that it is not going to be that close together where their hands are going to get stuck. She states that you can round them.

Wendel states that he could accept that.

Prochaska states that she would make sure that the boards are separated enough that nobody is going to get their head stuck. She clarifies not a sharp picket fence.

Selge asks for clarity that the garage is going.

Prochaska responds by stating if this is approved.

Gidley states that if they were to approve this, how soon would she be able to make those things happen. He states that he knows with the weather it may take a while.

Prochaska states that her plan right now is to stay where the school is until Spring Break which is late in March. She states that the weather will be better then and this would allow her time to make the necessary changes and then they will move the school at that time. She states that she will not operate the school at this location until all of those changes are made around Spring Break. She states that she is unsure how long it will take to make all of that happen. She states that weather for sure will be a factor but she is willing to entertain suggestions on if something isn't done then maybe they don't play outside until it is or whatever else they would want to stipulate as far as that goes. She adds that she is taking notes.

Selge states that with play time being around 11-11:30 that it would not wake up anybody.

Jacobs adds unless you are third shift.

Wendel asks if the kids take naps.

Prochaska responds by stating not in their program but if they were the full day then they would.

Jacobs asks if the city provides her with something in regards to what they recommend or say. He asks to see how they help people. He states that if they make a motion to accept and put a couple of stipulations in there, would she get a copy stating what those stipulations are. He states that he does not think it is fair that they require them to hopefully understand and interpret what they are saying

Williams states that so far, he has not been asked to send anything.

Gidley asks how long it takes before the minutes are ready.

Williams states that he has the minutes ready within a couple of days but he has to wait for approval of the minutes until the following meeting.

Jacobs states that he was curious on the process.

Board Members Selge and Wendel moved and seconded to open the public hearing. The motion carried.

In Favor:

Chelsey Lacy (16179 Linden Road, Argos, IN 46501):

Lacy states that her child is a newer member of Little Way and she is 2 ½ years old and almost 3. She adds that she has been at Little Way since October. She states that other than daycare, which is not a preschool, Little Way is the only option for her child. She states that her child is not potty trained so the only other preschool option is in Argos where they have to be three and potty trained. She states that she has a very intelligent little girl who very much wants to be out there socializing. She states that other than her just dropping her off at a daycare where it is just a daycare, this is the only option for her. She states that before she got into Little Way, she knew only a little about Montessori and they have a whole Montessori school in South Bend and she looked at Bloomington for years and they have programs down there but this is a very wonderful school. She states that this is offering things to children that are not offered in Marshall County. She states that you would have to go to South Bend, Indianapolis, bigger cities, or more progressive places so to have this is very special. She restates on top of this being special that this is the only option that her kid has. She states that there are no other places in the area offering this and it is very affordable. She states that if she put her in daycare that it would probably be two to four times as much. She states that as a stay-at-home Mom that if she did put her child into Daycare that she would probably have to work a job which is not really feasible as it is only part of the day. She states for her finances there is not another reasonable option in this price range. She states that her along with a couple other mothers went canvasing the neighborhood a couple weeks ago and that is when a couple of the signatures provided were received by them. She states that she cannot tell them the exact timeframe that they went but they went during the school day and during the hours of operation that the school would be going. She states that they can vassed the entire area and she states that they got very little answers at the door because people were not home. She states that the people that were there were stay at home Moms, retired folks, or work from home people. She states that all of whom who did answer did not care at all or they were for it. She states that one was the mother of a young child who very soon would be of age where he could go to the Montessori school. She adds that she did not sign as they wanted to look into it more but she was interested. She states that at this time-of-day people were not home to answer doors so there would not be a very big disruption to the people living in that area. She states that the house has a very large lot and she drops her kid off there every day and there is between two to four vehicles there at a time because people are coming and going. She states that there is ample parking on that street and she is aware that it is street parking and not private residence parking.

Jacobs asks if she is dropping her kids off there now.

Lacy states that when they drop them off at Lake Avenue when they were doing that it was only a couple of cars at a time. She states that the street parking that resides around that property is ample for the amount of people that are coming and going. She states that from her own experience dropping them off and picking up that there are never long lines of them waiting. She adds when they were at Lake Avenue that it was only a couple of spots and there was no clustered waiting.

She states that Lake Avenue is very busy and very hectic but the drop off never felt dangerous, erratic, or bottlenecked so she feels as far as the flow of drop off and pickup that it was very easy. She states that it was not like Saint Michael's and that is what a lot of the families that she spoke to thought it would be like. She states that Saint Michael's is congested, busy, hectic, noisy and chaotic while this is not. She states that she is not a resident in this area and that this is not going to affect her home or her day-to-day life. She states that she can't speak to that but as a parent who has the experience of dropping off and picking up that the chaos of Lake Avenue felt unsafe as that was dangerous and busy while you were having to look if cars were coming while this is quiet with nobody there and nothing happened.

Jacobs states that she does not want to cut her off but they do have a 5-minute time limit so the conversation needs to be wrapped up.

Lacy states that she felt like this is so much more of comfortable, safer, and quieter environment for the kids and the school. She adds that it may not be the case for the residents but thanks for hearing her out on this.

Michelle Campbell (310 E. Plum Street, Argos, IN 46501):

Campbell states that Lacy said everything she wished to say. She states that her daughter also attends Little Way Preschool and it is her second year. She states that she is three and when she started, she was 2 1/2. She states similar to Lacy her daughter was 2 1/2 so she could not attend any other school and they did not start that early. She states that she also wasn't potty trained so she would not have been able to start early either. She states that she is a little ahead of herself as far as intelligence but she was thrilled that we had a Montessori program. She states that the things that they have learned in that school are things that you cannot learn at any other schools. She states that she is learning how to treat her friends and neighbors is one of the things that she has progressed a great deal in since she started this school. She states that she has two older brothers and they are rambunctious and so she was learning things from them as far as how to play and she has learned now to ask permission before touching other children, how to cut vegetables and how to draw. She explains those are normal things but she learns based off of what she is interested in. She states that she is very interested in coloring and painting so she learns through those avenues instead of normal style teaching where the teacher is up at the front of the classroom speaking. She states that she just wants to stress that this is something that they do not have anywhere else in Marshall County. She adds that the number of students that are getting picked up and dropped off at the same time is very minimal as it is usually three to four cars at a time dropping off or picking up so it really wouldn't take anywhere but the front of the school to drop off the kids as they wouldn't really be lined up down the street.

Roscinda Rinehart (907 W. Jackson Street, Plymouth, IN 46563):

Rinehart states that she is the assistant teacher at Little Way Montessori School. She states that they do realize that traffic may be a little bit slower but they really move it quickly. She states that these children are young enough that they do not need parking spaces yet so the parent is only there momentarily. She states that she goes out and gets the child and the parents come and pick up the child so it is a rather quick move. She adds that is pretty much the only conflict she can see. She

states that she is very thankful that the Board is willing to do some adjusting because they can follow the specs and they know how to do that.

In Opposition:

Andrew Orr (801 N. Michigan Street, Plymouth, IN 46563):

Orr states that his house is the blue house directly across the alley. He states that at the last meeting he spoke and said about everything that he could possibly say. He states that the only things that he wanted to address was the point where the only options they had was here because their children are not potty-trained but he can state that Plymouth Wesleyan Church has a daycare. He states that maybe they could just be speaking to Montessori availability but Plymouth Wesleyan Church does charge extra is your child is not potty trained but they do take down to babies. He states that the other thing that he would like to mention is he would like to ask if the letter that was read here from somebody within the 300 feet of the property or was that from somebody outside of the property and just in the school.

Selge asks for clarity on what letter.

Orr responds by stating the letter that was read aloud from her phone.

Prochaska states that the letter was from a resident of Plymouth but they do not live within the 300 feet.

Orr addresses that the main thing is that they have heard a lot of great things and he does not doubt that this is a great school with the pedigree that Prochaska carries with her and he is sure they are doing great things but unfortunately, he has not heard anything for it directly within the 300 feet.

Prochaska adds that she has brought 6 statements of support with her from the 300 feet.

Orr asks if those will be read aloud this evening along with the statements.

Williams responds by stating that they can be read aloud.

Jacobs asks if he is referring to the ones that were for.

Orr responds by stating the ones where they gave an actual statement for it.

Richie shows Orr one of the statements.

Surrisi states that he will read the names and the addresses.

Orr states that he would like to finish and then they could go to that. He asks if any letters were received in opposition.

Jacobs responds by stating that they would have been read aloud.

Orr states that he does have one letter in opposition.

Jacobs asks if he can forward it.

Williams states that he could provide his email after the meeting.

Attached is the letter that was read aloud by Orr. This letter was received in the City Office by mail the following day.

December 28, 2022

Plymouth City Hall 124 N. Michigan St. Plymouth, IN 46563

Re: Request BZA 2023-02: Marcy Prochaska, 800 N. Center St., Plymouth IN 46563: A reconsideration of a Special Use request to have a Montessori School for up to (20) students, at 800 N. Center St., on parcel, 50-42-92-303-258,000-019 zoned R-3, Traditional Residential District.

To the Board of Zoning Appeals, I'd like to express my concerns and vote regarding this situation.

- Just a block from this property is St Michael's Church and school. With
 many children walking to and from school and being dropped off or picked
 up by parents or guardians the traffic is already a concern. Then on top of
 school traffic the church often has funerals that brings more cars and
 walkers to our neighborhood and street. And Weddings.
- Property value is a concern and top priority of interest to all of us neighbors. A business or special zoning within a residential neighborhood will definitely discourage some buyers and decrease the value of our properties.
- 3. Another note would be the fact that the surrounding area is not setup for proper parking or for dropping off and picking up children. With current parking by residents on both sides of the street, this could/would be a safety issue for both residents and children coming and going to both St Micheal's and the potential Montessori school. St Micheal's has upgraded their surrounding area for safety reasons.
- 4. Homeowners on Center St often park a car in front of their home on both sides of the street which leaves a single lane for other cars or trucks or emergency equipment access. If parents are coming with children or picking up children where is that line of cars or trucks going to park?

With these concerns in mind I would like to express my vote against this appeal for re zoning this property that is across the street from my home.

Sincerely, Mary Educa Halmes

Mary Eileen Helms 723 N Center St., Plymouth IN 46563

Orr states that this home is just catty corner of the property in question. He states that he also spoke to her neighbor who also voices her concern about this. He states that the neighbors just to the south of the property in the blue house are also against this proposal. He states that they work for the railroad and was unable to attend. He states that he also walked the neighborhood tonight just before the meeting encouraging neighbors to come out this evening. He adds that he did not encourage them to say either yes or no on the proposal but just to come out this evening. He states that he did run into one person who was in favor of this and they live right next door to the Blueberry Cottage, Betty Wilcockson, and she was not leaned in either direction on the issue. He states that as for the other houses he contacted and spoke to that he did not find anybody that was for this. He states that the route he followed was Center Street, Jackson Street and then anybody who bordered the alley. He states that his next question is the proposal of drop off and pickup and whether or not they planned on using the alley.

Richie states that he believes that was for parking. He states that they would tear the garage down and use it for employee parking.

Macie McMichael (809 N. Michigan Street, Plymouth, IN 46563):

McMichael states that she is the house that is directly to the north of Orr's house. She states that her concern is also the traffic and she is unaware of what date or time they came and scoped out the area but anytime that she has ever driven down Jackson Street and you encounter two vehicles that are parked right next to each other that you could barely fit one SUV through there so if you have opposing traffic, then somebody is getting over trying to let the other through. She states that if you do not see one another until last minute then someone is having to back up in the middle of the street which is very dangerous. She states that with the previous owners there have been times where he had a walker and he wasn't all the way upright so he couldn't see her vehicle through the vehicles that were parked and they almost collided with him while he was just getting into his vehicle. She states that she could not imagine a child darting out in front of her vehicle and she would not be able to live with herself and it is just a dangerous area. She states that she knows Saint Michael's was brought up but they have a whole lot to themselves plus there is a lot of parking directly behind them and they have a whole pickup and drop-off area that consists of the whole block. She states that where they are wanting to put parking is directly behind Orr's house where his garage is and that directly affects them, the people next to them and so on. She states that it is just too congested of an area. She adds that she is not against the school in any way shape or form but she is just against the location as it is not great. She states that she also wants to mention that a couple years ago there was the act of the man with the machete and his wife and that was only a couple blocks away as well. She states that she does not remember the exact street but it was just a couple blocks down more north.

Surrisi believes that it was on Harrison Street.

McMichael states that this was in very close proximity to where she is wanting to put this school.

Richie asks if that guy is still living there.

Someone in the audience states that they are in prison now.

McMichael states that it is just not the greatest area and as much as their little street is fine, the area behind it isn't a place where they would want their children to be throughout the day.

Terry Moss (813 N. Michigan Street, Plymouth, IN 46563):

Moss states that he was contacted by someone knocking at his door and he is second shift so he was sleeping. He states that he was contacted and he said then that he is not in favor of it. He states that alley does not have a lot of speeders but people do speed in that alley. He states the alley is so beat up that to lose control is very easy. He states that the congestion with the rear alley parking would affect three houses right there. He states that he loves concept of the school but not at that location.

Wendel states that they are not anticipating any alley parking at all.

Jacobs states that if they take the garage down then there will be parking along the alley.

Wendel states that it is still not in the alley.

Richard Gamble (808 N. Center Street, Plymouth, IN 46563):

Gamble states that he is two houses north and he states that he knows the neighbor just north of the property there keeps to herself a lot and works various hours so she couldn't make it tonight but she is not in favor of the school. He states that his wife and him have talked and he knows that it keeps getting brought up that. He states that he knows that the hours depend on that but there is a lot of congestion especially on Jackson Street. He states that people like to fly down Center Street and it gets congested quick and people do not watch where they are going. He states that they joke about rolling spike strips out there sometimes but it just feels a little chaotic to him. He states that they love the school, both him and his wife work with kids and he loves what Montessori does. He believes that it is the right school but it is the wrong location for them.

Selge states that there is a stop there at Center Street.

Gamble responds by stating there is but that is maybe questionable for some people as many of the times people view it as optional since they blow through that one.

Board Members Richie and Selge moved and seconded to close the public hearing. The motion carried.

Richie states that he is torn on this. He states that they did the afterschool program for years at Saint Michael's and they never once saw it get congested out to Michigan Street to the degree that people are talking about. He adds that they were there for years. He explains that for the signatures on the opposing side that there is even one from Walkerton and there are many there that are not going to be directly affected by this school and their property is not the one that is at stake here.

Selge adds that he believes ones like that are parents of some of the students that plan on going here.

Richie states that is a possibility too but he believes that it carries more weight for those who are directly going to be affected by it every day.

Jacobs believes that is a good point and something that he was going to say as well. He explains to the audience that they have no doubt on schools being good and the need for schools but what they really vote on is how does it affect the neighborhood. He states that it affects what the plans are for the community for an area. He states that does not mean they are voting no because they haven't voted yet. He states that what they are saying is that there is no question about the quality of the school or needing a place for kids to go but that is one of the things when they listen to people talk that they are trying to find out more in regards to the issues around the community and not whether there is a school or not.

Lacy states that she wants to remind the board that there are six signatures of people that live right in that surrounding area. She states that they are more than happy and accommodating and felt that it was not going to affect anything.

Surrisi asks to read the letter of supports aloud. See attached letters of support above before the opening of the public hearing.

Richie states that he lives on Bailey Street across Michigan Street and sometimes he makes the questionable decision to Jackson Street to go home and the parking on Jackson Street is similar on both sides. He states that most of the day the parking there is ridiculous and you can't even get through it. He states that one car has a hard enough time getting through it.

Wendel asks who is parking there. He states that one house is the railroad and he is never there.

Jacobs reminds the public that the public hearing is done at this time and they are just having discussion.

Richie explains that with the parking all through Jackson Street even all the way across Michigan to the other side of Jackson Street that he understands the parking issue having to drive it sometimes. He states that if someone is coming the other way then you have to look for a turnoff to get by there. He states that something needs to be done about the parking over there as there are more people parking there then that live there.

Selge states that he has heard a lot of comments about the alley and parking in the alley. He states that if the garage there gets torn down then they will be pulling into the yard probably past the western side of the garage and that is for the owners of the property and the people that work there. He clarifies that nobody is going to be parking there that is bringing kids in. He asks for clarity that nobody else is going to be using the alley.

Prochaska responds by stating that nobody is going to be using the alley.

Richie asks if they are going to be dropping off of Jackson Street.

Prochaska responds by stating that they may drop off either on Center Street or Jackson Street.

Selge asks if anyone dropping kids off will be using the alley.

Prochaska responds by stating that they will not.

Jacobs states that they can though.

Prochaska states that they may come through the alley but nobody is going to be parking on the side.

Selge asks if she can tell them that they will not be going through the alley.

Prochaska responds by stating that she can.

Richie asks for clarity on what street they are dropping kids off on.

Prochaska states that most likely they will be dropping off on Jackson Street, they can also use the portion of Center Street that is bordering the property and there is going to be the angled parking where the garage is. She adds that they can stop at any of those locations.

Selge asks if parents can park at an angle in the alley.

Prochaska responds by stating that parents will not be parking in the alley but rather in the property along the alley and it will not block the alley at all.

Selge asks if the parents have to go in the house.

Prochaska responds by stating that they do not.

Selge asks why would they need to park then. He states that it looks like they could pull up in the front on Center Street and immediately get the child out of the car.

Prochaska responds by stating that is generally what happens. She states that around pickup time they are playing in the outside and that may be the only time where parents may leave their car parked for a moment while they watch the kids play.

Selge asks if they have somebody that goes out and gets the kids. Prochaska agrees. Selge states that the parent does not even have to leave their car as they are just stopping there and not parking. He states that Jackson Street is narrow and Center Street is a little bit wider and there are buses that go down Center Street as well and that doesn't block Center Street as long unless you are behind the bus.

Richie asks if they are planning on getting a designated spot on Center Street because what happens if during the drop off time someone occupies that spot and parks there.

Prochaska responds by stating that she was unaware that reserving a parking spot was an option.

Hammonds states that would have to go before the Board of Public Works and Safety.

Richie asks if that could be a scenario.

Surrisi states that it could be if the Board of Public Works and Safety approved it but very rarely have exceptions occurred. He lists some in the downtown area like the Hair Studio on Laporte Street, Woman's Health Clinic on Washington Street and when Plumlee's Office would have a dental emergency that lasted longer than two hours, they approved a special tag that you could put on the cars that made them exempt from ticketing.

Wendel states that he can't imagine a residential area approving it otherwise everyone would want one.

Selge states that he drives past there every day at least once given that he lives down the street and there is never anyone parked in front of that house that they are using for the school and nobody parks along that property across as they have a big parking lot for their cars. He states that if you have someone standing out there getting the kid out of the car and the parent leaving immediately, could that be scheduled with the parents.

Prochaska responds by stating that is what they do for drop off.

Selge asks if they can leave the alley alone completely. He states that most of the people here are against it for the alley.

Prochaska responds by stating that if that is stipulated then they could accommodate that. She states that if so, then maybe she could keep the garage.

Jacobs states that with all the information that they already have that they need to entertain a motion of approval, denial or any other recommendations of what they are thinking. He states that they cannot solve a lot of the things they are trying to discuss because they do not have the authority to say yes or no. He states that you can try to put it into the motion.

Wendel asks if they put the fencing into the motion.

Jacobs responds by stating that it would have to be restated in the motion.

Wendel agrees and states that he lives across from the Junior High School so don't talk to him about traffic at all.

Orr states that Wendel moved in however when the Junior High School was already there.

Wendel states that he lived there for 17 years when the old Junior High School was still there. He states that he is aware of how much of a hassle it is.

Selge states that he did not hear anyone speak out against the school. He states that the issues brought up were dropping off and picking up kids.

Gidley states that nobody has spoken out against Montessori Schools but instead it has been about protecting the neighborhood.

Selge states that compared to Saint Michael's which has eight times more kids.

Wendel states that they have about 110 kids.

Selge states that is ten times more than this school.

Gidley adds that some of them come in on a bus and they are not coming in on individual cars.

Richie asks if he can ask a question to a gentleman in the public. Jacobs allows it. Richie asks Orr if the Montessori School were to approved then to him, what would be a reasonable solution to someone who lives there that you could live with and solve this issue.

Orr responds by stating that he does not see a way to solve the issue but believes that a proper evaluation of the traffic would be a start.

Richie states that he is worried about property value.

Orr responds by agreeing and stating that he is looking at the integrity of the residential neighborhood and he understands that they are not changing the zoning but by allowing this they are putting a semi-commercial piece of real estate in the middle of an established neighborhood.

Richie states that this concern is more than just traffic. He states that he thinks that sometimes they are just talking about traffic.

Selge states that what he was hearing the most was about traffic.

Wendel states that they are not changing the zoning at all.

Orr states that the other concern is that unfortunately talk is cheap these days so they can sit here and say that they will do this, drop off this, stagger dropping off twenty kids five minutes apart and that it only takes a few minutes to get a kid in the car seat and buckle them up but everyone who has a kid knows that is not true. He states for him what he wants to see a fence written into this, parking written into this, and a plan written into this so that they can hold someone's feet to the fire in case this is not what happens. He states that you need to be able to have a plan in place before you tell someone to go ahead and do that and impact all of the neighbors. He states that he was quickly looking at the map when they were listing off the different locations and it seems like those in favor were a little further out then those affected at the nucleus of that intersection or the roads that are being considered. He states that Walnut is one street to the west but he believes that the integrity of the neighborhood and the neighbors that are there is what he is looking at.

Williams brings up the earlier statement about sending minutes to be after they have been approved. He states that he does upload the minutes to the Plymouth Website after they have been approved so it is public knowledge for everyone so instead of holding just the owner accountable that the property owners in the surrounding area can hold the owner accountable.

Jacobs states that he was just worried that they did not have someplace where they could see the stipulations provided in the motion. He asks if he can make a motion.

Gidley responds by stating that it is preferred that he does not but if nobody does take action then he can.

Richie states that it is mindboggling because he understands where they are coming from on if any of the neighbors want to sell their property that some people may not want to buy a house that is next to something like this so property value is a major concern. He states that goes beyond traffic or beyond anything that they can put into a piece of paper to change this. He states that they can

make regulations about fences, about drop off and do all of that stuff but that makes no bearing on property value or the resale value of the property. He states that is a whole other monster.

Lacy states what if someone wants that property because they have a young child and they want close childcare.

Richie states that he agrees wholeheartedly with that but now that dilemma is put on the seller of the property to find that person.

Lacy asks what about the buyer looking for a place with that option because it could actually be an asset to the seller. She states that you are talking about a small family community and wouldn't a small family want a preschool next to their home.

Randy Longanecker asks if it is not part of the rule where they have to look at that given that it is in the rules of the Plan Commission that you are improving the surrounding areas. He states that is basically what they are governing over.

Jacobs states that is correct.

Longanecker states that they have to do the same thing in the Plan Commission. He states that these are the rules that are set and that you have to take into consideration the surrounding areas as those are part of the findings of facts.

Jacobs states that is correct and this is a no fun job.

Selge asks the audience if they are all concerned about their property values because all he was hearing was a bunch of traffic stuff.

Orr states that this meeting is about new findings of fact and he has not heard a lot of new findings brought up or any type of new information.

McMichael states that safety is their number one concern. She states that she is concerned about her property value but she is more concerned about accidently hitting a kid or her dog taking off and getting hit by a car. She states that the traffic is already concern enough without adding that much extra vehicular movement. She states that if someone is putting the child into their car seat and that just so happens to be on the side facing the road and they are closer to Michigan that they are already at a standstill if two vehicles are parked on either side.

Lacy asks McMichael if she is home during the hours that the school is running. McMichael responds by stating that she is.

Jacobs reminds the audience that the public hearing is done. He states that the Board may ask questions but states that the public hearing is closed. He states that with concerns about traffic being the center point of the new findings that he will make a motion.

Richie asks why the motion is just about traffic.

Jacobs responds by stating that this meeting and the new findings was only about traffic.

Gidley states that the only reason they were having the meeting was because there was supposed to be new findings.

Jacobs adds that there was also supposed to be a new thought process on this but he has not heard that himself. He states that he lived at 910 N. Center Street and he worked third shift and it does affect you when there is more traffic. He states adding more to it does not help it. He states that by looking at the neighborhood and what they talked about that he is making a motion to deny the request.

Board Members Jacobs and Gidley moved and seconded to deny BZA 2023-02 on the factor of traffic issues in that area. The motion passed by roll call vote.

Yes:

Gidley, Selge, Wendel and Jacobs

No:

Richie

Absent:

None

There being no other business, Board Members Selge and Wendel moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Kyle Williams— Recording Secretary