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 October 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. Alternates Linda Secor and Fred Webster were not in attendance and not needed. Others present were Building Commissioner Dennis Manuwal Jr., City Attorney Sean Surrisi and Plan Consultant Ralph Booker. The public was able to see and hear the meeting through Microsoft Teams.

Board Members Richie and Wendel moved and seconded to approve the minutes of September 5, 2023. The motion carried.

The following legal notice was advertised in the Pilot News on September 21, 2023:



<u>BZA 2023-23</u>: Nancy Rouse, 714 E. Laporte St., Plymouth, IN 46563: A Variance of Development Standards to build a new garage and twenty-four (24) foot pool with a five (5) foot side yard setback, on lots Forty-five (45) and Forty-six (46) in Bollman's Addition to Plymouth, located at 714 E. Laporte Street, Plymouth, IN 46563, zoned R-3, Traditional Residential District.

Plan Consultant Booker reviewed the findings of fact and the request from the applicant. He read the applicant's letter aloud. See attached letter below.

Booker states there are two lots there and normally we do not allow a person to build across a lot line. He states he did not ask the applicant but she submitted this to a surveyor in order to put the two lots together. He recommends putting in whatever motion you make that they put the two lots together that they are working on.

Jacobs asks what the green area is.

Booker responds by stating that is the dog area.

LETTER OF INTENT IN SUPPORT OF REQUEST FOR VARIANCE 714 E. LAPORTE STREET PLYMOUTH, IN. 46563

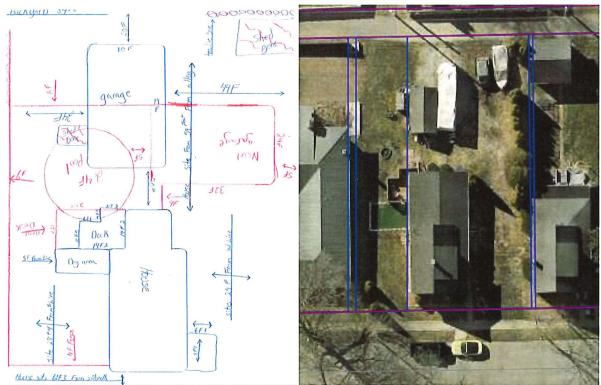
This letter of Intent is in support for a variance to both of the side yard setback requirements.

- The intention is to tear down existing deck which has rotting wood and rebuild it extending it by 5 feet and concurrent with the existing dog area,
 The dog area is 25 feet long and 12 feet wide. (built with permit). New deck would be 5 feet from the property line on the east side.
- 2. Put up a 24 foot round swimming pool and placed next to the south side of the deck. Pool will be 6 feet from the property line on the east side.
- 3. Tear down old garage, which is a one car garage and an eye sore. Build a 2 car garage 24x30 which will be 6 feet from the west side of property line.
- 4. By the beginning of summer of 2024 build a 6 foot privacy fence around east side of property to enhance the safety of the pool. The fence will go up to at least past the dog area.
- 5. No various is need for the south side of property line. All structures will be at least 19 feet from the back alley. Only the privacy fence will be put up back there. Also nothing is being built in the front of the property.

Thank you for your consideration,

Respectfully submitted





Nancy Rouse (714 E. LaPorte Street, Plymouth, IN 46563):

Rouse brought pictures to show the board. She explains what she is doing is tearing down the old and building new to improve her property. She states it will be the same pool but they are expanding to make things bigger. She states the current shed on the property has been moved around so they can tear down the garage.

Gidley asks where she plans to move that plastic shed to.

Rouse responds by stating she is going to put that next to the garage because it is a movable shed that she uses to put her lawnmower in. She explains the reason they want to extend the deck is because they want to abut the pool up to the deck so the only way, they can get to the pool is from the deck. She adds there will also be a privacy fence put around so there is no way for someone to get to it.

Wendel asks if she will have a fence that goes completely around.

Rouse responds by stating she will be putting a privacy fence up but the problem is it will be in 2024. She explains that is because the land is starting to get hard and nobody wants to do it in October. She states as soon as the pool is put up that she will have to close it because nobody wants to go swimming in October so that is why she said 2024 before the summer.

Gidley asks Booker about his recommendation about how he referenced the 5-foot setback.

Booker responds by stating she asked for a 5-foot setback and a 6-foot setback but we decided to make it 5 feet on each side. He explains she can still build at six feet so there is no problem.

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

There were no comments at this time.

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

Booker clarifies if you want to amend the motion to be six feet and five feet that you have the right to do that but you can't make it less. He states you can make it more if that is what you want to do.

Gidley asks if the two of you have agreed that five feet works on both sides.

Booker responds by stating it would be easier to do frame the legal advertisement that way as to not confuse the public.

Williams explains the legal advertisement originally had both a five-foot setback and a six-foot setback which made it confusing.

Rouse adds that she believes she has James Kimball & Sons who did a minor plat for her and they said it should be done by the 9th of October.

Jacobs states it doesn't look like the smaller lot is big enough to build a house on anyways.

Booker states he has seen it happen where a bank bought one lot and another bank bought the other property which caused a mess.

Board Members Richie and Selge moved and seconded to approve BZA 2023-23 with the condition to put the two lots together. The motion passed by roll call vote.

Yes:

Gidley, Richie, Selge, Wendel and Jacobs

No:

None

BZA 2023-24: City of Plymouth and Culver Sand Hills Farm, LLC, 124 N. Michigan St., Plymouth, IN 46563: Variances of Development Standards to approve no-off street parking spaces, to approve 9 x 19 parking spaces, to approve a seventeen (17) foot access aisle, a side yard setback of six (6) feet and a rear yard setback of two (2) feet and six (6) inches, on parcels 50-32-93-104-943.000-019, 50-32-93-104-939.000-019, 50-32-93-104- 936.000-019, and 50-32-93-104-936.001-019 located at the corner of Garro and Water Streets, Plymouth, IN 46563, zoned C-2, Downtown Commercial District.

Plan Consultant Booker reviewed the findings of fact and the request from the applicant. He read the applicant's letter aloud. See attached letter below.



September 13, 2023

Plymouth Board of Zoning Appeals 124 North Michigan Street Plymouth, IN 46563

RE: Water Street Townhomes & Public Parking Project

Dear Board Members,

This correspondence serves as both a letter of intent and additional application information regarding the above project. In brief, the Water Street Townhomes & Public Parking Project proposes to construct twelve (12) 2 story two-bedroom townhomes facing Water Street, a two-story building at the corner of Water and Garro Street containing a business occupancy on the first floor and two (2) one-bedroom apartments on the second floor and an expansion of the current city parking lot from thirty (30) spaces to forty-eight (48) spaces. To accomplish this, the project seeks five (5) variances of development standards as follows:

- 1. Describe the details of your request.
 - a. Variance to approve no off-street parking spaces (1 per dwelling unit required in the downtown overlay district). (Although the parking spaces are being increased by eighteen (18) spaces, they are all within the public parking lot) -page 76/6. Type I.6
 - b. Variance to approve a 9' x 19' parking space (10' x 20' required) page 183/D/2
 - c. Variance to approve a 17' access aisle (20' required) page 183/D/3/a
 - d. Side yard Setback variance to 6 feet (20' required) page 36 Development Standards
 - Rear yard setback variance to 2 feet 6 inches (10' required) page 36/Development Standards
- Explain how enforcement of the Ordinance would unreasonably prevent you from using your property.

General: The proposed project is consistent with the goals of the comprehensive plan and downtown overlay district. However, the detailed requirements of the ordinance make compliance for an infill project of this nature difficult.

- The parking variances simply follow the existing development and layout of angular parking found downtown and which has functioned well for decades. Additionally, the
- proposed parking lot design meets or exceeds Indiana Department of Transportation Standards figure 51-4A. (attached)
- c. The side yard setback variance allows for the full utilization of the property and creates a design consistent with existing downtown development. If the project directly adjoined the buildings to the north, the setback would be zero (0) feet.
- d. The rear yard set-back variance is a result of the City of Plymouth request to place the entire parking lot on city owned property. Many downtown buildings have zero (0) rear yard (alley) setback.
- 3. Describe the unique characteristics of your property with respect to lot size, shape, topography, and other physical limitations that make enforcement of the Ordinance impractical. Were any of these limitations created by you or by past property owners?
 - a. As a property within the original downtown plat where lots are 22, 44, 66, and 88 feet wide and 126 feet deep with a 12-foot-wide alley, the ability to effectively develop and utilize the property for highest and best use today is limited. Additionally, the existing topography of the site makes compliance with a maximum pavement slope of 5% challenging. This property has historically been a mixed-use property combining commercial and residential occupancies. The development proposes returning to that historic combination of uses.
- 4. What other options have you considered and why were they not chosen?
 - a. Preliminary designs included variations on the type of housing and the extent of mixeduse occupancies. Ultimately, townhomes with a corner mixed use structure were determined to be the best solution to comport with the comprehensive plan and the downtown overlay district.
- Explain how granting this variance is consistent with protecting the public interest; in particular explain how it will impact sensitive public resources and/or adjacent properties.
 - a. With the exception of River Gate Apartments, this project will be the first major private investment subject to property taxes constructed in the downtown district in nearly 30 years. It is in the public interest to see new investment in proximity to the central core of the city. Additionally, the project will create fourteen (14) new dwelling units (downtown residents) who will generate economic activity. The expanded parking spaces that will be available will benefit both the new residents and the existing

businesses in the historic downtown. The Impact on adjoining properties will be positive.

- 6. How is granting this variance consistent with the spirit and intent of the Ordinance; in particular, how will it meet the purpose of the zoning district(s) in which your property is located?
 - a. The C-2 District where this property is located is envisioned as a mixed-use urban neighborhood. The downtown overlay district encourages precisely this kind of development, bringing residents to the historic center of Plymouth.

We respectfully request your favorable consideration of these variance requests and look forward to answering any questions you may have. Please note the Plymouth Board of Public Works and Safety voted unanimously in support of these variance requests at their September 11, 2023, meeting.

Sincerely,

Mark Senter, Mayor City of Plymouth

Kevin Berger, owner

Culver Sand Hill Farm, LLC



Booker states this will be combining several lots into two lots. He explains the Board of Public Works and Safety did make this motion and it was mentioned in the letter as seen below.

Board Members Houin and Ecker moved and seconded to approve the request with the following stipulations listed below. The motion carried.

- Recommendation to the Board of Zoning Appeals in support of the variances.
- Approval of a rain garden. The maintenance responsibility falls upon the property owner manger and not on the City of Plymouth.
- Approval of the conceptual use of a drywell as outlined above.

Surrisi states he will speak on behalf of the city as the City Attorney. He states as stated above, the Mayor and the Board of Public Works and Safety are in support of these variances. He explains the belief is that this is a good project for the downtown and this is the second project they have been able to work with Kevin Berger's company on. He states the first one was part of the Stellar Communities Grant Program that they received and is the Riverside Commons Townhouses out on Baker Street and Richter Road. He states this one is more of a public and private partnership with the land and the parking lot being part of it. He states they did receive a grant from the State of Indiana and the South Bend Regional Partnership of \$520,000 in support of this project. He explains they recognized it as part of a regional goal to create more housing like this. He states as far as some of the discussions about the parking and the setbacks, he views the setbacks as not much of an issue as it allows for a new development to fit in with the nature of other downtown buildings that are historically here. He explains most of the downtown buildings do not have as great of setbacks as what is set in the ordinance now so this would allow it to fit in with the character of the downtown area. He explains there was a lot of discussion with the city staff and the Board of Public Works in regards to the variances that would allow for no on-site parking for the homes themselves and the no rear yard setback that it would allow them to keep the entirety of the parking lot in the city's ownership. He states it is a complication compared to other dwellings as this is in the downtown overlay district that these townhomes are only required to have one off street parking place and not two. He believes it would be simpler for maintenance and for use of the public to have this as one city parking lot rather than the eastern most row of parking spaces being on private property devoted to those residents. He describes what they see most during the day most of the time is that this parking lot is busy in the morning into the afternoon but in the evening hours it is less used. He believes this would allow for more flexibility of the users of the spaces and also it will be much easier for snow removal and things of the sort. He states if it was two separate lots then Berger would have his snow removal people coming in before our Street Department gets there as our priorities are the streets. He believes it would be easier to have the Street Department handle it all versus two snow plows going back and forth. He states they have looked at the parking space size variance and the driving aisle variance but as Brent Martin mentioned at the Board of Public Works and Safety meeting that the sizes that are proposed meet what the State's Department of Transportation standards are. He explains our standards are a little more generous and call for a little wider lane but this is the same size of the parking spaces and lanes they have in the city parking lot that is over on LaPorte and Center Street across from Yolanda's Restaurant. He explains that is the least important of all the variances as they could get by with having to build bigger parking spots but with the proposed

plan, they are getting a net gain in parking spaces but if they had to comply with the size limitations that they would lose a couple of spaces from what is in the existing lot.

Jacobs asks how many spots are there now.

Brent Martin (15413 12th Road, Plymouth, IN 46563):

Martin responds by stating there are 30 there now but they are proposing 48 parking spaces.

Surrisi believes if they comply with the standards that it would go down to 28 or 29 spaces.

Martin agrees that it would be 28 parking spaces.

Gidley states he has read different articles at different places and the parking lot is going to be public parking. He asks if they plan on dedicating the usages of the parking spots right behind the units to the occupants in some fashion.

Surrisi responds by stating as of now that is not contemplated. He explains it was discussed to institute a type of program where people could buy a reserved parking permit from the city office to have some marked that way. He explains none of that has been taken any farther currently.

Jacobs asks if there is not any overnight parking in city parking spaces.

Surrisi responds by stating that is only in a couple of lots where it is prohibited. He believes the one by the library, the police station, and perhaps the Water Street one is.

Gidley asks if that one will have to be changed then.

Surrisi responds by stating it probably would but he believes the water street parking one close to the river has that limitation on it. He states he knows the one by the police station and library have signage that speak about that.

Jacobs asks how many spots they expect will be taken up by the townhouses and the workers. He asks if the corner spot will have units above it.

Kevin Berger (8886 State Road 17, Plymouth, IN 46563):

Berger responds by stating the corner spot has two apartments above it so it would be 14 units. He explains if they were going to follow what was required then they would have to put 14 spaces in.

Jacobs asks how many for the workers as you would have to have spots for the workers too.

Berger responds by stating he does not have it leased out yet so he is not sure what it is going to be. He explains it is a small space so he does not see as many people working there.

Jacobs asks if they will have to go into the alley to exit.

Surrisi responds by stating that is the new plan, it will be one way in and one way out.

Jacobs believes it would be pretty hard to make that turn, he states it will have to be pretty open to make that turn.

Berger states they have a pretty good radius there.

Jacobs asks if on the handicap spots if that is a five-foot loading ramp for a wheelchair there.

Martin responds by stating it is actually eight feet so it is van accessible.

Gidley states the current entrance to the parking lot moves up the hill. Berger agrees. Gidley asks if the rain garden will be out in that pie shaped piece out by the sidewalk.

Martin responds in agreeance and states it is in the southwest corner.

Gidley asks how deep the rain garden is going to be.

Berger responds by stating it will only be a couple feet as they do not want it to be dangerous.

Gidley asks if there will be an outlet in it. He asks if the plan for it is to have water.

Martin responds by stating the alley is the high point and it runs downhill into Garro Street. He explains at the point in that triangle it is about 2 feet and four inches lower so they will do a curb cut.

Gidley asks for clarification if it does fill up that it would just spill into Garro Street.

Martin responds in agreeance and states right now all it will be doing is treating and slowing down some water that was just going to go right out into Garro Street.

Jacobs asks if there will be any parking, which would be on the east side, of the units on the street. He asks if they are getting rid of that.

Martin responds by stating it will stay the same on street parking.

Gidley asks how long those parking places are.

Martin responds by stating he made them 22 feet.

Gidley asks if that is what they are now. Martin agrees. Gidley asks if he will try to get more cars in the front than what is already there.

Martin responds by stating the only exception to that is when you have an open end then he usually makes them 18 feet but normally 22 feet.

Wendel asks if there is a normal two-hour time limit on the parking there during the day.

Surrisi responds by stating he does not think so.

Wendel states he sees problems with parking.

Surrisi states for on street parking, once the Board of Public Works and Safety starts to see problems that they can address those as they come up and put signage. He states one other parking issue that he would bring to your attention is that the really tiny lot of the seven lots in the northwest was that it was previously owned by Dr. Mary Swartz, who is the Podiatrist that has her business on Washington Street. He explains she donated that property to the city as part of this as it would allow for better flow in the parking area and get a few more spaces in there. He explains they are open four days a week but one of the conditions to that donation is they would sign the immediate two spaces behind her business that during her business hours that it would be reserved for her and her customers. He states for the rest of the time those would be available to the general public.

Selge asks if they will be tearing down all those buildings there.

Surrisi responds by stating those two homes that front Water Street. He explains all the commercial buildings on Washington Street will stay there.

Wendel asks if the Utility Superintendent and everyone is okay with the runoff.

Martin responds by stating they have had their Technical Review Committee (TRC) but they still have some calculations to do.

Jacobs states that is not their concern as the BZA but rather the city's concern.

Gidley states in the Mayor's letter that it talks about the historic downtown. He explains he has tried to stay up with this all along and the last article WTCA had on their Facebook page was two different elevations. He states one had a parapet roof and he forgot what the other did but in support of the downtown he likes the fact that the corner building is brick veneer. He asks what the other surfaces are going to be on the actual housing units.

Martin responds by stating dry stack stone masonry wainscot on the bottom of the townhomes and then it is a board and batten metal siding with what is called a marquee canopy, which is the square canopy. He states the horizontal is also metal but a wood look metal.

Gidley asks if this is the final design. He asks if this is what it is going to look like with no anticipated changes so this is what they are going to get.

Berger responds by stating this is the goal at this point but the plans are not complete yet. He states this has not gone out to bid but this is the concept they are heading for.

Wendel states on one of the pictures it has steps coming down from all of the units.

Martin states all of those units have steps going down. He explains you step up to a small patio with an entrance to the unit on the front. He adds they all have backdoor to the back as well.

Selge states he does not see this as historic.

Martin states what they tried to do with the corner building is make it in masonry veneer and they have purposely tried to draw that distinction between that building and the townhomes that sit ten feet back further from that corner building because they wanted it to feel like one came from that time and the other came from this time.

Gidley states he remembers when that was all houses and they were brown and different colors. He explains they were all different so when he saw this picture versus the other drawings, he saw on the WTCA website that he thought it isn't what fronts Michigan Street but this corner building does match. He explains the units do in some respect match what the houses used to be like. He states what he is concerned about and he understands that all the plans are not worked out but what he doesn't want to see personally is that metal shiplap becoming vinyl.

Berger responds by stating that is not the plan at all. He states he is going to own this so he wants them to look good.

Gidley states vinyl fades and dirt just sticks to it.

Martin responds by stating it is a very inexpensive product and that is why you see it everywhere.

Berger states if they end up changing to something that it would be more likely they change to a cement board or something like that but at this point this is what they will be pricing and heading towards. He does not believe vinyl siding would be appropriate.

Wendel asks what rental pricing they would be looking at.

Berger responds by stating they are looking at the \$1,200-\$1,500 range. He states it is up in the air because what is happening with inflation and interest rates. He states this was budgeted a year and a half ago at this point so things have changed. He states at one point they looked at doing all brick but there is no way as the budget would not make it like that.

Surrisi adds that renting would also not occur until 2025 so who knows how the economy will be then.

Jacobs asks if the apartments will be handicap accessible.

Martin responds by stating they will not as they are individual dwelling units.

Berger states that they looked at that as having one of the end units being handicap accessible but it takes up two units. He states with the townhome concept having bedrooms on the second floor that it throws that out.

Selge asks if the two homes have already been purchased for this project by the city.

Surrisi responds by stating they have been purchased by Berger's company.

Selge asks if they know the date on the home that was built closest to the parking lot. He judges that area as being some of the oldest residential areas in still in the downtown area. He assumes when that area is under construction that nobody will be able to use the parking lot.

Martin responds by stating the parking lot has to be closed in order to build the project.

Berger states they are also rebuilding the parking lot.

Martin states the parking lot has to be completely rebuilt.

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

Booker adds that the one home is built in the 1900's and he did not get to check the second house. He reads the following letter in favor aloud.

Gary L. Neidig (6100 Michigan Road, Plymouth, IN 46563):



6100 Michigan Road Plymouth, IN 46563 574.936.2112 Tel. 574.936.7224 Fax. www.itamco.com

September 11, 2023

Re: Water Street Town Homes

Plymouth Board of Public Works:

I am writing to recommend that approval be granted for the Water Street Town Homes Project and its plan for storm water management. The project is needed to help build density in the downtown area, and subsequently enhance the options for downtown living.

The engineering data that I have reviewed shows the design to meet or exceed the requirements from the State of Indiana. While the plan is not quite to the local requirements, I believe that the project's value is worth discussing and accommodating the physical environment.

Brent Martin, and Kevin Berger have proven themselves to be people of integrity and quality performance. I hope that you will be able to make the accommodations as requested.

This project, and others like it are a great step in the right direction. I look forward to seeing positive results as the economic impact comes to fruition.

Sincerely,

Gary L. Neidig - President

stry 1 Being

ITAMCO glneidig@itamco.com D: 574-935-6903

Gidley asks if Gary Neidig serves on the Regional Board that helped fund this project.

Surrisi responds by stating he serves a subcommittee of South Bend/ Elkhart Regional Partnership. He states there is a government entity that is the regional development authority that is an organization that was authorized by Marshall County, Elkhart County, and St. Joesph County to create this authority which is contemplated under State Statute. He states only those authorities are eligible to receive this READI money from the State so there is a board of about five people that govern that. He states that John DeSalle is the Marshall County Representative on that board. He states those five people all have day jobs and they have contracted with the South Bend/ Elkhart Regional Partnership and their staff to do the administration of these READI grants. He states that is a regional economic development group that has various subcommittees. He believes Gary Neidig serves on the subcommittee for Entrepreneurships and Manufacturing Economic Development issues for that group. He states he was not a part of the government entity that actually made the decision to give the grant.

Booker adds he is also on the Comprehensive Plan Committee.

Surrisi adds that he also found that both of those house's records show 1900 and he believes that is as far back as they put the records. He believes it could be very certain that they could be before 1900.

Selge states the one closest to the parking lot that is not two story could be some of the original homes built in town.

Booker reads the second and third letter in favor aloud.

Greg Hildebrand (2864 Miller Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563):

2864 Miller Drive | Plymouth, Indiana 46563 O: 574-935-8499 | F: 574-936-2645 www.marshallcountyedc.org



September 25, 2023

Mr. Art Jacobs; President
Plymouth Board of Zoning Appeals
111 Center Street
Plymouth, IN 46563

Re: Water Street Townhomes Variances

Dear Mr. Jacobs:

Lam writing to express Marshall County Economic Development Corporation's (MCEDC) support for the above referenced project. MCEDC'has been vocal regarding the need for workforce housing. I am currently serving on the Plymouth Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee where I have continued to emphasize the importance of this. At those meetings, housing needs have been discussed extensively. Water Street Townhomes hits many of the metrics expressed in those meetings, including mixed use, infill development and residences in walkable distance to commercial needs, among others.

This is also a READI project. Bringing READI dollars to Marshall County and Plymouth has been a major goal of MCEDC. We have recently been apprised of the potential for READI 2.0 dollars coming to us. It will be important to show community support and successful implementation of the 1st round of READI projects to qualify for the 2st round. This is one of those projects.

The variances requested serve only to bring the project into conformance with existing development in downtown Plymouth. MCEDC sees this as a positive project that moves our economic development goals forward. Please support this project and grant the requested variances.

Respectfully,
MARSHALL COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Greg Hildebrand President and CEO

George Schricker (11644 Maple Road, Plymouth, IN 46563):

George Schricker JGM Properties 11644 Maple Road Plymouth, Indiana 46563

Plymouth Board of Zoning Appeals 124 North Michigan Street Plymouth, Indiana 46563

October 3, 2023

Dear Zoning Board Members,

I am writing in support of the Water Street Townhomes project as proposed by SRKM Architects. As a property owner in Historic Downtown Plymouth, I support the addition of new housing to the downtown in the interest of creating expanded living opportunities in the area. Not only should such a project add to the vitality of the area, it also should help improve commerce and community-building in the downtown. The site's proximity to the River Park Square should prove a great encouragement to the development of this block, and, hopefully, others like it. Although, I would prefer this be developed as condominiums, I am happy to see this particular site developed in this way. With the continued development of eateries, gift shops, performing arts spaces and galleries in the area, I expect Plymouth's downtown to witness unprecedented growth and development in the next ten years—kudos to SRKM Architects for proposing such a worthwhile project.

Sincerely.

George Schricker

Manager of JGM Properties

Brian VanDuyne (11047 Victoria Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563):

VanDuyne states he has spoken with Brent Martin and looked the plans over. He states it looks like it will be an asset for the downtown. He asks if there will be a spot for everyone to put dumpsters.

Martin responds by stating there is a dumpster for the development toward the north end where you sweep around. He states there are places along the alley for totes. He explains the doctors each have a tote along with a couple other totes. He states the way they did their curb lines you can place totes along the alley.

Surrisi states the island at the curve is where the dumpster will be for all these units and then totes will be stored along the alley there.

Wendel asks if the city will be handling trash services through their contractors with street totes.

Martin responds by stating on the plat they created an easement for access/ egress and the dumpster falls within that easement.

Wendel asks if each unit will have two totes.

Martin responds by stating there will be one dumpster for the development.

Gidley asks for clarification that each unit will not have two totes. Martin agrees. Gidley states he would not want to see 24 of those lined up out there.

Surrisi clarifies there are some businesses along Michigan Street that already have totes that are already there.

Jacobs states there will be a better spot for them.

Gidley asks for clarification that there will not be 24 more totes. Martin agrees.

VanDuyne asks if his neighbor will be keeping his big one.

Surrisi responds by stating it will be going away.

VanDuyne states his only other concern is the curb. He asks if they are tearing into that anyway if they could make it match the north curb. He explains it has always been a bottleneck there.

Jacobs asks for him to clarify what he is talking about.

VanDuyne points out the curb and states it protrudes out past the one on the north. He explains that is the way it is now but there is always a bottleneck there so if you are going to be doing something there anyway then why not line it all up.

Surrisi asks if he is talking about the curb by the Republican Headquarters. VanDuyne agrees.

Martin states starting at Michigan Street on the north side of Garro Street that the curb line runs down and when it gets onto the other side of the alley it actually jumps out about two and a half feet and the road becomes a little narrower for some unknown reason. He explains it feels a little tight when you pull through there but that is what VanDuyne is talking about. He states he does not know why it doesn't line up but somebody poured a curb there.

Jacobs asks if there is any chance you could make that straight to open up the road more or no.

Martin responds by stating it is not an issue to pull the curb line back other than somebody having to pay for it.

Gidley adds it is a city street.

Matthew Berry (9672 West 950 South, Kewana, IN 46939):

Berry states his business is at 201 N. Michigan Street. He states the parking is the real issue on a lot of it. He explains there is talk about expanding it but you are only doing that by making the spots smaller because if you were to keep the sizes the same there would be less parking. He states you

guys asked some questions about where everybody was going to park and that you would need 14 spots for the units and how many for the business is unknown. He states that could be 16-18 overall and you only added 18 spots. He explains the doctors will need two of them during the day so you haven't added anything from that. He states through building that you cut off the other parking lots that are down there from anybody that would potentially park there for the businesses that are on Michigan Street when it is busier. He states that parking lot is busy quite a bit and when he looked earlier this week that he only saw three or four empty spots that day midday. He explains parking has been an issue for a lot of the businesses on the main road. He states a lot of the businesses are not even aware this is going on because most of them do not own their property. He provides the example of the dance studio, and states they do not own that property but they did not find out until today that this is potentially going on. He states he is totally for people doing whatever they want to do on their property and he does not believe you shouldn't have to come and ask anybody if it is on your own property. He states where he starts having issues with things is when county and city have to be a part of it to start doing things and when it doesn't necessarily benefit everyone in that case that is where you will have the issue of having the city and county determining who the winners and losers are. He states with the parking lot closed during construction you will have to have people park somewhere else for a year. He explains for his wife's boutique she runs that it will not be a big deal to him because they do not depend on that making a dollar. He explains he has other jobs that are making income and as long as that business does not lose him a fortune that it will continue to run. He explains a lot of the businesses on the main drag depend on that parking lot so a year not having that he worries those businesses will not survive that. He explains you already have businesses leaving so you cause more of that on the main drag. He states it does not matter what you put here when you have empty storefronts all along Michigan Street. He explains his issue is more the timing for him as you cannot make it more difficult to be on Michigan Street to then establish a thriving downtown. He states if downtown was already thriving then it wouldn't be a big deal. He states people wouldn't care about not being able to park there or having to walk far. He states you could go into other downtowns where things are great and you can park a long way away from the main drag and walk in because it is established and you want to go there. He expresses that downtown is not thriving and if you make it more of a pain to get somewhere then people are just not going to go down there. He explains that businesses will close up and other ones will not want to go down there. He states having the Brass Rail down here is great as it brings a lot of people downtown but it is not great parking on Friday and Saturday nights. He states it stretches all the way downtown taking up all those spots. He explains with this going here it is definitely an issue and he doesn't know if it has been addressed.

He states with part of the conversation that came up about having the apartment people purchasing a permit for parking spaces. He states it is like you are acting that you will be putting in spaces right now but, in a year, you will want to put signs there for people who buy spots. He states if we are allowing the purchase of spots that he will start buying spots down Michigan Street for his business so he won't have to worry about parking monitors every two hours because he can put signs up saying those are his spots. He states they do not want to have to do that but he feels like he is having to be the spokesman for a lot of the businesses that have that concern. He restates that a lot of them are not even aware this is going on. He states another several do not want to talk or speak to it because they do not want to be quoted as having said that and have someone mad at them for whatever reason. He explains he deals with having to have things approved all over the country and he is not really for people stopping people for doing stuff because if you own your property, you ought to be able to do whatever you want. He states on those couple parcels that they bought that you can do whatever you want on those parcels. He states where he starts to have more of an issue

and things need to be addressed is when you have to change a city parking lot and have to do a bunch of other stuff. He states he does not know if this is beneficial for downtown and getting it going at this point. He explains if downtown was already thriving that it would be spectacular to have that and it would help but he does not know if people will have what they need to survive that in downtown. He explains a lot of them barely survive day to day and a year of 20% less sales that a lot of them won't make it and that is his concern with this.

Richie asks if his business is Lock and Key Boutique.

Berry responds by stating that is his wife's business. He explains he deals with renewable energy so he is used to people being against things and all that. He states he hates it when people say they need to stop this as they can do whatever they want on their two parcels because it is their right to do whatever they want because they bought them and own them. He states his issue is when you have to make all these changes with the city.

Richie states Lock and Key is an asset downtown.

Selge states he understands what he is saying because the only city parking lot he uses is the one that is not going to be available at the start of this project.

Berry states you have the parking lot down by the library that is always full across from it. He states this is the closest parking lot to the Museum and he assumes they try to get people to go there. He explains if they say they will go to the other one then what other one because the one by the library is full all the time.

Jacobs states there is the one over there on the back side.

Berry states that is well down there and you will have to walk over and down the street and you will not be able to cut through there anymore once that is there. He states they are looking at other properties in the future down here and he is all for people doing it but he is not sure it is the right time for it. He states he is not sure what the city has planned and he knows the city bought property in town by the Garden Court ones they did a while ago and nothing is coming out about that. He asks if they are going to start this one and then talk about the one over there. He states he has no issue with that one as it is not in the way of anything. He states if something went in over there that it would be great. He states his business will be fine because they can survive and not depend on it for anything. He states they bring their kids up to St. Michael's and it gives his wife something to do during the day and they believe it was something Plymouth needed. He states they are looking at other properties to do other potential businesses in the future but he does know through talking to other people that there are other businesses that will not be able to afford that.

Kathy Bottorff with WTCA asks what the plans are for storing materials and equipment during the construction phase. She states with what happened over at the library over the last year and a half that she was wondering if there would be any street closures or a different parking lot for storage.

Berger responds by stating he would not anticipate any street closers for storage. He adds if so, they would be minor. He states they will have to close Garro Street at one point to get the water and

sewer connected but otherwise the parking lot will be the staging area because it will have to be torn up in order to do this.

Wendel asks for clarification that the whole parking lot will be closed.

Berger responds by stating it will be closed because the way it is set up now is that it is all self-contained with the one entrance/ exit. He explains with that moving and it being walled off from the alley currently so yes it will be closed during that time.

Jacobs asks what the estimated construction timeframe is.

Berger responds by stating 12-18 months.

Building Commissioner Manuwal states looking at the plans, he asks if the dumpster will be sitting in the spot next to the center island or in the landscape area.

Martin responds by stating it will sit on that concrete pad and the landscape area is behind it.

Manuwal states his only concern with that is that you have 17 x 10 marked up here and seeing that line come down, he believes your dumpster is going to be in the way of your exit.

The rest of that topic was discussed away from the microphone.

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

Booker adds there was a parking study that was done several years ago with MACOG and looking at it currently, they claimed at that time there was 1051 off-street parking spaces and there were 1199 on-street parking spaces for a total of 2250 parking spaces. He explains 23% are private and 77% are public. He adds that South Bend had eliminated all their parking requirements in the downtown so in the Planning circles that they are not as concerned about parking compared to what other people are.

Selge states he has heard it mentioned several times in the letters and recommendations of the historic downtown. He states in his opinion, the corner building is close to fitting into the historic downtown but the apartments do not fit into the historic downtown area.

Booker reminds you that you are talking about variances and not the look of the building.

Selge states he knows but he wants to say it though.

Gidley states he agrees with Booker but he does think you have to cognizant of what the historic downtown is intended to look like. He states one of the reasons he brought this up was because he didn't see anywhere in any of these other meetings that anyone asked what it is going to look like. He states here they are going to put in half a million dollars from the State and until this drawing nobody asked what the building was going to look like. He believes that someone needed to ask what the building was going to look like along the way. He explains he did not go to the meetings

but rather he was reading accounts from WTCA and the Pilot News but he did not see any mention. He explains when Bottorff write an article about one of these big meetings that she had two separate elevations and neither one of them were this. He believes she got those from the original grant application that had some proposed visions. He states until tonight, nobody has said what this is going to look like.

Selge states he is disappointed because that does not fit into the historic district.

Booker asks what would.

Selge responds by stating the steps do but maybe a brick façade. He explains you do not have to make the entire building brick but maybe a façade that does fit into the historic district.

Jacobs explains he travels a bit and he actually likes it for historical. He states when he travels around Indianapolis and the outer banks of other cities that when you mix the old with the new like they done here that it is appealing to younger people. He states he works with a lot of 25–30-year-old employees and they are looking for a lot of different office space and where people will live. He explains he is old so he is probably more like you thinking about what an older structure would look like but this is appealing to people when you have it melting together. He explains it is similar to when the other architect came in and spoke about the signs and what you do. He states when he looks at that, he wants to live there.

Richie likes how he brought this up because they had this discussion last meeting about the signs and he does not want to get rid of historic stuff. He states the truth of the matter is we can become a prisoner to this concept of historic and staying that way and a city or town is living and breathing. He explains when they built downtown Plymouth, he does not believe they thought that in 80 years they wanted this to stay exactly the same. He explains they would have wanted people to come in and build upon what they do and expand past it. He hopes 50 years from now this board is not bound by the decisions they are making and that they move past us and build on past it. He states that is part of what the gentleman at the last meeting said that architecture breeds, lives, moves, and shapes. He explains what is historic to one generation is not historic to another.

Jacobs adds what Gidley said about how it pulls it in, it is darker like what the houses used to be there.

Gidley agrees that it is similar to what the houses used to be but it certainly is not the same materials. He states they were darker and brown.

Richie states they have a housing problem.

Gidley responds by stating he is not arguing about the housing problem whatsoever. He states if you are listening to him that he is telling you he can live with this as it complements what used to be there. He states he is not arguing that it all needs to be brick but he does think that somebody along the way should have been saying if they were having the State put in half a million dollars, what is the building going to look like. He states this is the first time tonight that one of these boards asked what this is going to look like.

Surrisi states the Redevelopment Commission is providing some matching funding for the READI grant to be awarded and there was discussion last year back when the application was made that there was a previous rendering.

Gidley states he can't speak for Bottorff but the renderings he saw probably came from that meeting.

Surrisi states there are those renderings which are similar which are similar but things have evolved over time. He states at that time the project even getting off the ground depended on winning the grant award. He explains at that time if you do not know if you are going to get the grant that Berger would not be invested in doing the full plans and this is where it has evolved too.

Selge thought this project was on the other side of the street when they heard about this project the first time.

Surrisi states there was another proposal several years ago about doing a development on the other side of the street that was different. He explains that did not gain the needed approvals to go forward but this project always looked somewhat similar to this. He believes the renderings had a bit more brick on them but they have changed.

Selge states if it was like the building on the corner there since it is new, then why not all the way across.

Jacobs responds by stating he would not like that. He appreciates what you are saying because you probably understand the historic side better than him but if he was driving and saw what it is now that it would be appealing to him and a younger crowd of people.

Richie believes this would also be more appealing to younger people.

Jacobs explains they are not completely throwing out the old as they have the brick and they are trying to mold the two together.

Richie states he wants to speak to the gentleman whose wife has the Lock and Key Boutique. He states the issue he brought up was a whole separate issue. He explains he has had his hand in businesses downtown over the years and parking has been a nightmare down there forever. He remembers back in 2012-2013 that there were parking issues. He explains it seemed like it was even worse for some reason but there isn't a quick fix or a quick answer to that. He does not believe you should cease development for the sake of parking either. He states if you were to look at Kokomo that they had a horrific parking issue for years. He explains the city ended up building a three-story parking garage downtown and it solved their parking. He adds it is incredible now. He believes there are answers but he does not believe we are necessarily ready for them here in that sense. He explains he does not believe not building this solves the parking issue either. He believes that parking issue is going to continue to worsen. He explains from working at the library that he can say they will be finished with one half in October but the next side will be getting worked on for another year so that is not helping the situation either. He wants to say that he understands the concern because his business was affected by a lack of parking and people could not get there. He states his heart goes out to all the businesses down there but he believes in the long run that something like this benefits the downtown because you will have people living here walking around

with people visiting them. He states more people will see the downtown area and it also supports a greater nightlife of people walking around for the restaurants that stay open later. He explains the catch is if they suffer now for the long run or do they stop something like this. He states right now this issue persists and businesses are suffering so that will not change if this does not go forward. He believes in the long run this will help more businesses than it will hurt but that is his theory on it. He believes that should be taken into consideration that this will bring some light in the long run but it may hurt in the short term.

Gidley asks what the back of the building is going to be made out of when he comes down the alley.

Martin responds by stating nicer than the other side of the alley. He states it will be the same metal that is on the front.

Berger adds it will look nice.

Wendel states Martin hit on the topic that this is blending the old with the new. He asks if anyone remembers Anderson University. He states he was a part of that. He states River Park Square was born out of that creation and where Garro Street is now to where the new coffee shop is now that he would like to see stuff like this move that way. He believes River Park Square was going to be Governor Square but that was going to be the focal point for housing and shops. He explains it has been a long time.

Berger states if the city goes through with the Entertainment District downtown that they will be right there for all of that.

Richie mentions the person in the back also brought up that the city bought another piece of property.

Jacobs responds by stating he was referring to the old Eagles Building he thinks. He states he would love to see something like this go there.

Wendel adds that it is not.

Richie asks if there is any talk on what is going to happen to the old Penguin Point area.

Surrisi responds by stating there is not. He adds it is currently for sale right now but he is not sure.

Richie states that might not be a bad idea to look into for some parking.

Selge states one of the reasons he got on this board way back was he did not agree with something that he did not see anywhere else. He asks if everyone is familiar with the old Carnegie Libraries and Andrew Carnegie stacking each of them with books all across the country. He explains we tore ours down.

Wendel adds that a lot of them did.

Selge disagrees and states that a lot of them built around them like how you said with blending the old with the new. He states there would still be a Carnegie Library there but a whole new area built around it. He states there were other buildings that were torn down to make the city better but that right there in black and white does look old. He states the proposed materials though are metal. He explains people have their own opinions. He states there are a lot of sights that he visited since retirement like Lincoln, New Mexico where Billy the Kid committed some of his most notorious crimes and the battle where the houses burnt down that they would not allow a modern building like that in that town. He adds in New Orleans, it would be the same thing. He states in New Orleans, you can do whatever you want to except you have to keep the façade of the building. He explains you could completely gut the inside, remodel, or even make it into a parking lot but you have to keep that front.

Jacobs adds they should float.

Richie states the difference is those places have things that are attracting money and business that they do not have.

Selge states we do however have one of the best-preserved downtowns that he has seen and that is why he moved here.

Jacobs states when he went to the Alamo that they built completely around it with the riverwalk and the downtown. He sees us doing the same with that brick on the corner as they are trying to preserve the old and then keeping it with the new. He states he is not disagreeing with your point but he likes that.

Selge states he is with the group actually that is wanting to have all those modern buildings there torn down on the site at the Alamo and building it back to the way it was.

Board Members Wendel and Gidley moved and seconded to approve BZA 2023-24 as presented. The motion passed by roll call vote.

Yes:

Gidley, Richie, Selge, Wendel and Jacobs

No:

None

Other Business:

Gidley states he had a discussion with the County's Building Commissioner and he thought there was a committee that the city and the county cooperated on for unsafe buildings.

Booker responds by stating there is.

Gidley states not to quote him but the conversation he had with Steve Howard was that there isn't this joint group. He believes either he does not understand it or the question was misunderstood.

Booker responds by stating when he was there it was established. He states they could have disbanded it since then but he hasn't heard.

Manuwal states they did not disband as he sits on the board for it. He explains that board handles primarily the county unsafe buildings.

Gidley states there is this house out on Lincoln Highway that is just outside city limits where the roof is caving in and an abandoned car behind it. He asks if that has to go to that committee or can that be addressed by you.

Manuwal responds by stating that has to go to the committee. He explains if it is not within the city limits then the County Building Commissioner has to handle it. He explains he can make the recommendation to him but the Howard has to handle it. He states he will say he was confused on that because he tried to handle it.

Gidley asks who is getting him to mow the grass.

Manuwal responds by stating he had done that at one point but he has not been out there lately.

Gidley states they have mowed it but another year or two that roof is going to cave in. He states he is hung up about this because these entrances to the city need to look better. He explains this mess north of the city where this guy has this fence made out of pallets as you are coming out of the roundabout into the city. He expresses that is an absolute eyesore for the City of Plymouth along with that building out on Lincoln Highway. He states coming in from the south that the city does not look too bad but from two directions the city is a mess. He states he is up on his soap box but it does not do the city any good to have that either of those two eyesores and it needs to be addressed. He understands that you have your hands full but when you get a chance, he would personally like you to address that.

Manuwal responds by stating there is nothing he can do about the building.

Gidley states if you have to go to Steve Howard then he would like you to go to Steve Howard and ask him.

Surrisi provides the example of what that board does and what Howard does. He explains we do not have unsafe building jurisdiction outside the city limits but within the city limits it is up to the Building Commissioner as our Enforcement Authority so he has to be the one to decide it is unsafe and he is telling them that. He states in certain instances if it is where we want you to demolish the house then we are required then to offer that person a hearing. He explains here it is our Board of Public Works and Safety that operates as our hearing committee while at the county it is joint board that has representation from the city and all the towns in the county. He explains they would then have to have a hearing but it is on their Building Commissioner who is in the same role that has the discretion to say that is unsafe. He states that has been part of the situation where Howard's philosophy is that he is more reluctant to use his discretion to call something unsafe. He explains it starts with that official to get the ball rolling.

Booker states it falls within the famous two-mile zone and nobody wants to take responsibility.

Gidley states it seems like they made progress especially with that house out on Manor Drive that used to belong to Doctor DeJesus and it is getting fixed. He states it seemed like when they did that, they were making progress.

Jacobs asks if there is a meeting they could go to.

Manuwal responds by stating they meet every other month.

Gidley asks if he can tell them to the next time they meet. Manuwal agrees.

Surrisi states for the DeJesus house that the county did not want to call it unsafe. He explains he can see some arguments there and the way they actually got that moving was Keith Hammonds issued a zoning ordinance violation for tall grass and it never got paid so he filed that \$200 fine as a small claims lawsuit to collect their \$200 and it never got paid for six months. He states they then asked to foreclose on the property to collect their \$200 and they forced a sheriff sale which made it sell for \$100,000. He states they received their \$200 check and the county is sitting on \$99,000 and change waiting for the family of DeJesus's to claim it. He explains that is the only way they prompted that through civil enforcement of collection judgement.

Manuwal states he thought he was in charge of all the two-mile and he sent him an unsafe building because of how the roof was. He explains it is basically rotted back far enough that it is going to start leaking inside the house.

Gidley agrees as you can see the roof falling in at some locations. He expresses that you do not have to trespass to see it as it is visible from the road.

Manuwal states the gentleman actually came into his office, sat down and talked with him and said he was going to go up on the roof and fix it. He adds he is 87 years old.

Gidley states he is an MD from Bremen.

Manuwal states nothing was done and that is when he reached out to Surrisi and that is when he found he was outside his jurisdiction so it had to be turned over to Howard. He states Howard does not like to send out the letters and would rather approach people.

Gidley states that doctor and him were on the health department board for 15 years together and he is aware of who he is and why that house sits there.

In other business, Jacobs asks Martin his thoughts about signs.

Martin responds by stating you could throw all that sign stuff on him if you wanted to but close to thirty years ago Troyer Group did a townhouse study in 1984 for the City of Plymouth when Glaub was Mayor. He explains in that there are a bunch of recommendations and one of them was to eliminate projecting signs. He states there were some signs sticking out in the downtown and ultimately through a sign grant that a lot of those were taken down and an ordinance was made to not have projecting signs. He states that it was an approach that was more like taking a chainsaw instead of a scalpel but that was what it was. He states when he starting working with some property

owners in the 1990's for façade grants that some of them wanted a projecting sign. He states he spoke with several property owners, the Barber Shop, Louis Plumlee, the Wood Duck, etc. and they came up with a recommendation to minimize so many square feet of sign, sign could not be internally illuminated, the materials had to be specific, put on a bracket, just some general rules. He states they got 3-5 of those signs through the BZA approved because they fit the character. He doesn't believe there is anything wrong with projecting signs and it is a judgement call. He states one of the things that is easy to do as there are a ton of sign requirements in historic districts. He explains one of his favorite examples is from Salt Lake City and if you are going to have a problem with signs then that location is a nice place to do some research and come up with a plan and then an ordinance that becomes a part of your BZA.

Jacobs states what he runs into will be just like this project that you have is you are asking for historical and someone will come in and not see it the way you see it.

Gidley states that is the function of this board.

Surrisi states the Plan Commission and the City Council are in the process of adopting a new Comprehensive Plan before the end of the year or early next year. He states the next thing after that is to look at the zoning ordinance and what kind of amendments to the zoning ordinance that they might want to consider in response to the Comprehensive Plan so there will be an opportunity next year to make some of those changes.

Martin states interestingly you have three different boundaries for your historic district. He states there is an actual registered district and that is defined very tightly. He explains none of that over here is within that district. He states you got your zoning ordinance which is your C-2 and Downtown Overlay District and that takes in more territory. He states then there is some of your planning documents that take even more territory towards the courthouse. He states how you draw those lines, they are tough decisions.

There being no other business, Board Members Richie and Gidley moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Kyle J. William

Kyle Williams— Recording Secretary