The Plymouth Plan Commission met in regular session in the Council Chambers of the City Building, 124 North Michigan Street, Plymouth, Indiana, on October 7, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Commission President Doug Feece called the meeting to order for Commissioners Alex Eads, Randy Longanecker, Shiloh Carothers Milner, Andela Rupchock-Schafer, Linda Secor, Dan Sellers, Fred Webster and Paul Wendel answering roll call who were physically present. Commissioners Mark Gidley and Beth Pinkerton were absent. Others present were Advisory Member Stan Klotz, Building Commissioner Dennis Manuwal Jr., City Attorney Jeff Houin, and Mayor Robert Listenberger. The public was able to see and hear the meeting through Zoom and streamed live at https://www.youtube.com/@CityofPlymouth.

Commissioners Webster and Sellers moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the last regular meeting on September 2, 2025. The motion carried.

The following legal notice was advertised in the Pilot News newspaper on September 25, 2025:

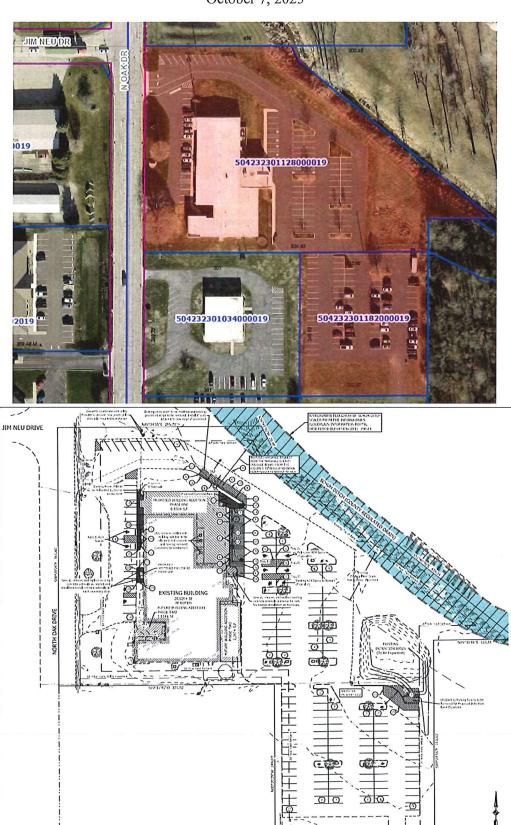
# 116 Legals

NOTICE OF **PUBLIC MEETING** hold a meeting on October 7th, walks,

ana on the following matters: PC 2025-13: Crossroads Evan- Information on these matters gelical Free Church of Ply- may be obtained at the office of mouth Indiana Inc. 1650 N Oak the Clerk-Treasurer, 124 N. Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563: An Michigan St., Plymouth, IN and Abatement of Development telephone #574-936-2124. The Plan Commission of the Standards to waive and abate If you are disabled and need City of Plymouth, Indiana will the requirement to install side- special accommodations, parcel please call the ADA Coordinaon 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Coun- 50-42-32-301-128.000-019, lo- tor at 574-936-2948. cil Chambers of the City Build- cated at 1650 N Oak Drive, Ply- Kyle Williams, Recording Secing, 124 N. Michigan St. (Garro mouth, IN 46563, zoned C-3, retary, Plan Commission, Sep-St. entrance), Plymouth, Indi-Corridor Commercial District.

PC 2025-13: Crossroads Evangelical Free Church of Plymouth Indiana Inc, 1650 N Oak Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563: An Abatement of Development Standards to waive and abate the requirement to install sidewalks, on parcel 50-42-32-301-128.000-019, located at 1650 N Oak Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563, zoned C-3, Corridor Commercial District.

City Attorney Houin reviewed the findings of fact and the request from the applicant. He shared the maps below:



Houin read from the report that a similar Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Pedestrian Easement would be executed. He stated it was referring to the previous agreements that were approved specifically for Collins (ADDD Equities) for their property on N. Oak Drive and Plumlee Dentistry.

Feece asked about the bank.

Houin asked for clarification that he was talking about Beacon Credit Union.

Feece replied with Centier Bank and Beacon Credit Union.

Houin explained that he was not familiar with any agreements for Centier Bank. He stated he was not involved at the time, but he remembered that the approval for Beacon Credit Union and Mr. Storage was that they did not have to install sidewalks until an adjacent property installed sidewalks. He stated the agreements for Collins and Plumlee Dentistry specifically said that they did not have to install sidewalks now but when the city did develop a project along Oak Drive, they agreed to give a 10-foot easement along the curb so the city would have space. He stated the biggest problem along Oak Drive was the lack of right-of-way.

Feece remembered that they asked for right-of-way plus we said that they would have to pay for the sidewalks when it went in.

Houin stated for Collins and Plumlee, they were not required to pay for the sidewalk, and the city would take on the expense of installing it in exchange for the 10-foot right-of-way easement so the city would have space to install a sidewalk. He stated that would be what was proposed for the Crossroads application, which would provide the city with a 10-foot right-of-way easement once the city was ready to proceed with our project.

Webster asked where the Complete Streets Committee was with this.

Houin replied that it was not in the hands of the Complete Streets Committee anymore and instead it was in the hands of the City Engineering Department.

Sellers stated that the city had inquired with INDOT about funding opportunities and the city plans on applying for a grant next month in November and we won't hear anything about whether we receive a grant or not until early Spring. He stated the hope was to receive the grant and pursue that project.

Webster asked what the estimated cost of this project was. He referenced a five-foot-wide sidewalk for however long they want to run.

Sellers replied that it would be for sidewalk on both sides of the road. He stated a lot of cost was involved in right-of-way acquisition, which some of these agreements help. He stated this project would range from US 30 to Lake Avenue and the estimated cost was around \$4 million.

Houin stated the process that they went through was that the Complete Streets Committee did hire Troyer Group to give us some preliminary concepts of both a very simple cost-effective version and a very detailed very expensive version. He stated that Sellers took both of those and combined elements from each to create a more realistic middle of the road version. He stated the particular grants that the

city would be applying for would also include engineering and design work so that we can take those preliminary concepts and develop a full complete design using those funds.

Sellers informs everyone that any grant they get was going to have a long lead time before construction starts.

Webster asked for clarification that they're probably going to have to have a match. Sellers agrees. Webster asked if the city had any ideas about going Collins, Crossroads Church, Plumlee's Dentistry, and asking for donations for this in lieu of not having to put up any money now.

Houin replied that one of the major expenses with a project like this was right-of-way acquisition. He stated that was the benefit of agreements like what's being requested tonight. He believed it was the city's intention to also approach other property owners and try to negotiate favorable agreements for that right-of-way acquisition. He stated that would be the primary contribution of businesses along that route would be the real estate where we need to build it.

Rupchock-Schafer stated she was concerned because it felt like we had given exceptions to what we wrote. She stated the vision was we would require new development to have sidewalks, and we keep on saying, well in this case it was okay. She stated she heard loud and clear that the plan was to pursue a grant, but as it was rightly noted, that time frame was very long with no guarantee that we would receive the grant, whereas if we stuck to what we wrote in the ordinance we could have sidewalks at least in front of this church. She stated she felt like it was somewhat frustrating that we keep on saying, "Let's just wait."

Feece stated the bad thing was that there was a precedence set now, and we can't do for one that we haven't done for the other.

Houin stated that he certainly understands the position and from the administration's perspective he would say that if it was purely speculative then he would agree with them. He stated in this case along Oak Drive, we've identified the project, and the city council has made it clear that this was a top priority and they want the pedestrian infrastructure along Oak Drive, second only to a fire station on their priority list. He stated there was strong motivation among both the Mayor's Office and City Council to move this project forward. He stated a sidewalk in front of the church would be great, but we would anticipate that they're not going to build it to width and specifications that we want for that corridor but instead they would build it to what the minimum requirement would be in the ordinance.

Sellers stated that a lot of developers in the city let the developer build the sidewalk and they put it on their property instead of city's right-of-way and that creates somewhat of a liability issue, and they don't build it to the proper ADA standards. He stated they don't build it to be uniform for the entire road.

Longanecker and Rupchock-Schafer asked how they were not held to that standard.

Sellers stated we need to have preliminary engineering done and the grant would pay for that. He stated the issue was that there was no right-of-way along Oak Drive to put sidewalk in. He stated we need to acquire that for use by the public.

Rupchock-Schafer stated she heard what he was saying but she was confused. She asked if some of the newer sidewalks are not ADA compliant.

Sellers replied that they should be but when you have private development, the city does not have enough control.

Webster asked if the city had standards for ADA sidewalks.

Houin replied that we have sidewalk standards, and those standards do meet ADA requirements. He stated we also have an ADA Transition Plan for sidewalks that were developed or installed before the ADA requirements or under old requirements. He stated he was not sure if the ADA requirements were different on private property than on public property. He believed the bigger concern was even if it meets ADA requirements, if the church were to install a sidewalk now then it would be on their private property where the city would not have control over that right-of-way. He stated that when the project on Oak Drive were to move forward, the city would first incur the expense of acquiring all that right-of-way and then the expense of removing that existing sidewalk in addition to the installation that would be planned. He stated by doing it this way as we've done Collins and Plumlee, they would be donating that right-of-way to the city so we wouldn't have the expense of acquiring the land and it would be fresh ground where all we would have to do was install sidewalks.

Webster asked if the expenses for acquiring the right-of-way was already added into the \$4 million price tag or if it was additional.

Sellers replied that it was part of the \$4 million and wanted Webster to keep in mind that it was an estimate.

Houin added that it was also assuming that the owners would be willing to sell that right-of-way to the city. He stated they had been working on the Harrison Street Trail, and he believed they came to tentative agreements with everyone, but they had some holdouts that threatened that we would have to condemn the property and go through a court process.

Feece stated he was about 99% certain that we told Mr. Storage and Beacon Credit Union that they had to put the sidewalks in when it came time. Houin agreed that may be the case. Feece stated what Rupchock-Schafer was saying made a lot of sense because what was good for the goose was good for the gander. He stated if they had someone downtown who had to pay for a sidewalk because they're putting a new building in and suddenly it does not look good to the city if they're putting in free sidewalks for everybody else down Oak Drive.

Rupchock-Schafer added that it was just not consistent.

Feece agreed and stated this happened before with another development. He stated the city paid for sidewalks at another development and then somebody who lived in the community for 75 years, they wouldn't pay for sidewalks for that individual. He stated that it stuck with him because that was not consistent and that's not right. He believed we want things that are right to be upheld but that was his theory.

Houin explained that he did not want to diminish any of those points but looking at this from the planning perspective, administration's perspective, we're looking at what was the most cost-effective way to get the entire project installed. With a project that big and a price tag like that, we're looking to make it as cost-effective as possible. He stated with having the right-of-way donated and less expense

of demolition for existing infrastructure was going to make it more efficient.

Webster prefaced his question with City Council members present, the Mayor, someone from the engineering department. He stated this was a big, long project, and the potential of it not working out, if the city would be opposed to doing this in sections. He stated it could be divided into four sections, and they could get it done even if they must kick it out of the General fund or wherever else we must grab it from so we could at least make some progress on this.

Houin stated from his understanding, the estimated \$4 million price tag puts them right in the sweet spot for some of these grants that they are looking at. He stated the big grant round was in November when we'll be applying through INDOT. He stated they have several buckets of federal money to pull from, and they would look at the application and decide which of these federal grant programs were the best fit for these funds. He stated if they are not successful there would be another grant opportunity with an application deadline next June. He stated if they were still not successful that November call for projects was an annual grant application and we would continue to work with partners at INDOT to try to make this the best application possible. He stated we had also been working with MACOG to get their experience to advise us on preparing the application. He believed we were in the best possible position to apply for these funds and made it the most ideal project for the available funding. He agreed it was not guaranteed and if it was not successful that we would continue to make those tweaks, whether it was splitting it up into multiple projects or reconfiguring it, but it would continue to be worked on until they are able to get funding for it.

Longanecker added that they were also not guaranteed everyone would give them the easement.

Houin stated there was an eminent domain process so we could guarantee that we could get the easement if we are willing to.

Webster added that they could draw it out for a few years if they want to fight it.

Houin agreed and stated there were also ways to redesign or reconfigure if we end up in that situation.

Sellers stated ideally, they would have a nice straight sidewalk.

Feece stated there was enough younger people that sit on this board and on other boards that they must remember if there was new development that we needed to put those sidewalks in at the same time.

Houin stated for some of these different projects the city was working on at a conceptual stage, one of the big differences was having a full-time Plan Director, Complete Streets Committee, etc. He stated there was a lot more forethought that's going into it. He stated it outlined long-term goals so there was a lot more planning going into some of these decisions than maybe what was done in the past.

Houin stated for the staff recommendation that the request be approved subject to them agreeing to the MOU and having a notation be recorded as evidence of that MOU. He stated it was exactly what they did with Plumlee Dentistry.

Webster asked if the right-of-way acquisition had been discussed with the applicant.

Jason Stiger (1615 N. Oak Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Stiger introduced himself as the Executive Pastor of Crossroads Church. He stated it was his understanding that they had agreed to the same terms as what Plumlee Dentistry had. He stated we would want to partner with the city as best as possible.

Commissioners Webster and Eads moved and seconded to open the public hearing. The motion carried.

There were no comments at that time.

Commissioners Webster and Eads moved and seconded to close the public hearing. The motion carried.

Commissioners Sellers and Milner moved and seconded to approve PC 2025-13 with staff's recommendation as presented. The motion passed by roll call vote.

In Favor: Eads, Milner, Secor, Sellers, Webster, Wendel, and Feece

Opposed: Longanecker and Rupchock-Schafer

Absent: Gidley and Pinkerton

<u>Resolution No. 2025-1170:</u> Order of the Plymouth Plan Commission Determining that a Resolution Amending the Declaratory Resolution Approved and Adopted by the Plymouth Redevelopment Commission Conforms to the Comprehensive Plan and Approving Said Resolution.

Houin stated for the Redevelopment Commission (RDC) to spend TIF funds, the expenditure had to be a part of their TIF spending plan. He stated the item they are considering was a contract with R<sup>2</sup> Solutions, which would do an efficiency analysis for the Plymouth Aquatics Center to determine what could be done to save on utility costs. He stated that R<sup>2</sup> Solutions had indicated that they feel they could save as much as 50% of the current utility costs, which would be substantial, but they need to do a deeper analysis before they could finalize their recommendations. He stated that for the RDC to approve that \$16,000 contract, it had to be added to the spending plan. He listed the following process below.

- Redevelopment Commission: Declaratory Resolution Declaration saying the project would be appropriate to fund from said TIF district.
- Plan Commission: Order of the Plan Commission Verifies compliance with City's Comprehensive Plan.
- City Council: Resolution Secondary verification of compliance with City's Comprehensive Plan.
- Redevelopment Commission: Confirmatory Resolution Public hearing and final approval.

Houin stated in reviewing the Comprehensive Plan, this project was not specifically contemplated, but the Aquatics Center was called out as an example of collaboration, which was one of the three tenets of the Comprehensive Plan. He read aloud the following.

while gaining valuable land for community use. Additionally, Plymouth engages in strategic infrastructure development, leasing renovated spaces to support local organizations and actively participating in the construction of vital community facilities like the Bardwell Aquatic Center. These endeavors underline Plymouth's dedication to innovative partnerships for the collective benefit of the community.

Houin stated although the Comprehensive Plan does not identify any specific projects related to the Aquatics Center, it does highlight the Aquatics Center as an example of the collaboration that's called for in the plan. He believed it could also tie with the various well-being improvements that are specifically geared toward some of the park and green space areas but certainly apply to a community athletic facility like the Aquatic Center.

Webster asked who owned and controlled the Aquatic Center. He stated there had been a lot of confusion about it recently.

Houin replied that it was not finalized but we are nearly complete with the final documentation. He explained that a new LLC was created, Plymouth RDC Center LLC, and that LLC would own title to the real estate and the facility. He stated that LLC was wholly owned by or would be wholly owned by the RDC.

Webster asked if they made the appointments to their Aquatic Center Board.

Houin replied there was still a master lease. He stated the LLC that owned the property would continue to lease it to Marshall County Health and Wellness and that board had three members with one appointed by the city, one appointed by the school corporation, and one that was formerly appointed by Ancilla, but they would likely not be participating. He stated that third member would likely be selected by the two others.

Webster asked if this would all start January 1st.

Houin replied that it should be wrapped up soon.

Webster asked for clarification if the RDC controlled the whole building and everything involved.

Houin replied that they did control it indirectly. He explained that they controlled the LLC that owned the property and has the lease. He stated that the lease gave certain rights to other parties.

Webster asked if these pool board meetings were open to the public and if they were posted. He stated when he entered the library, he could see the dates and times of every meeting they're going to have that month.

Houin replied that he did not know how they were conducting their meetings currently. He stated they would not be legally required to open those meetings to the public.

Webster stated as a city resident and Plymouth Community School Corporation resident, he was paying taxes on that pool. He asked why he could not go in and sit in at the board meetings.

Houin replied that he did not say you could not, but he did say that it was not legally required. He added that he did not know how they were going to conduct their meetings.

Webster asked if they would have to post their meetings and notify the press.

Houin replied they would not be legally required to do that.

Webster asked if the plan was for us to just keep giving them blank checks.

Houin replied that nobody's giving anybody a blank check. He stated the payments made by the school corporation and the city are based on the lease agreements that had been in place.

Webster asked who was overseeing the board that would be running the pool. He asked if they had auditors come in or anything else. He added they have already had one problem out there already.

Houin replied that the actual pool operations are being done by We Love Swimming, which was an independent nonprofit. He stated they were the facility operators and are also part of the master lease agreements. He stated there were several entities involved. He explained that the RDC owns real estate and that was their role. He stated the We Love Swimming organization would continue to update the city council, the school board, and the RDC but they were the ones operating the facility, not the RDC.

Webster asked, with all the reorganization going on out there, nobody seemed to know what was going on, who was doing what, or who even was on board. He stated people don't even have the option to go speak to a board member and ask how they are doing.

Houin replied that those were legitimate questions with a lot changing and he was aware there was going to be a lot more press about it in the future with them getting their marketing out. He stated they wanted to be very public about what they're doing but he was not sure if it was relevant to the consideration of the comprehensive plan.

Webster stated it was relevant to giving/approving another \$16,000.

Houin replied that it was not giving another \$16,000. He stated it was hiring a company to do an energy analysis to determine how they could save money on utility costs.

Rupchock-Schafer asked if this money would be coming out of the TIF District.

Houin replied that it would be because they were asking the RDC to pay that contract price.

Rupchock-Schafer stated that it would be taxpayer money out of the TIF District.

Houin agreed, but it was not writing a blank check. Rupchock-Schafer agreed.

Longanecker asked who was financially responsible for the utilities.

Houin replied that it was currently the operators, We Love Swimming, and it would continue to be them.

Longanecker asked for clarification that we were spending \$16,000 to help them but not \$16,000 to help the city save money.

Houin replied that it would be \$16,000 to help them to make sure they can keep operating a public good.

Rupchock-Schafer asked if it made more sense to have this conversation after the pool was organized and finalized agreement wise, so we were aware of what we are dealing with as a finished product.

Houin replied that realistically it made more sense to have this conversation at the RDC meeting because they were the ones who had to decide whether to spend the money for this. He stated the Plan Commission was tasked with the simple question, does spending money to determine cost-saving efforts for the Plymouth Aquatic Center, conform to the Comprehensive Plan.

Rupchock-Schafer stated she would argue that she did not know the answer to that if she did not know how the Aquatic Center was organized. She did not believe she could answer that question without knowing how it was ran.

Feece asked if this was a yes or no, if it was still going to go before the city council. He asked if all they were doing was recommending.

Houin replied that it was not a recommendation but a determination of whether it conformed to the Comprehensive Plan. He stated a recommendation was for amendments to the zoning ordinance. He stated the statute for amending a zoning ordinance says that you make a recommendation to the city council and they approve any ordinance amendments. He stated this was not the same procedure. He stated this was a review of an amendment to a TIF spending plan for the RDC. He stated because the Plan Commission was the body that created and adopted the Comprehensive Plan, you are the ones who determine whether an action by the RDC conforms to the Comprehensive Plan.

Longanecker asked if it would still go to the city council if denied.

Houin replied that if they say no, it can't be completed so you could put a hard stop to this.

Sellers stated the people operating the Aquatic Center came to the RDC and gave their spiel. He stated it was both the newly formed board and R<sup>2</sup> Solutions. He stated they were not doing it behind closed doors.

Houin stated R<sup>2</sup> Solutions worked with We Love Swimming to learn about the facility, try to identify ways to create efficiencies, and they would like to contract with one another to do the analysis, but because they are newly reorganized and they're still trying to catch up from some previous financial problems with the aquatic center, they don't feel they can spend the \$16,000 right now for the analysis. He stated they came to the RDC and asked if they would make that as an investment within the TIF district, like other investments the RDC has made for other entities throughout the city. He stated they were willing to consider it, and they've not made a final decision. He stated they could not make a final decision until they have a public hearing, but they did adopt the declaratory resolution to start the process so that it could go through these steps and go back to the RDC to hold a public hearing and make final determination.

Feece stated it sounded like we were going to spend money so that they can spend more money so that they can save money.

Webster stated his biggest gripe was that they were not open enough to everybody. He stated they haven't been since they started. He stated we never get any updates; we get a little press clipping occasionally and it was all fluff. He stated the city, either through the RDC or whatever, they're spending a lot of money out there and they're on the hook for many years. He stated he would like to see a little responsibility from the other side to at least make sure everybody's informed.

Houin asked if he had been out there in the last few months.

Webster replied that he was just out there before he came to the meeting because he wanted to look at the parking lot. He stated he spoke to Greg Hildebrand of Marshall County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) that day because at one time a subsidiary of MCEDC was a pass-through corporation for the Aquatic Center. He stated that MCEDC still owned the parking lot and the lot next door. He stated he was wondering where the Aquatic Center was going to put solar panels because they don't own the parking lot so they couldn't put them above the cars. He asked if they were going to put them in the grass field farther to the west. He asked how they planned to work this out. He stated he was not against anything, but he looked at this, and it was only \$16,000, which wasn't a lot of money for what everyone else spends, but he asked how they were going to do this. He understood the importance of cutting their utility bills down because they were through the roof. He asked if they were going to spend half a million to save a little bit each month.

Houin stated the short answer to that, as those were legitimate questions, would be that the appropriate place to ask those questions would be at the public hearing in front of the Redevelopment Commission because those were things that they must consider in deciding whether to contribute \$16,000 to cover this contract expense.

Rupchock-Schafer stated that the RDC holds the purse string for the TIF District funding. Houin agreed. Rupchock-Schafer stated that we are tasked with looking at this proposal and deciding whether the expenditure of \$16,000 out of the TIF District conforms to the Comprehensive Plan.

Houin stated they were not necessarily looking at the proposal but looking at the resolution adopted by the RDC. He asked if they were to take out R<sup>2</sup> Solutions completely and take out the details that are included in this proposed contract. The question before you was if the RDC chooses to spend \$16,000 to have an analysis done to determine how the Aquatic Center could save money on utility expenses, would that action conform with the Comprehensive Plan.

Rupchock-Schafer stated that it was a weird question.

Webster stated that it was unfortunate that this was the only opportunity they were going to get to ask their questions that were asked. He stated they were probably not going to get it anywhere else.

Houin recommended they come to the public hearing at the RDC as that was the forum for those questions.

Sellers asked for clarity that they are being asked if doing on a study on saving utility costs conforms to the Comprehensive Plan.

Houin replied in agreement that partnering with the Aquatic Center to contribute the funds to do the study to save on utility costs, he believed that it does conform with the Comprehensive Plan. He stated their job was to determine whether they agreed with that.

Rupchock-Schafer asked if the reason he believed that was because the Aquatic Center contributed to the health, well-being, and that it was a collaborative project.

Houin replied that he believed it because the text in the Comprehensive Plan mentioned the Aquatic Center in one place as an example of the types of projects that the city engages with for collaboration. He believed that although the Aquatic Center was not specifically mentioned in the list of goals, there are several of them noted in the collaboration and well-being headings of the Comprehensive Plan that are focused on recreational facilities throughout the city. He stated even though it was not an outdoor park space, that the Aquatic Center was also a recreation facility within the city and was very similar to the goals that were expressly stated.

Longanecker asked if the council had to approve the appropriations for this.

Houin replied that they would not be making an appropriation. He explained that the council would essentially make the same determination that you're making about whether this conforms to the Comprehensive Plan. He stated the RDC would then decide whether to spend the money.

Webster asked if there was anyone here to represent the Aquatic Center.

Houin replied there was nobody tonight. He stated he was aware that they were planning to be at the Redevelopment Commission meeting.

Commissioners Webster and Wendel moved and seconded to approve Resolution No. 2025-1170, Order of the Plymouth Plan Commission Determining that a Resolution Amending the Declaratory Resolution Approved and Adopted by the Plymouth Redevelopment Commission Conforms to the Comprehensive Plan and Approving Said Resolution as presented. The motion passed by roll call vote.

In Favor: Eads, Milner, Rupchock-Schafer, Sellers, Webster, and Wendel

Opposed: Longanecker, Secor, and Feece

Absent: Gidley and Pinkerton

#### **Comprehensive Plan Update / Other Business:**

Houin stated there was no update at this time.

With there being no other business to come before the Commission, Commissioners Webster and Milner moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Kyle 2. William

Kyle Williams, Recording Secretary