

DEKALB COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

PLANNING • BUILDING • GIS

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AGENDA

DeKalb County Board of Zoning Appeals

Commissioners Court – 2nd Floor DeKalb County Court House

Monday, December 8, 2025

6:00 PM

A livestream of the meeting can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/YouTubeDCPC>

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Approval of Minutes: November 10, 2025
4. Old Business: None
5. New Business:

Petition #25-14 – Westrick LLC requesting a Development Standards Variance to allow for a gateway sign and for a larger sign than allowed by ordinance (5.49 B(1)). The property is located on the west side of County Road 71, approximately one-quarter mile north of the intersection of County Road 17 and County Road 66, Auburn, Indiana and is zoned RE, Rural Estate.

6. Reports of Planning Staff, Officers, and/or Committees
7. Comments from Public in Attendance
8. Adjournment

Next Meeting: January 12, 2026

If you cannot attend, please contact Meredith Reith

mreith@co.dekalb.in.us | (260) 925-1923

***PLEASE ENTER THROUGH THE NORTH DOOR OF THE
COURTHOUSE LOCATED ON SEVENTH STREET***

****Cellphones, tablets, laptops, & weapons are prohibited****

MINUTES
DEKALB COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Monday, November 10, 2025

A Meeting of the DeKalb County Board of Zoning Appeals was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioner's Court of the DeKalb County Courthouse by Chairperson, Frank Pulver.

ROLL CALL:

Members present: Frank Pulver, Jason Carnahan, Andrew Provines, Rory Walker and Wayne Funk.

Members absent: None

Staff Present: BZA Attorney, Andrew Kruse, Director/Zoning Administrator, Chris Gaumer, and Secretary, Meredith Reith

Public in Attendance: Brian English, Misty Vance, Mike & Connie Gerardot, and Russ Hoff.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion was made by Andrew Provines and Seconded by Jason Carnahan to approve the Minutes of October 13, 2025 as submitted. None opposed. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Petition #25-11 – Digital One LLC, Brian English requesting a Development Standards Variance to allow for a reduction to the setback for an outdoor advertising sign along State Road 3 and to operate a digital billboard/electronic sign. The property is located on the west side of State Road 3, approximately two-tenths of a mile south of the intersection of State Road 3 and State Road 205, LaOtto, Indiana and is zoned C2, Neighborhood Business.

Chris Gaumer reviewed the proposed petition and staff report, which outlined the need for a development standards variance to allow for the reduction to the setback for an outdoor advertising sign. He stated that in the packet it shows the proposed location for the sign. This proposed sign area is vacant land owned by Donna Griffis. You can see the proposed sign graphic advertising our DeKalb 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The proposed sign will be 35 feet in height and 25 feet of space between the ground and the sign, with the overall sign being a 360 square foot sign of 10' x 36'. He stated that in our ordinance outdoor advertising signs or billboards are permitted within 500 feet of any State Road, if they follow the required sign regulations. The placement of the sign should be located at least 100 feet from any right-of-way and not greater than 500 feet from a right-of-way. With this there requesting the variance with the setback from State Road 3 to be reduced to 60 feet. Additionally, the petitioner is requesting that the sign be able to include video images, changing faces, and electronic messages or similar.

Andrew Provines asked what the distance is that you must be without the variance and how many signs do we have in the County with moving pictures.

Mr. Gaumer stated that the sign would need to be 100 feet away from any right of way. He addressed that there were no other signs that he was aware of. He added that just north of this proposed sign we did do one. He asked Brian to help him with answering this. He stated that the other sign that was done we reviewed with Brian being the representative of the project. He believed the sign was approved at 34 feet.

Brian English approached the podium he added that the sign was the same size sign at 35 feet in height. The issue with this one was that they couldn't satisfy what the State of Indiana requires. They require that these signs be setback 500 feet from the intersection. This previous sign received your approval, but INDOT didn't approve this location.

Jason Carnahan addressed that with this previous sign being at this height they wouldn't authorize it to be closer.

Wayne Funk asked if INDOT was okay with this sign?

Mr. English answered that we submitted our application to INDOT two weeks ago. This will generally take them a month to a month and a half to approve it. We applied for a digital board in Decatur last year and it took them about 5 weeks. So, no they have not approved the sign and whatever the board's decision is its contingent upon if we get INDOT approval.

Mr. Gaumer stated that we wouldn't issue any permits until they receive their state approval.

Mr. Funk asked so this isn't advertising a particular business, it's just a billboard that different businesses can advertise.

Mr. English answered yes, this is called an off-premises sign. This is for people apart from the on-premises business that can advertise, and our company would sell advertising to various businesses.

Rory Walker asked if this is new technology that's not included in our ordinance for these electronic signs?

Mr. Gaumer stated that when the ordinance was written the Plan Commission at that time just didn't want to see electronic signs. It was back in 2009 when the ordinance was created and there were electronic signs already. He wasn't quite sure why it was a requirement to basically prohibit them. We just need to have a variance to either approval or deny one.

Mr. Provines asked so is the variance for the electronic sign or the setback?

Mr. Gaumer stated that this is for both. He addressed that in the staff report it shows this, and can be located in the UDO in article 5 section 5.49 C. for sign lighting (E4), it states that signs shall not include video images, changing faces, electronic messages, or light emitting LED's or similar images. This would mean anything that would have a moving picture would have to get a variance as well.

Mr. Provines asked if there were state rules on the types of images that can be put on these signs.

Mr. Gaumer addressed that federal law as protected signage as a part of free speech. Brian can probably speak to this too but, basically you can't limit what people can put on signs even planning and zoning can't.

Mr. English added that we do run into this question almost all the time and Chris is correct. We're selling local advertisements, and this means generally we will have advertisements that go on our boards and are a pretty good reflection of the community. If you're in a more conservative community, it's going to be more conservative advertisements. This would be the opposite if you're in New York or California it is going to be at a different level every time.

Mr. Provines asked if there would be any signs like those in Las Vegas, such as flashing ones.

Mr. Gaumer stated that you can't limit that though.

Frank Pulver asked how far the sign would be from SR 205?

Mr. Gaumer answered that from the road setback it would be about 145 feet from the actual road, this is for SR 3.

Mr. English addressed that the setback from SR 205 must be the 500 feet. The setback is determined by where the roads meet at the cross section and come back at 500 feet.

Mr. Gaumer added that it would need to be a minimum of 500 feet from the intersection to satisfy the INDOT requirement.

Mr. English addressed that he believed that it's about 160 feet from the concrete and this would be the southbound lane of SR 3, and the 160 feet is from the State right of way.

Mr. Gaumer explained that they will be probably right at 500 feet from that intersection. The setback from SR 3 will be about 145 feet from the edge of payment and 60 feet from the road right of way.

Mr. Pulver asked so Donna Griffis is the property owner and you're going to lease that area from her. He added that there will need to be access to this area.

Mr. English confirmed that we have a signed land lease with her, contingent on regulatory approval. The agreement covers a small pad and will include easements, which he still needs to draft. She will need to grant easements across three parcels extending from the south. He mentioned that there's ongoing difficulty contacting the owner of the former paintball property, which would provide easier site access. Construction is expected to take less than two days, and afterwards we anticipate returning no more than once a year for maintenance, ideally not at all since everything will be managed remotely. He added that he typically explains this to landowners and adjacent property owners, that the work will take only two days, and they likely won't see us again.

Mr. Provines asked so you can't deny any company that would want to advertise. Would you have a policy that you follow.

Mr. English stated that there's no formal written policy, the company operates from Michigan and maintains a conservative approach. There's not enough money to be made on these advertisements for us to go out on the limb for somebody crazy, at \$500 a month. He expressed that their priority is to avoid upsetting landowners, neighbors, or the County even though they technically have the freedom to advertise what they want. Currently we manage 10 boards in small communities across Michigan, Ohio, and Decatur, and hope to install one in Kendallville within the next month. He explained that they have never encountered issues with any existing boards, including those previously sold. He mentioned that from his experience in Hillsdale, this is one of the most conservative communities. We've never had a complaint about an advertiser because it reflects local values. While we cannot guarantee that no one will ever be offended, he believes the only potential concern would involve political ads. Otherwise, advertisements typically feature local businesses, car dealerships, and occasionally lucky to get larger retailers like Kroger or Meijer under annual contracts. Regarding Kendallville, he mentioned they expect approval soon. The city reviewed its ordinance, which initially lacked standards for digital boards, and after a delay due to the location change, they are now updating their ordinance to allow for digital and static boards of the same size.

Mr. Pulver asked if from what you're saying you do or do not have guidelines as to who advertises.

Mr. English addressed that we do not have any formal written guidelines regarding not advertising to certain individuals.

Mr. Provines addressed his concerns with a billboard allowing any type of advertising that could potentially be like what Vegas would advertise.

Mr. English stated that were trying to appease to the local community. If we did something crazy like that it would probably be harder to sell advertisement to other people because someone wouldn't want their advertisement next to anything potentially like Vegas.

Mr. Pulver stated that if the store in Quincy, Michigan contacts you about advertising on your billboard, everything is legal in Michigan. He also mentioned that he has noticed an increase in advertisements in our area promoting Quincy and Coldwater. Since there are no guidelines in place, they are permitted to advertise their sales.

Mr. English addressed so you're talking about Marijuana. We have boards in Michigan, two in Ohio, and one in Decatur. He stated that he couldn't think of any incidents in those boards where a Michigan Marijuana company has reached over. He added that he couldn't speak to the fact if that's legal and if Indiana would allow this.

Andrew Kruse added that he believed that there's probably Interstate commerce issues if you don't. It's kind of questionable because even though it's legal in Michigan it's not yet legal federally. He explained that we wouldn't want to as a BZA do anything different than what the First Amendment allows.

Mr. Pulver asked if there were any further questions or comments from the Board. Hearing none. He opened the public portion of the hearing up to any comments for or against this petition. Hearing None. He closed the public portion of the hearing. He asked Mr. Kruse to move to the Findings of Fact.

Mr. Kruse went through the Findings of Fact for this petition with the board.

JURISDICTIONAL FINDINGS:

The petitioner has complied with the rules and regulations of the Board of Zoning Appeals in filing appropriate forms and reports.

1. Application completed and filed on **September 26, 2025**
2. Legal notice published in The Star on **October 31, 2025** with the publisher's affidavit and receipt received.
3. Certificate of mailing notices sent and receipts given to staff.
4. Letter from the County Board of Health, dated **October 23, 2025**
5. Letter from the County Highway Department, dated **October 3, 2025**
6. Letter from the Soil & Water Conservation District, dated **October 3, 2025**
7. Letter from the County Surveyor or Drainage Board, dated **October 13, 2025 – see condition**
8. Letter from the DeKalb County Airport Authority is **not applicable**.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. Will the approval of the variance request be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community? Yes ()* No (X)
The proposed electric sign and the reduction to the setback along State Road 3 will not be injurious to the public. Also, see letters from the various county departments without objection. See condition of approval for the County Surveyor.
2. Will the use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance request be affected in a substantially adverse manner? Yes ()* No (X)
The proposed electric sign and the reduction to the setback along State Road 3 will not adversely affect the neighboring properties. See condition of approval for the County Surveyor.
3. Will the strict application of the terms of the Unified Development Ordinance result in practical difficulties in the use of the property? Yes (X) No ()*
The proposed electric sign and the reduction to the setback along State Road 3 is needed for the property owner to further develop the property.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS:

1. The Board retains continuing jurisdiction of this from Development Standards Variance to assure compliance with all terms and conditions and/or impose additional conditions deemed necessary for health and safety.
2. A Development Standards Variance to allow for an electric sign and the reduction to the setback along State Road 3 is approved.
3. Comply with any applicable Environmental Standards as required in Article 5, 5.11; EN-01, in the Unified Development Ordinance.
4. No offsite drainage crossing said real estate should be obstructed by any development on this site.
5. No Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Completion shall be issued until the applicant files written evidence of compliance with any conditions of the DeKalb County Board of Health,

DeKalb County Highway Dept., DeKalb County Drainage Board or DeKalb County Surveyor, DeKalb County Airport, DeKalb County Soil & Water Conservation District, or other agency as applicable. File written evidence of compliance with Federal or State agencies where identified in the findings or conditions. The Zoning Administrator to determine when conditions have been met.

6. The Regulated Drain Variance from the Drainage Board for the Harvey Guthrie Open Ditch 181-00-0 was approved on November 6, 2025. The variance will need to be recorded prior to any permits issued.

IT IS, THEREFORE, THE DECISION OF THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS VARIANCE PETITION #25-11 IS HEREBY APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS ON THIS 10TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2025.

Motion made by Jason Carnahan, Seconded by Wayne Funk.

Vote tally: Yes: 5

No: 0

Frank Pulver

Jason Carnahan

Rory Walker

Wayne Funk

Andrew Provines

Petition #25-12 – Misty Vance requesting a Development Standards Variance to allow for a reduction to the side yard setback. The request is due to a structure fire, and the owner wishes to build on the existing foundation. The property is located at 2199 County Road 40, Auburn, Indiana and is zoned A2, Agricultural.

Chris Gaumer reviewed the proposed petition and staff report, which outlined the need for a development standards variance to reduce the side yard setback for a home due to the existing home being damaged from a fire. He stated that she had this fire and was basically a total loss. In our UDO in the non-conforming structures section if it's a total loss of 70% or more of the cost of the rebuild it has to meet the standards of the current ordinance. Which is thirty feet for our Agriculture A2 zoning district, so this is what is being requested. On the aerial map provided, she has this long skinny lot, and the house sits approximately 13' feet from the west property line. He asked Misty Vance to come to the mic and address when the house was built.

Misty Vance approached the podium stating that the house was built in 1978.

Mr. Gaumer addressed that back then it probably didn't have to meet any setback ordinances. He stated that in this request she needs a variance for the 17' feet for her to rebuild her home on the existing foundation.

Mr. Pulver addressed that in the picture that shows the 13' feet with the house, this is no longer there?

Ms. Vance stated that the house is still there and hasn't been torn down yet. The entire basement if were able to build will remain and only demolish the top layer.

Mr. Pulver asked if there were any structural issues with the basement due to the fire.

Ms. Vance stated no, there's no fire cracks or damage to the basement and was just soaked from the Fire Department.

Mr. Pulver asked about the 13 feet.

Mr. Gaumer stated that this is the existing setback where the existing house is and our ordinance requires anything new to be thirty feet.

Mr. Kruse addressed that this will fit in with finding number 3 arguably on the strict application would result in practical difficulties in the use of the property.

Mr. Gaumer stated that theoretically if we denied her there's no where for her to put the house because the lots to skinny anyway.

Mr. Provines asked what type of damage would have had to happen.

Mr. Gaumer addressed that she would have to make sure that if the house was appraised for \$300,000 and it was only going to cost 50,000 to repair any damage, then she would be fine with no variance. This is determined if the rebuild would be 70% or less of the cost of reconstruction

Mr. Kruse mentioned that something like this has happened in the county before.

Mr. Pulver asked if access to the house is on CR 40.

Ms. Vance stated yes.

Mr. Provines asked if everything would remain the same.

Ms. Vance stated that the driveway is paved and will remain the same. The changes are only with the house.

Mr. Carnahan asked if the new construction would be the same distance from the property line as the old one, not closer or farther.

Ms. Vance stated that is correct.

Mr. Pulver asked if there were any further questions amongst the board or for Ms. Vance. Hearing none.

Mr. Gaumer addressed that there was a letter received in favor of the petition. He read the letter into the record. The letter received was from Carolyn King the neighbor next door to Ms. Vance. The letter addressed if a variance was really needed due to the home needing rebuilt due to a house fire. Ms. Vance shouldn't have to be approved by this board and should be grandfathered in, since she is just rebuilding. She addressed how this has been a heavy burden for her and to put her through this is just unbelievable.

Mr. Funk stated that the letter does mention the thought that he had as to why it can't be grandfathered in.

Mr. Gaumer stated that the non-conforming structures section of our ordinance states that if you have a non-conforming you can't rebuild. If the loss is greater than 70% or more of the cost to rebuild the house you must rebuild it at the current standards.

Mr. Carnahan added that this is a decent way to look at the legal non-conforming uses that we must make sure that the ones we can correct we do and ones that don't need to correct we don't mess with.

Mr. Kruse addressed that we can also acknowledge that it's sad that homeowners must go through this.

Mr. Pulver asked if there were any further questions or comments from the Board. Hearing none. He opened the public portion of the hearing up to any comments for or against this petition.

Russ Hoff approached the podium addressing that he is Misty's other neighbor. He explained that his father-in-law built her house originally in 78. He owned everything property wise from the County Home line to the creek. He stated that he had come to town and his father-in-law wanted him to live next door, and this is when he moved to town. He had lived in this house for a few months until they completed his

house. He's very familiar with what's in that house, how big it was, what was there and wasn't there. During all those years there were no additions added and the house remained as the same footprint. He added that as Carolyn stated we don't really have a problem with it. He addressed that if Ms. Vance is not allowed a variance what happens to this house. It will get torn down and there's a foundation. What will happen to it? She's willing to rebuild on the same footprint and he asked that the approval be made so she can rebuild.

Mr. Pulver asked if there were any further questions or comments from the public. Hearing none. He closed the public portion of the hearing. He asked Mr. Kruse to move to the Findings of Fact.

Mr. Kruse went through the Findings of Fact for this petition with the board.

JURISDICTIONAL FINDINGS:

The petitioner has complied with the rules and regulations of the Board of Zoning Appeals in filing appropriate forms and reports.

1. Application completed and filed on **October 3, 2025**
2. Legal notice published in The Star on **October 31, 2025** with the publisher's affidavit and receipt received.
3. Certificate of mailing notices sent and receipts given to staff.
4. Letter from the County Board of Health, dated **November 3, 2025**
5. Letter from the County Highway Department, dated **October 3, 2025**
6. Letter from the Soil & Water Conservation District, dated **October 3, 2025**
7. Letter from the County Surveyor or Drainage Board, dated **October 3, 2025**
8. Letter from the DeKalb County Airport Authority, **not applicable**

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. Will the approval of the variance request be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community? Yes ()* No (X)
The proposed reduction in the side yard setback not be injurious to the public. The structure will be in the same location as it was before the fire. Also see letters from the various county departments without objection.
2. Will the use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance request be affected in a substantially adverse manner? Yes ()* No (X)
The proposed reduction in the side yard setback not adversely affect the neighboring properties as the neighboring properties are single-family homes.
3. Will the strict application of the terms of the Unified Development Ordinance result in practical difficulties in the use of the property? Yes (X) No ()*
The proposed reduction in the side yard setback is needed due to the existing foundation that will be used.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS:

1. The Board retains continuing jurisdiction of this from Development Standards Variance to assure compliance with all terms and conditions and/or impose additional conditions deemed necessary for health and safety.
2. A Variance to allow for the side yard setback to be 13 feet is approved.
3. Comply with any applicable Environmental Standards as required in Article 5, 5.11; EN-01, in the Unified Development Ordinance.
4. No offsite drainage crossing said real estate should be obstructed by any development on this site.

5. No Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Completion shall be issued until the applicant files written evidence of compliance with any conditions of the DeKalb County Board of Health, DeKalb County Highway Dept., DeKalb County Drainage Board or DeKalb County Surveyor, DeKalb County Airport, DeKalb County Soil & Water Conservation District, or other agency as applicable. File written evidence of compliance with Federal or State agencies where identified in the findings or conditions. The Zoning Administrator to determine when conditions have been met.

IT IS, THEREFORE, THE DECISION OF THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS VARIANCE PETITION #25-12 IS HEREBY APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS ON THIS 10TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2025.

Motion made by Andrew Provines, Seconded by Rory Walker.

Vote tally: Yes: 5

No: 0

Frank Pulver

Jason Carnahan

Rory Walker

Wayne Funk

Andrew Provines

Petition #25-13 – Michael & Connie Gerardot requesting a Development Standards Variance to allow for a reduction to the side yard setback. The request is for a proposed garage addition. The property is located at 0710 County Road 45, Waterloo, Indiana and is zoned A2, Agricultural.

Mr. Gaumer reviewed the proposed petition and staff report, which outlined the need for a development standards variance to reduce the side yard setback for a proposed garage addition. He stated that if you look at your aerial image the red area is the proposed garage addition, and the yellow outline is the property. They will be 10.8 feet from the south property line, which is what they have proposed, and the variance is requesting the 19.2 feet. The house as it sits now is only 36.8 feet from this south property line. He addressed that this is really the only location that the garage addition could be attached to the house.

Mr. Pulver asked if the septic was in the north. He questioned the barn located on the top north of the property.

Michael Gerardot approached the podium stating yes, the septic is to the north. The shed is used to park my gator in.

Mr. Pulver asked if there were any other questions. He asked how big this proposed garage is.

Mr. Gerardot answered that the garage is 26 by 26. He added that he will have a handicap ramp installed inside so we can go down the ramp and into our car without going outside.

Mr. Pulver asked if there were any further questions or comments from the Board. Hearing none. There was no one else in the audience except for Mrs. Gerardot to open the public portion of the hearing. He asked Mr. Kruse to move to the Findings of Fact.

Mr. Kruse went through the Findings of Fact for this petition with the board.

JURISDICTIONAL FINDINGS:

The petitioner has complied with the rules and regulations of the Board of Zoning Appeals in filing appropriate forms and reports.

1. Application completed and filed on **October 16, 2025**
2. Legal notice published in The Star on **October 31, 2025** with the publisher's affidavit and receipt received.
3. Certificate of mailing notices sent and receipts given to staff.
4. Letter from the County Board of Health, dated **October 23, 2025**
5. Letter from the County Highway Department, dated **October 20, 2025**
6. Letter from the Soil & Water Conservation District, dated **October 17, 2025**
7. Letter from the County Surveyor or Drainage Board, dated **October 21, 2025**
8. Letter from the DeKalb County Airport Authority, **not applicable**

FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. Will the approval of the variance request be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community? Yes ()* No (X)
The proposed reduction in the side yard setback will not be injurious to the public. Also see letters from the various county departments without objection.
2. Will the use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance request be affected in a substantially adverse manner? Yes ()* No (X)
The proposed reduction in the side yard setback does not adversely affect the neighboring properties.
3. Will the strict application of the terms of the Unified Development Ordinance result in practical difficulties in the use of the property? Yes (X) No ()*
The proposed reduction in the side yard setback is needed due to the location of the driveway and septic system.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS:

1. The Board retains continuing jurisdiction of this from Development Standards Variance to assure compliance with all terms and conditions and/or impose additional conditions deemed necessary for health and safety.
2. A Variance to allow for the side yard setback to be 10.8 feet is approved.
3. Comply with any applicable Environmental Standards as required in Article 5, 5.11; EN-01, in the Unified Development Ordinance.
4. No offsite drainage crossing over said real estate should be obstructed by any development on this site.
5. No Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Completion shall be issued until the applicant files written evidence of compliance with any conditions of the DeKalb County Board of Health, DeKalb County Highway Dept., DeKalb County Drainage Board or DeKalb County Surveyor, DeKalb County Airport, DeKalb County Soil & Water Conservation District, or other agency as applicable. And further, where applicable, file written evidence of compliance with Federal or State agencies where identified in the findings or conditions. The Zoning Administrator to determine when conditions have been met.

IT IS, THEREFORE, THE DECISION OF THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS VARIANCE PETITION #25-13 IS HEREBY APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS ON THIS 10TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2025.

Motion made by Wayne Funk, Seconded by Rory Walker.

Vote tally: Yes: 5 No: 0

Frank Pulver

Jason Carnahan

Rory Walker

Wayne Funk

Andrew Provines

REPORTS OF PLANNING STAFF, OFFICERS, OR COMMITTEES

None

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Frank Pulver, Chairperson

Meredith Reith, Secretary

DeKalb County Department of Development Services
Planning, Building & GIS
301 S. Union St.
Auburn, IN 46706
Ph: 260-925-1923
Fax: 260-927-4791

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:
File Number: 25-14
Date Application Filed: 11/7/2025
Fee Paid: pd cc
11/19/25

Application for DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS VARIANCE
(Section 9.09)

This application must be completed and filed with the DeKalb County Department of Development Services in accordance with the meeting schedule.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant's Name: Brian Rothgeb
Address: 1828 San Giovanni Ct Auburn, IN 46706
Telephone Number: 260-914-9873 E-Mail: customvantagehomes@gmail.com

OWNER INFORMATION (if different from applicant information)

Owner's Name: Westrick, LLC.
Address: 1830 San Giovanni Ct Auburn, IN 46706
Telephone Number: 260-433-5835 E-Mail: mike.westrick@me.com

REPRESENTATIVE INFORMATION (if different from applicant information)

Representative: [Signature]
Address: 1830 San Giovanni Ct.
Auburn, IN 46706
Telephone Number: 260-433-5835 E-Mail: mike.westrick@me.com

Legal Ad Payment & Public Hearing Notifications: Applicant ☐ Owner ☐ Representative ☐

Zoning Classification of Property: RE

Overlay District of Property (if applicable): _____

Address or common description of property:
Rotondo Estates Subdivision Section II
corner of CR 66 & CR 17

Legal description of property affected (or provide property deed):
Padre Pio Drive Entrance

What Development Standard are you seeking a variance for (setback, height, parking, etc.) and how to what extent (acreage, square footage, distance, number of lots, etc) BE SPECIFIC:

We are seeking an entrance sign at the front of
the subdivision to identify that it is Rotondo
Estates. See Plan for sign

**Standards of Zoning Ordinance requesting Variance from Developmental Standards from
(Zoning Section Number and/or Specific Section from Article 5):**

5.49 SI-02

The Applicant must answer the following questions and establish reasons for each answer at the public hearing in order to obtain an accurate determination from the BZA. Please answer each question and give reasons for your answer.

- A. Will the approval of this variance request be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and the general welfare of the community?

Yes () No (✓) Why? Explain below:

This will not affect public safety, health, or morals in any way. The sign will be set back over 50' from County Rd #17. This will allow more than 3 full car lengths ensuring the sign will not block line of site.

- B. Will the use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance request be affected in a substantially adverse manner if the petition is approved?

Yes () No (✓) Why? Explain below:

see A.

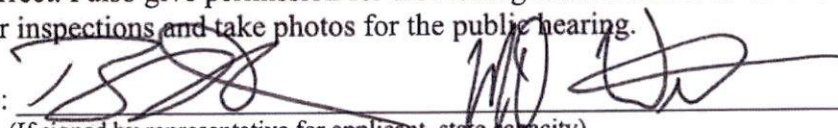
- C. Will the strict application of the terms of the Unified Development Ordinance result in practical difficulties in the use of the property involved in the petition?

Yes (✓) No () Why? Explain below:

Rotondo is being build w/ a similar theme as San Giovanni across the street. San Giovanni is much larger in square footage and its footprint on the land. We're not requesting anything of that scale but we want the sign to have a presence which current restrictions won't allow.

By my signature, I acknowledge the above information and attached exhibits, to my knowledge and belief, are true and correct. I also give permission for the Zoning Administrator to enter onto the petitioned property for inspections and take photos for the public hearing.

Applicant's Signature:


(If signed by representative for applicant, state capacity)

This Staff Report is prepared by the DeKalb County Department of Development Services to provide information to the Board of Zoning Appeals to assist them in making a decision on this Application. It may also be useful to members of the public interested in this Application.

SUMMARY FACTS:

APPLICANT: Westrick LLC

SUBJECT SITE: west side of County Road 71, approximately one-quarter mile north of the intersection of County Road 17 and County Road 66, Auburn

REQUEST: Development Standards Variance

PURPOSE: To allow for a gateway sign and for a larger sign than allowed by ordinance

EXISTING ZONING: RE, Rural Estate

SURROUNDING LAND North: Farm Ground (A2)

USES AND ZONING: South: Single Family Residence (A2)
East: Single Family Residence (A2)
West: Farm Ground (A2)

ANALYSIS:

UDO Standards: 5.49 SI-02: Sign; Agricultural and Residential Districts

B. Permanent Signs:

- 1. A permanent gateway sign, no larger than 40 square feet in size, is allowed when a single-family development includes 20 or more lots, a multifamily development includes 20 or more dwelling units or a mobile home community contains 20 or more dwelling sites.*
- The petitioner is requesting a gateway sign for Rotondo Estates, a 14-lot subdivision location on CR 17. The subdivision was approved in 2025.
- The proposed sign will be directly across from San Giovanini Estates, a 12-lot subdivision approved in 2005.
- The petitioner is requesting a variance to allow for a gateway sign for this subdivision.
- The proposed sign is 23 ft x 14.4 ft = 331.20 sq. ft.
 - Requesting a variance for 291.2 sq. ft.

JURISDICTIONAL FINDINGS:

The petitioner has complied with the rules and regulations of the Board of Zoning Appeals in filing appropriate forms and reports.

1. Application completed and filed on **November 7, 2025**
2. Legal notice published in The Star on **November 28, 2025** with the publisher's affidavit and receipt received.
3. Certificate of mailing notices sent and receipts given to staff.
4. Letter from the County Board of Health, dated _____
5. Letter from the County Highway Department, dated **November 12, 2025**
6. Letter from the Soil & Water Conservation District, dated **November 7, 2025**
7. Letter from the County Surveyor or Drainage Board, dated **November 10, 2025**
8. Letter from the DeKalb County Airport Authority, **not applicable**

PROPOSED FINDINGS OF FACT:

*These Findings of Fact proposed by staff are based off the knowledge and understanding of the proposed project. If any one of **your** answers is followed by an asterisk, under State Law (IC 36-7-4-918.5) and Section 9.09 G (3) of the DeKalb County Unified Development Ordinance you must deny the request.*

1. Will the approval of the variance request be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community? Yes ()* No (X)
The proposed sign is larger than allowed by Ordinance but will not be injurious to the public as the sign will be set back to allow for a safe entrance and exit into the development. Also see letters from the various county departments without objection.
2. Will the use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance request be affected in a substantially adverse manner? Yes ()* No (X)
The proposed increase in size of the sign will not adversely affect the neighboring properties as the neighboring property has a larger sign then proposed.
3. Will the strict application of the terms of the Unified Development Ordinance result in practical difficulties in the use of the property? Yes (X) No () *
The proposed increase in the sign size will allow for the same presence as the adjacent development has.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS:

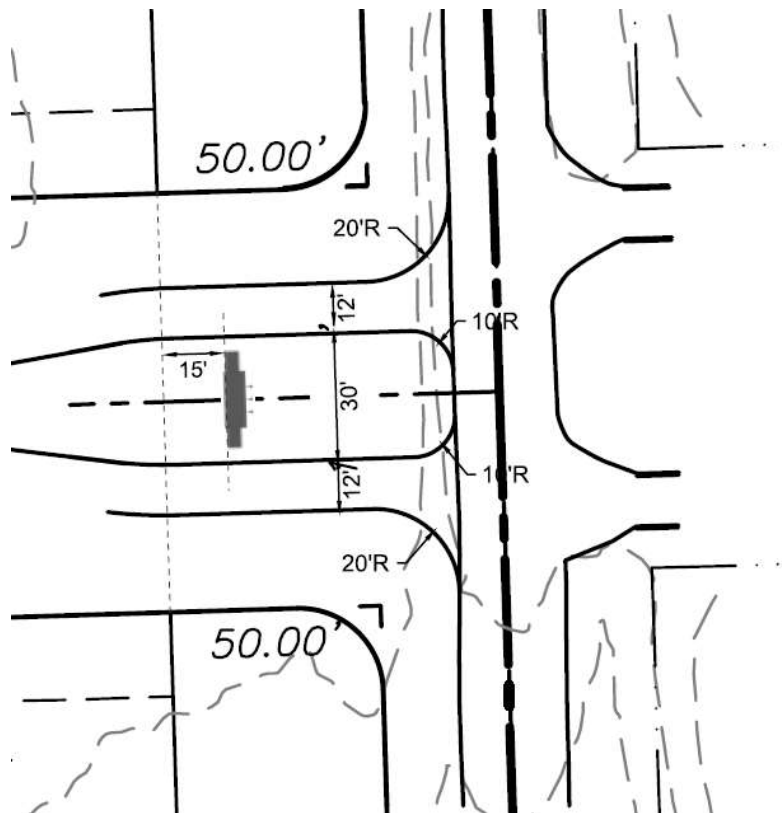
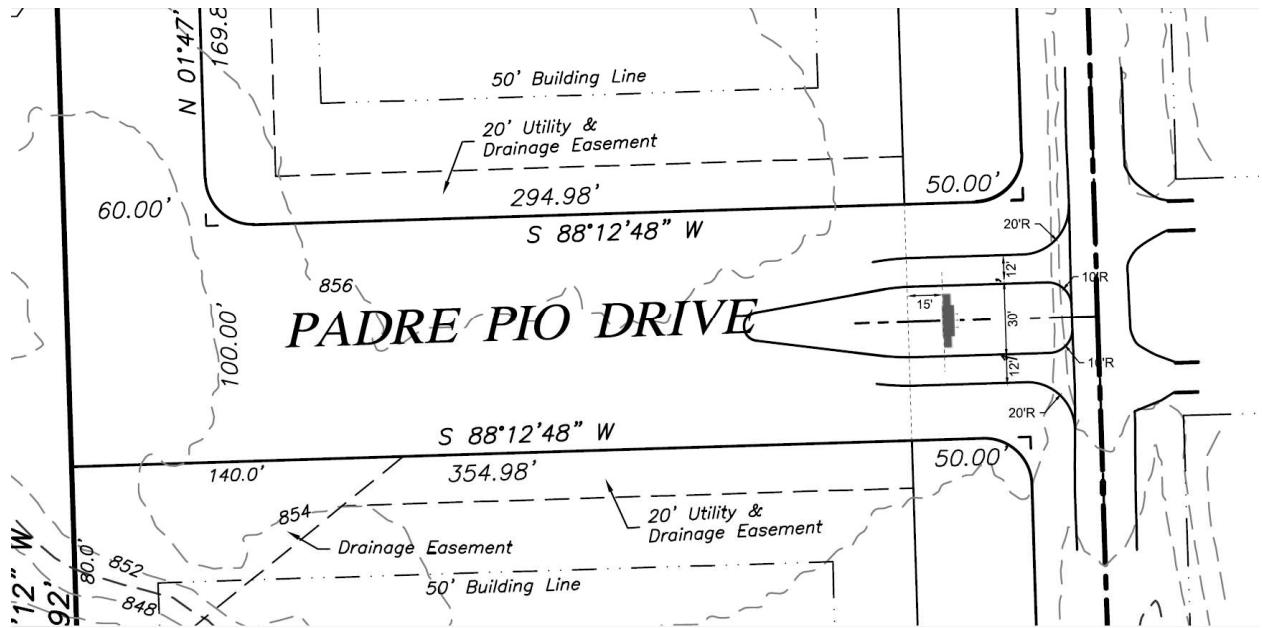
Conditions of Approval:

Staff is recommending approval for this Development Standard Variance and recommends the following conditions:

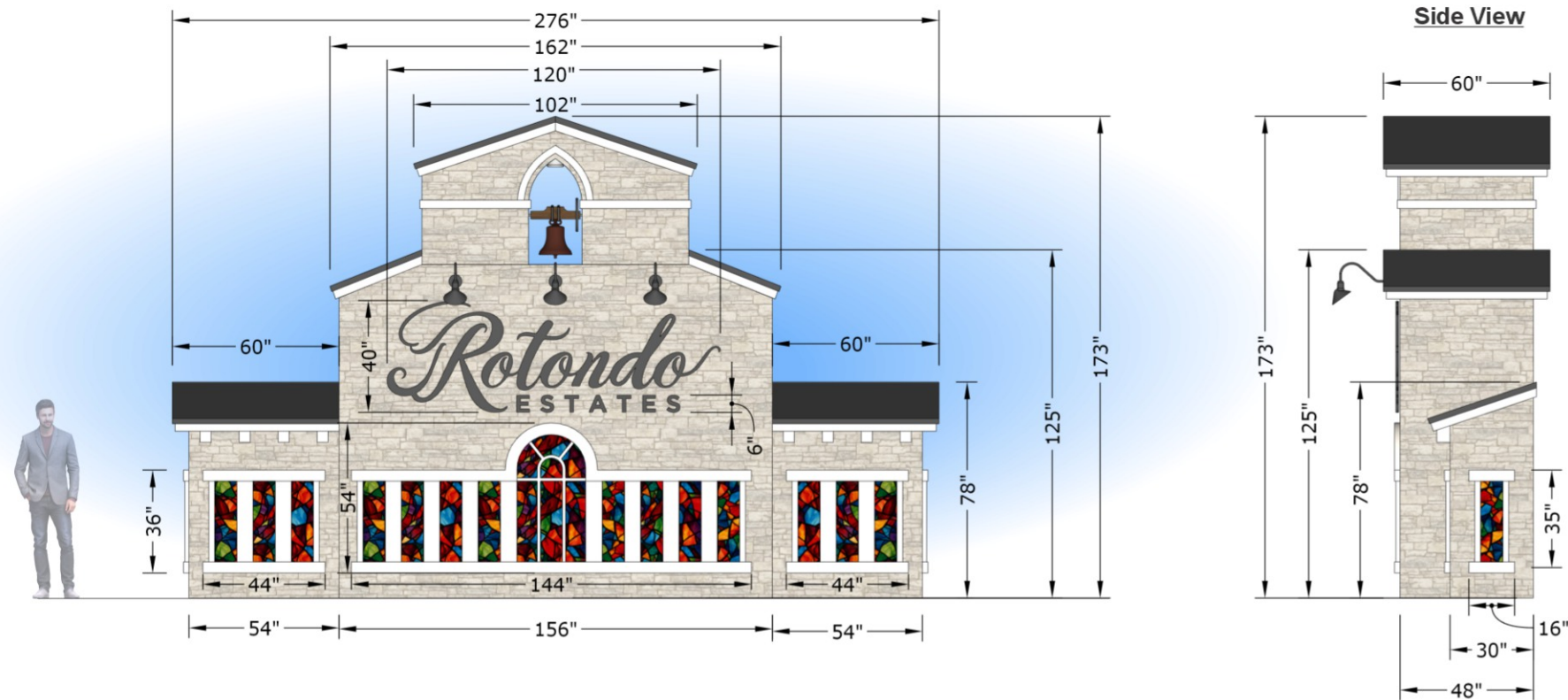
1. The Board retains continuing jurisdiction of this from Development Standards Variance to assure compliance with all terms and conditions and/or impose additional conditions deemed necessary for health and safety.
2. A Variance to allow for a gateway sign and for a larger sign than allowed by ordinance is allowed.
3. Comply with any applicable Environmental Standards as required in Article 5, 5.11; EN-01, in the Unified Development Ordinance.
4. No offsite drainage crossing over said real estate should be obstructed by any development on this site.
5. No Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Completion shall be issued until the applicant files written evidence of compliance with any conditions of the DeKalb County Board of Health, DeKalb County Highway Dept., DeKalb County Drainage Board or DeKalb County Surveyor, DeKalb County Airport, DeKalb County Soil & Water Conservation, or other agency as applicable. And further, where applicable, file written evidence of compliance with Federal or State agencies where identified in the findings or conditions. The Zoning Administrator to determine when conditions have been met.

Commitments of Approval:

Staff is recommending approval. If the Board assigns commitments, they shall be given, signed and recorded with the DeKalb County Recorder's Office.

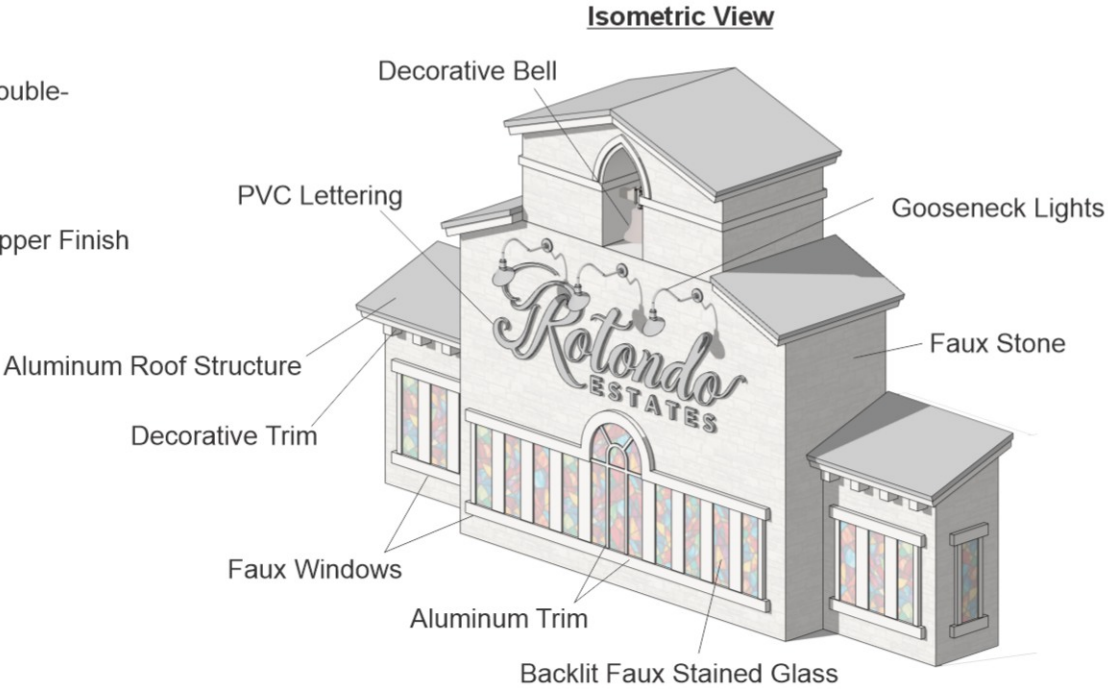


NOTE: Due to Limitations of the Printing Process, Printed Colors May Vary from Those of Final Production.



Single-Face Entrance Monument Sign

- Spot-Lit PVC Lettering Mounted to Faux Stone
- Faux Windows with Backlit Faux Stained Glass (Double-Strike Digital Print Applied to Face Side Only)
- Aluminum Roof Structure with Decorative Trim
- Decorative Bell (Non-Functioning) with Metallic Copper Finish Lit with Concealed Down-Light
- Landscaping by Others



4707 East Washington Blvd.
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46803
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Client / Project Name	
Rotondo Estates Entrance Sign	
Location(s)	
Township 33 N, Range 12 E DeKalb County, Indiana	

Project Manager	
Matt Schlau	
Designer	
Rick Stemmler	
Drawing Number	
250033-06	

Beginning Date	
01/28/2025	
Scale	
Not to Scale	
Page Number	
1 of 1	

Client Approval
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