



Wabash County Plan Commission

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Wabash County Board of Zoning Appeals – Meeting Minutes

Board Members: Dan Dale, Chris Hickman, Patty Lengel, Amanda Lyons, Joe Vogel

Staff: Mark Frantz, Board Attorney; Brian Campbell, Plan Director; Jennifer Hicks, BZA Secretary

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

1. Call To Order

Mr. Dale called to order the March 24, 2026 Board of Zoning Appeals meeting at 7:00pm.

Ms. Hicks called roll:

- ✓ Dan Dale – *yes*
- ✓ Chris Hickman – *yes*
- ✓ Patty Lengel – *yes*
- ✓ Amanda Lyons - *no*
- ✓ Joe Vogel - *yes*

A quorum was declared.

2. Consideration of Minutes – February 24, 2026

Mr. Vogel made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2026 meeting as written.

Ms. Lengel seconded the motion.

Ms. Hicks called roll:

- ✓ Dan Dale – *abstain*
- ✓ Chris Hickman – *yes*
- ✓ Patty Lengel – *yes*
- ✓ Joe Vogel - *yes*

The motion carried 3-0-1

3. Old Business

Electronic Meeting Resolution

The electronic meeting resolution was presented by Mr. Campbell. The resolution allows members to be considered present for a quorum and participate in final actions via Zoom, provided they can be both seen and heard. The resolution includes specific restrictions, such as requiring at least 50% of members to be physically present and prohibiting electronic participation for high-stakes actions like adopting a budget or exercising eminent domain.

Mr. Vogel made a motion to approve the resolution. Ms. Lengel seconded the motion.

Ms. Hicks called roll:

- ✓ Dan Dale – *yes*
- ✓ Chris Hickman – *yes*
- ✓ Patty Lengel – *yes*
- ✓ Joe Vogel - *yes*

The motion carried 4-0

4. New Business

SE-26-001 – Andrew & Jennifer Koselke, Pleasant Township

Petitioner: Andrew & Jennifer Koselke

Location: 12117 N St Rd 15, North Manchester, Indiana

Request: Requesting a special exception for a home occupation type II to place a bakery on the property with a variance from the development standards to place an accessory structure associated with the home occupation closer to the front setback than required by ordinance.

Mr. Campbell presented the BZA with the petition and the staff report. He explained the location of the property and the nature of the request. Mr. Campbell explained the petitioner will not be operating a retail bakery, she just wants to be able to have an accessory structure with a kitchen to do baking for her home-based business. Additionally, the accessory structure will be located closer than the required 105 feet from a state road therefore the petitioners are also requesting a variance from the setback requirements.

Mrs. Koselke explained that the business is entirely custom-ordered through Facebook and a website, involving no on-site customers, signage, or commercial equipment. The proposed 32x45 structure will be connected to the existing residential well and septic system. Mr. Campbell noted that the Health Department had verified compliance with Indiana cottage food laws and that neighboring inquiries had resulted in no objections.

Mr. Dale opened the floor for public comment. No comments were received.

Ms. Lengel made a motion to approve the special exception. Mr. Vogel seconded the motion.

Ms. Hicks called roll:

- ✓ Dan Dale – yes
- ✓ Chris Hickman – yes
- ✓ Patty Lengel – yes
- ✓ Joe Vogel - yes

The motion carried 4-0

Mr. Vogel made a motion to approve the variance request. Mr. Hickman seconded the motion.

Ms. Hicks called roll:

- ✓ Dan Dale – yes
- ✓ Chris Hickman – yes
- ✓ Patty Lengel – yes
- ✓ Joe Vogel - yes

The motion carried 4-0

VAR-26-003 – Pamela & Lisa Owen, Liberty Township

Petitioner: Pamela & Lisa Owen

Location: Old State Road 15, LaFontaine, Indiana

Request: The petitioner is requesting a variance from the development standards to place a residential structure in an A1 zoning district without meeting the minimum point threshold required by the factor point system.

Mr. Campbell presented the BZA with a summary of the petition request and the staff report. The petitioners were seeking a variance to allow a residential structure in an A1 zoning district without meeting the required minimum 15-point threshold required by the factor point system, as the property scored a 10. It was noted that the project would not remove farm ground from production, and the proposed new owners planned to clear four scrubby acres on the south end to return them to agricultural use. This clearance would also allow for a path between two fields, reducing the need for farm equipment on public roads.

Mr. Dale opened the floor for public comment. No comments were received.

Ms. Lengel made a motion to approved the variance. Mr. Vogel seconded the motion.

Ms. Hicks called roll:

- ✓ Dan Dale – *yes*
- ✓ Chris Hickman – *yes*
- ✓ Patty Lengel – *yes*
- ✓ Joe Vogel - *yes*

The motion carried 4-0

VAR-26-004 – Jennifer Rickner, Paw Paw Township

Petitioner: Jennifer Rickner

Location: 300 W, Wabash, Indiana

Request: The petitioner is requesting a variance from the development standards to allow more than one split in less than a five-year period.

Mr. Campbell presented the BZA with a summary of the petition request and the staff report. The intent of the request was to facilitate a "cleanup" of multiple property lines by extending existing lines north to the creek. This action involves taking small, inaccessible segments of land between the creek and the current property boundaries and adding them to the larger parcels owned to the south. Because this required two splits from the same original piece of land at the same time, a variance was necessary under the current ordinance. The Board noted that these segments would be combined with the southern parcels to ensure they have proper road frontage and meet size requirements.

Mr. Dale opened the floor for public comment. No comments were received.

Mr. Vogel made a motion to approved the variance. Ms. Lengel seconded the motion.

Ms. Hicks called roll:

- ✓ Dan Dale – *yes*
- ✓ Chris Hickman – *yes*
- ✓ Patty Lengel – *yes*
- ✓ Joe Vogel - *yes*

The motion carried 4-0

VAR-26-005 – John & Jennifer Rumble, Paw Paw Township

Petitioner: Pamela & Lisa Owen

Location: 400 N, Wabash, Indiana

Request: The petitioner is requesting a variance from the development standards to allow more than one split in less than a five-year period.

Mr. Campbell presented the BZA with a summary of the petition request and the staff report. This variance also pertained to the property line "cleanup" along the creek, specifically involving a joint parcel owned by Jennifer (Rickner) and John Rumble. Similar to VAR-26-004, the request was to allow more than one split in a five-year period to consolidate the northern wooded segments with the existing southern parcels. Members of the board discussed the parcel split and recognized the fact that this as a logical extension of the project to simplify property boundaries and approved the request.

Mr. Dale opened the floor for public comment. No comments were received.

Mr. Vogel made a motion to approved the variance. Ms. Lengel seconded the motion.

Ms. Hicks called roll:

- ✓ Dan Dale – *yes*
- ✓ Chris Hickman – *yes*
- ✓ Patty Lengel – *yes*
- ✓ Joe Vogel - *yes*

The motion carried 4-0

VAR-26-006 – John & Deborah Burke, Pleasant Township

Petitioner: John & Deborah Burke

Location: 29 E Ireland Dr, North Manchester, Indiana

Request: The petitioner is requesting a variance from the development standards to allow an accessory structure closer to the property line than permitted by ordinance.

Mr. Campbell presented the BZA with a summary of the petition request and the staff report. He explained that the structure had been constructed without a permit and was discovered during a review of the area. The structure is located slightly within the required setback, measuring approximately seven and one-half to nine and one-half feet from the property line where ten feet is required. Staff reported that neighboring property owners had been notified and had submitted written statements in support of the request, indicating no objections. The Board discussed the narrow nature of the lots in the area and the practical difficulties of meeting setback requirements. A recommendation was made that the structure not be expanded further into the setback area.

Mr. Dale opened the floor for public comment. No comments were received.

Mr. Vogel made a motion to approved the variance. Ms. Lengel seconded the motion.

Ms. Hicks called roll:

- ✓ Dan Dale – yes
- ✓ Chris Hickman – yes
- ✓ Patty Lengel – yes
- ✓ Joe Vogel - yes

The motion carried 4-0

VAR-26-007 – Sweet Beginnings Maple, Lagro Township

Petitioner: Sweet Beginnings Maple

Location: 7174 E Schmalzried Rd, Lagro, Indiana

Request: The petitioner is requesting a variance from the development standards to allow a residential structure to be built on a parcel less than the required 1.5 acres in an A2 zoning district with less than the required road frontage.

Mr. Campbell presented the BZA with a summary of the petition request and the staff report. He explained the petitioner was seeking two variances to allow a residential structure to be built on a parcel less than the required one and one-half acres and to allow less than the required road frontage. Staff explained that an existing home on the property would be removed due to the poor condition, and a new residential structure will be built in a similar location.

The parcel measures approximately one and one-quarter acres and does not meet the minimum frontage requirement. Mr. Campbell noted that the Health Department had been consulted regarding septic feasibility. The Board discussed the history of the property, the feasibility of rebuilding in a similar location, and the existing access arrangement.

Mr. Dale opened the floor for public comment. No comments were received.

Mr. Hickman made a motion to approved the variance. Mr. Vogel seconded the motion.

Ms. Hicks called roll:

- ✓ Dan Dale – yes
- ✓ Chris Hickman – yes
- ✓ Patty Lengel – yes
- ✓ Joe Vogel - yes

The motion carried 4-0

VAR-26-008 – Betty & Amythyst Thomas, Liberty Township

Petitioner: Betty & Amythyst Thomas

Location: 2503 E St Rd 524 Lot 1, Wabash, Indiana

Request: The petitioner is requesting a variance from the development standards to allow an accessory structure to be placed closer to a property line in an A2 zoning district than permitted by ordinance.

Mr. Campbell presented the BZA with a summary of the petition request and the staff report. He explained that the required setback is thirteen feet and that the proposed placement would be closer due to the limited depth of the yard. The petitioners described the intended use of the structure and indicated that it would be a low-maintenance metal building with landscaping improvements around it. The Board discussed concerns related to maintenance access between the structure and the property line, as well as the potential impact of aggregate setback requirements on neighboring properties. The petitioners stated that the structure would be placed in a manner that maximizes usable yard space and that no neighboring property owners had expressed concerns. After discussion, the Board chose not to impose a specific setback condition.

Mr. Dale opened the floor for public comment. No comments were received.

Mr. Vogel made a motion to approved the variance. Ms. Lengel seconded the motion.

Ms. Hicks called roll:

- ✓ Dan Dale – yes
- ✓ Chris Hickman – yes
- ✓ Patty Lengel – yes
- ✓ Joe Vogel - yes

The motion carried 4-0

5. Staff Reports

Complaints Update

Mr. Campbell provided an update on active complaints, legal actions, unsafe premises, reassessments, and complaint closures. There are currently 43 active complaints, 9 legal, and 2 unsafe premises for a total of 54 open complaints. Mr. Campbell explained there are 10 properties being monitored for compliance.

There were 10 reassessments rolled over from 2025 and 7 new received so far in 2026. 6 have been closed so far this year.

6. Other Business

With no further business brought before the Board, Mr. Vogel made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Lengel seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm.

Others Present: Deborah Burke, John Burke, Andrew Koselke, Jennifer Koselke, Rick Fisher, Chase Enyeart, Amythyst Thomas, Silas Beachler, Jennifer Rumble, John Rumble

(bac)