

**Town of Porter  
Plan Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
January 18, 2006**

**A. The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m.**

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

**C. Roll Call / Determination of Quorum**

Present: Mr. Timm, Mrs. Snyder, Mr. Stinson, Mr. Eriksson, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Childress,  
and Mr. Bell

Absent: Mr. Eriksson

Also present were Mr. Mandon, Mr. Lyp, and Mrs. Mitchell

**D. Consideration of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Motion to approve the minutes of the December 21 regular meeting was made  
by Mr. Lewis; second by Mr. Childress. Motion carried via voice approval 6 – 0.

**E. Election of Offices**

Motion to make Lorain Bell president and Ken Timm vice president of the  
Plan Commission was made by Mrs. Snyder; second by Mr. Childress. Motion  
carried via voice approval 6 – 0.

Motion to make Kara Mitchell the Secretary for the Plan Commission was made by  
Mr. Timm; second by Mr. Lewis. Motion carried via voice approval 6 – 0.

**F. Audience Participation**

None

**G. Old Business and Matters Tabled**

Mr. Bell let the Plan Commission and the audience know that the Noise Ordinance is  
now finished and in the hands of the Town Council.

**H. New Business**

None

**I. Preliminary Hearing**

*Application for subdivision approval made by Don Coker and Dane Jackson for the  
property located at the corner of Marquette Road and Johnson Road in Porter.*

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Dane Jackson addressed the Plan Commission representing developer Don Coker. They are requesting to split Lots 10 and 11 on Marquette Street east of Johnson Street into four building sites. One of those lots contains an existing home that is currently being renovated. Mr. Jackson said the other lots would have moderate sing-family dwellings built on them which would sell for \$175,000 – 180,000. He thinks it would be a simple split that would enhance the community.

Motion to set this request for Public Hearing at the February meeting was made by Mr. Childress; second by Mrs. Snyder. Motion carried via voice approval 6 – 0.

**J. Public Hearing**

*Application for plan unit development approval made by Neville J. Gough and Larry N. Gough for the property located at the northeast corner of Beam Street and Mineral Springs Road in Porter.*

Mr. Lyp immediately stated that there had been a typographical error made on the Public Hearing sign that was placed at the property stated above. The address on the sign is that of the “temporary” Town Hall during its construction. Mr. Lyp said there was nothing legal that should stop the hearing from commencing.

Attorney Babcock addressed the Commission with some changes that had been made to their plans. These changes were handed out to the Commission members by Mr. Babcock. The changes consist of 13 extra parking spaces and one interior sidewalk connecting Beam Street and Mineral Springs.

Mr. Gary Radke addressed the Plan Commission from Radke and Associates. He discussed his plan for drainage issues. He plans to manage the drainage according to current EPA standards by managing and treating water. The water will be treated through rain gardens and subsurface drainage. The water will be managed by slowing down the flow of water by building swales.

Mr. Larry Gough then addressed the Plan Commission. He is the current owner and proposed developer of the property. He said the homes will target empty-nesters. The objective of the development is to create an environment with higher density. Also, he thinks the development would provide opportunities for neighbors to meet neighbors. The units would sell for \$160-195 thousand. They would consist of 3 bedrooms and 2 car garages and have high pitched roofs. They have hopes of extending the bike path along Beam Street. The units would have similar roofs with different choices for siding, etc. The size of the units is 1,450 with enclosed patios in the back. He mentioned several other developments he has completed in Valparaiso and Crown Point. He believes his land is a good transition zone between the former Spa Restaurant and the current Spring House Inn.

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Mr. Babcock made his closing remarks to the Commission. He too believes that the development would be a good transition for its location.

Mr. Gough is considering using Mr. Jackson to build his development. Mrs. Snyder asked Bill Lewis if Mr. Jackson had any track record in the town of Porter. Mr. Lewis stated that he had and that he has had not problems with Mr. Jackson's construction. She then stated that she would like to take a look at the homes.

Mr. Stinson questioned "Exhibit D" wording of "feet" to "floor area." His question was answered.

The Public Hearing was opened at approximately 8:10 p.m.

Those who spoke in support of the proposal:

- ✓ Justin Brooks – 702 North 200 East in Valparaiso

Those who spoke against the proposal:

- ✓ Mike Hinkel – 1020 Beam Street. He does not like the "cramming" of houses and fears that they will become rental properties. He does not believe that the Porter Zoning should be changed when it is not necessary.
- ✓ Andy Panozzo – 197 Spring View Drive. He fears that the "berm" will dam water into his yard. He is opposed to the entrance off of Beam for safety reasons. He also thinks it is too dense for the units.
- ✓ Tyler DeNormandy – 280 Spring View Drive. Also fears traffic and drainage issues.
- ✓ Heather Lukas – 280 Spring View Drive. She chose to live in Porter because of its family orientated neighborhoods. She thinks this development would take away that description of Porter.
- ✓ Michael Harris – member of Woodlake Springs, LLC. He was involved with the original planning and developing of Woodlake Springs. He thinks it is definitely too dense for all of those units. Six years ago when his subdivision was polled for the remaining acreage in Woodlake they overwhelmingly favored single-family homes to be built. He also did not think there was enough room for residents to park their vehicles in front of the units. He also believes that in five years there would still be drainage problems.

The Public Hearing was closed at approximately 8:29 p.m.

Mr. Radke rebutted comments made by the audience. Mr. Gough also took defense to things said by the audience. He said the homes were not going to be "substandard," but rather that they were upper scale. He believes that developments should be mixed with all types of people. Rentals would not be a possibility because he agreed to have a covenant against them.

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He also did not feel like the development would “detract” from Porter’s reputation.

Mr. Babcock stated that Beam Street is designed for lots of traffic. He stated that Porter’s police and department heads had looked at the proposed road cuts and passing lane. The development would have city water.

Mr. Bell pointed out that there were indeed nice homes to the east and west. He feels that “Exhibit A” breaks a lot of variances. Also, he feels like the area is too dense for the proposal.

Mr. Mandon gave a thorough exposition on his opinion of the development. He mentioned that the developers had met with TAC at 3 or 4 meetings and were more than willing to comply with TAC’s ideas and suggestions. He said the development is “up to speed” and “state of the art.” He believes this PUD, having a MS4-inspired stormwater system, is a prototype for our town and other towns. He suggests that the road systems be privately owned because it would reduce the cost to the Town. In his opinion, the lot coverage is comparable to single family dwellings. Mr. Mandon addressed the matter of density saying that it was a matter of personal opinion.

Mr. Timm addressed concern about the “drain ponds” being clean.

Mr. Childress suggested that the middle units be eliminated.

Motion to table the PUD petition to study the new concepts proposed and variances requested was made by Mrs. Snyder; no second – motion died.

Motion to send the proposed development to the Town Council with favorable recommendation (with the suggestion that Units 19 and 20 be removed from the plans) was made by Mr. Childress; second by Mr. Timm. Motion carried 4 -2.

**K. Finding of Fact**

None

**L. Comments from Plan Commission Attorney**

None

**M. Comments from Plan Commission Secretary**

None

**N. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Snyder; second by Mr. Lewis. Meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:10 p. m.

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Lorain Bell  
Chairman

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Kara Mitchell  
Secretary

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