

MUNSTER PLAN COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
June 10, 2025

The Munster Plan Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting on June 10, 2025, at Munster Town Hall, 1005 Ridge Road, in the Main meeting room and could be accessed remotely via Zoom webinar, a videoconference application.

Call to Order: President Baker called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

William Baker, President, Appointed by: Town Council, Initial Appointment: 01/15/2007 -Term Expiration: 12/31/2026
Roland Raffin, Vice-President, Appointed by: Town Council, Initial Appointment: 03/12/2007 - Term Expiration: 12/31/2026
Jennifer Johns, member. Appointed by: Town Council, Initial Appointment: 12/17/2018 - Term Expiration: 12/31/2027
Rachel Branagan, member, Appointed by: Town Council, Initial Appointment: 06/01/2022 - Term Expiration: 12/31/2027
Joseph Hofferth, Town Council Rep., Appointed by: Town Council President, Initial Appointment: 01/06/2025 - Term Expiration: 12/31/2025
David B. Nellans, Town Council Rep., Appointed by: Town Council President, Initial Appointment: 01/06/2025 - Term Expiration: 12/31/2025
George Shinkan, Town Council Rep., Appointed by: Town Council President, Initial Appointment: 01/06/2025 - Term Expiration: 12/31/2025

Members in Attendance

William Baker
Roland Raffin
Jennifer Johns
Rachel Branagan
Joseph Hofferth
David B. Nellans
George Shinkan

Staff Present

Nicole Bennett, Town Attorney
Denise Core, Administrative Assistant

Approval of Minutes: May 13, 2025

Motion: Councilor Shinkan moved to approve the May 13, 2025; minutes as presented.

Second: Commissioner Branagan

Vote: Yes – 7 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carried.

Preliminary Hearings: None

Public Hearings:

President Baker introduced PC25-006 DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW: Marc Smith of E. Anthony on behalf of Family Christian Center requests review of a Development Plan at 340 45th Street.

President Baker announced this is a continued public hearing. He asked anyone who wished to speak on behalf of this petition to come to the podium, state your name and address for the record.

Mr. Zenon Kurdziel stated that he the principal architect with Ridgeland Associates, 830 North Boulevard, Oak Park, Illinois, the architects for the proposed addition to the Family Christian Church. He said to

refresh everybody's memories, they are proposing an addition to the east and north sides of the building, to be done in two separate phases. The east end will be an area for storage and a small chapel and the creation of a large vestibule in front. They'd like to get approval for both projects and submit permits for the east addition first and finish up the project by doing the north addition.

President Baker said when they left this last month, there was a discrepancy between the square footage on the paperwork and what was requested as part of the presentation. Mr. Kurdziel said it wasn't that much different; there was a misprint. He stated the existing building as it stands on the first floor is 60,457 square feet; the second floor is 38,516 square feet for a total of 98,977 square feet. On the east, they are proposing the addition of 14,758 square feet on the first floor and 10,293 square feet on the second floor. On the north, they are looking to add 10,765 square feet and 479 square feet for a total of 36,586 square feet which gives us a grand total 135,588 SF for the entire building.

Mr. Kurdziel said they discussed parking last month. The existing parking lot currently has 774 parking spaces and 16 ADA spaces for a total of 790. There's also a staging area, which isn't striped at the back of the building on the south side, where they're proposing on adding 90 additional spaces. He said by adding to the east side, they are losing some spaces which brings them down to 773 plus 17 ADA spaces for total proposed parking of 790. For overflow parking, they are adding another 90 parking spaces so what they have is a grand total of 810 parking spaces. He stated the code requirements are based on the seating count, 30% of the amount of seating in the building, which currently is 1,909. When that is multiplied by 0.33, the code requirement is 635 parking spaces, so they are well over the required parking space count.

Attorney Bennett said the exhibits that were attached as part of the staff report were updated and those documents itemize the parking items and square footage numbers. She thinks there had been a few inversions on numbers, perhaps. She wanted to clarify, so the record is clear, that based on the updated information as stated on page 2 of the staff report, she believed the expansion numbers to be accurate with the east building, the first floor being 14,758 and the second floor being 10,293 and on the north building expansion, 10,785 on the first floor and 749 on the second floor. She said that gets us to the same number as was discussed last month which is a total expansion of 36,585 for all floors and all areas. She said the question they were having before was exactly where the square footage was, and maybe how that was calculated. She said there had not been changes to the proposals, the site plan, or the floorplan. The parking space calculation is modified because of the expansion of the building that is taking the parking spaces directly in front of where those improvements are being made on the east and north sides. That was not in any way getting them below the required parking so that was not an issue; they did not need any variances for approval of the development plan. President Baker asked how the temporary seating is calculated for parking requirement purposes. Attorney Bennett said we calculate it based on how many folding chairs can be set out in the area that is used for those services to keep within the fire code; it's what will be put out for services, separate prayer groups, and whenever meeting is needed.

Commissioner Johns said she had noted the current parking number was 810 but there were actually 720 spaces. She recalled the small chapel had a capacity of maybe 1,000; The plan was to set it up for only around 200 for smaller events, however, it did have a larger capacity. Mr. Kurdziel said that was correct and said Pastor Steve had clearly pointed out that the smaller chapel they're adding would never be used in conjunction with the main building. He said this is because Pastor Steve presides over both and the

smaller chapel is strictly for smaller weddings and funerals so they'll never be used simultaneously. Commissioner Johns said she did recall that but there is no assurance that in 5 years, there won't be an associate pastor or someone else who would conduct a wedding or funeral at the same time. Since things change over time, and because they have the capacity for that, it needs to be considered especially since traffic and everything going into and out of the church is notable as it is. There was a discussion around the total number of chairs they could fit in the small chapel, determined to be 183 seats, and the 61 parking spaces needed to meet that capacity. With their 810 spaces, they still meet the requirement. Commissioner Raffin asked if they had ever exceeded the maximum capacity of 1909 people. Mr. Kurdziel said he couldn't say for sure but he knows when they have a major event, they accommodate that by finding parking off-site. He said it gets pretty packed sometimes, but there's always a police force involved with making sure that traffic is controlled and it doesn't create headaches for the immediate community. Commissioner Raffin said he was asking because the traffic and parking around West Lakes is a major concern when the church is busy. He said with the addition of 36,000 more square feet, a lot of residents have the same concerns so the Plan Commission wants to make sure that is addressed. Mr. Kurdziel said that's a very fair question and pointed out that the majority of the east addition is primarily storage for the costumes and other things that are utilized for the productions that the Pastor has on a rotating basis.

Commissioner Branagan said the renderings are the same as the prior month and asked why the removal of the diamond shape feature was not reflected on new renderings. Mr. Kurdziel apologized and said he didn't realize he needed to amend the renderings for that. He said they were just a graphic visual of what they originally proposed. President Baker asked if they would have signage of the Last Supper on the side of the building. Mr. Kurdziel said they are proposing a cross on the front of it and the Last Supper in a fashion similar to the renderings. President Baker asked how they are to know what are doing and not doing if it is not shown on the renderings. Mr. Kurdziel said the only difference on the renderings is the triangular pyramids that were over the portico were removed, everything else stays the same as drawn on the drawings. President Baker asked Attorney Bennett if the picture of the Last Supper would be considered signage. Attorney Bennett said no, it falls into first amendment protection.

Commissioner Raffin said he didn't see an updated landscaping plan. Attorney Bennet said that was not required because the site itself complies with the current code and their construction is only to the building. She said if they were changing the ingress or egress, moving the entrances over, changing the curb cuts, or things of that nature, that would be affecting and changing the site. She said the site, the building, and the uses are separate. She said some of the landscaping would be impacted as reflected in the staff report. Mr. Kurdziel also described changes, but not the elimination of, landscape islands and the new drop off configuration. He said they are looking for the approval and then they will be generating permanent construction drawings for the east and the north additions. There were no more questions from the commissioners.

President Baker opened the public hearing and asked anyone who wanted to speak on this petition to come up to the microphone, and state their name and address for the record.

Mr. Shawn Bulow of 133 Glastonbury, Munster, said he has been a resident of West Lakes since it first opened, so he has been there 26 years. He said he was speaking on behalf of several of his neighbors and they oppose the addition for the church. He said any Wednesday, special event, and Sunday, it's almost impossible to get in and out of the subdivision. He said if you actually go to the church-and he has walked

in on some of these events- no matter how the seats are counted, there are people standing everywhere; they just pack them in. He said their parking is always overflowing into the bank and the trucking facilities across the way; he doesn't see any way to put an addition in there. He said they say they are adding the new 90 parking stalls to the south of the building in the area they call the prop staging, semi area and overflow parking, but they have been using that space ever since they put that church there. He said they pack it in as full as possible; they park in the park on their heavy events; if they are given more space, they're just going to fill it. He concluded by saying they are opposed to it. If they have to, they'll walk through the whole entire subdivision and get everybody to sign petitions. He said most of their parishioners come from Illinois and other areas of Indiana; it's really not their community church.

President Baker asked if anyone else like to speak on this petition. When there were no additional comments, he closed the public hearing.

Attorney Bennett drew the commissioners' attention to page 7 of the staff report that identifies the applicable code provisions that apply to a development plan as set forth in the ordinance as well as the same considerations by the state. She said as part of a development plan and in their consideration of those items-everything from the increase on services on the town, parks, schools etc., the appropriateness for the drive functions and parking items in consideration of that, the development standards relating to how that is circulated and considerations for traffic overflowing like that- all of that is legal for the Plan Commission to consider in their analysis. As part of a development plan consideration, they are also permitted by law to add any reasonable conditions to the development plan approval. She said it is not a situation where it's one or the other, or even that the conditions have to be met prior to construction. Rather, conditions that can be placed upon the use of the property, that is about physical use of things the commissioners are concerned about, such as occupants and parking. She said, obviously, as part of every building structure inspection, it has to meet the fire code and occupancy will be established immediately. Whether or not that 1909 number is current based on the size, she can't speak to that, she's not quite sure what the Fire Chief has for occupancy and whether or not that is an enforcement from the police department or even fire department to confirm that at any point. There was some discussion regarding moving forward and a concern that Ms. Johns brought up that someday an Associate Pastor may be added. Attorney Bennett said there are reasonable conditions, based upon those concerns, that can be placed on an approval that have to do with how the building is used. She said she is noting that because for any approval, there are considerations for those things. She said the commission has the option, because of the same considerations, to do an outright denial of the development plan as proposed; it's not all or nothing, they have significant latitude. A discussion followed on conditions that may be appropriate within the context, as it relates to the expansion, like driving, parking, and the capacity of the structure to allow for more seating. For example, more landscaping would not be appropriate since the project does not trigger additional landscaping or screening. Stormwater changes may be appropriate if there are concerns with retention pond capacity and drainage affected by additional square footage of impermeable surface. Conditions placed on the use may be appropriate but must be related to the expansion of the building or what the development plan changes. Councilor Hofferth said, engineering-wise, he needs more analysis and evaluation to make a decision on this. Commissioner Johns said it is very clear to anyone who drives through our town that the infrastructure coming out and along West Lakes is insufficient now. She is not trying to stop progress for the church but it's a burden on the entire town; the traffic is an objection for people as they look to buy homes in West Lakes. She asked what can be done to enable the church get what they need with a small chapel and storage. She suggested a work session. Councilor Shinkan suggested they wait an hour

between services to allow the parking lot to clear out. Attorney Bennet said she would prefer to let the church come up with alternatives that would be considered by the Planning Commission as a way expressing these things. They are the ones that know what their capacity is for services and parking lots to clear, whereas she would propose that for anyone sitting on this board, it's going to be guessing. She said it is also not the job of the police or fire departments to make that determination when the Plan Commission is the one asking for it. She said, considering drainage, she didn't think she had seen any kind of their reports or if that was something that had been discussed with the planner. The Plan Commission can take an action on this as proposed or they can ask whether or not the petitioner wants the opportunity to address some of these other concerns and work through this with staff.

Councilor Shinkan said it had come to his attention that they would like Margo to go all the way to the train station. He said that is not going to happen as long as he is with the Town of Munster, it's going to be a one-way in, one way out. Commissioner Johns asked about a traffic study since that would be a really great place to start. Attorney Bennett said that is within the realm. President Baker said that a traffic study makes sense, considering it's always been an issue, but parameters need to be set. Attorney Bennett said a traffic study done now would give you information but you would still need to contemplate the changes the commissioners have been talking about like changing services or more services. Attorney Bennett said these are some of the factors that could inform the conditions of, or limitations on, a potential approval. She said it is a matter of pinning down what they are, and that's what she would propose that this goes back to the petitioner as to what they propose and then, for those specific things, there can potentially be limits to a number that the commission finds reasonable. This could be services, occupants, or vehicles in and out of that area. She said the petitioners have the option not to proceed with the expansion and then they are they're not under any of those restrictions, but if they are related to the statutory considerations for a development plan approval, in this case, modifying the building that's going to create that, then the Plan Commission has the full authority to do that.

President Baker said one of the concerns is the retaining ponds. Councilor Shinkan said we need an engineer. President Baker recognized Mr. Torrenga in the audience and asked if he would introduce himself and let the commissioners know if he had done drainage work on this site.

Mr. Don Torrenga from Torrenga Engineering, 907 Ridge Road, Munster, Indiana, introduced himself and asked that the existing and the proposed site plans to be shown. He stated that the hard surface area of the site, which is how the stormwater retention ponds are sized, is less after the addition than it is now because there was never any green space on the east side of the building, and now a substantial green is intended in that area. That means that, technically, the amount of stormwater retention necessary by the town of Munster, which has not updated since this was originally designed and originally installed, is less than what is actually there. He said it was stated that the bank and the property across the street on Margo drain into those ponds but that is not a true statement; they do not. He said they have their own stormwater retention and it's inadequate; that's why they flood. He said there's a restrictor on the detention ponds currently as they exit into the storm sewer on 45th Street. He said they intend on enlarging that restrictor to the size that is allowed by the Town of Munster instead of the size that was installed, perhaps, by the maintenance department of the church. What he saying is that there is a pipe and that pipe has a restrictor on it, which is 1 ½" in size, but it's inside of a 10" pipe and someone decided that the 1" pipe would slowly drain in a thunderstorm or a flood. He said they are propose enlarging that restrictor to the size that is allowed by the Town of Munster's ordinances to help those ponds drain down

quicker. He said there's nothing that is necessary for them to do with stormwater retention, detention, or drainage according to the Town of Munster ordinance. He said stormwater was discussed at the staff meeting and it was determined that nothing needed to be done. Commissioner Johns asked what size restrictor the ordinance allows. Mr. Torrenga said the allowable restrictor is whatever stormwater falls onto that site with nothing on it, just open grass, that is, how much water would actually be generated from a 2-year frequency storm. He said that is the size of the restrictor, he can't explain it any better. The stormwater retention ponds are sized for stormwater falling on that site in a hard surface situation as currently exists in a 100-year storm; you take the 2 numbers and subtract them, and that's how much stormwater retention is necessary. Commissioner Johns said the restrictor is 1 ½" now. Mr. Torrenga said the minimum size any town allows is 3 inches, because if you get less than a 3-inch restrictor, it plugs very easily. Mr. Torrenga said the restrictor was not discussed with the staff, that was discussed among the project people when they were trying to come up with a reason as to why the ponds fill up as quickly as they do. He was not aware that was the situation so that is something they are going to try and rectify. He said all those calculations, all of that information, will certainly be sent to the town, however, that's not a requirement. Commissioner Johns said she understands; she was trying to educate herself on the issue that was apparent with drainage and overflow on this site. Mr. Torrenga explained in detail the history of the infrastructure of the region and the all the paths that stormwater follows to ultimately drain in to the Grand Calumet River. President Baker thanked Mr. Torrenga.

Commissioner Brangan said they 'd like to address the resident's concerns. She asked if the petitioner would address the resident's comment about the church parking overflowing into the bank and park parking lots; if that is true, what do they plan to do about that. She further asked if they have agreements with the bank and the parks for overflow parking.

Mr. Antonio Belmonte of 9987 Margo Lane, Munster, In, said he is a consultant for the Family Christian Church and a resident of West Lakes. He said the they have parking contracts with the warehouses across the street, parking contracts with the bank or Payroc, he was not sure which, but he is pretty sure they work together. He said they hire Munster Police, who control the traffic light, etc. He said he's not going to say that there's not a lot of traffic. He said he's been here about 25 years and it's not perfect but this was done prior to the subdivision even being built, at least that's what he was told. The street and the streetlights were put in before they even started the road. Councilor Shinkan said he was in (West Lakes) before the church got services, when they were still building. Mr. Belmonte said they have traffic control, but always thought they should have a resident sticker for coming and going; there could be better traffic solutions. He said that was his opinion as a resident. He said they did a curb cut and in a plan meeting, there was a discussion about adding a sidewalk from the main sidewalk, along 45th to the front doors; there is nothing there now. He said they put big curbs in and people with expensive cars were trashing their rims so nobody uses that. He wondered why they don't cut that down and put some pavers in so traffic could move more easily out of there. Councilor Hofferth said that would be at the north side. President Baker asked Commissioner Branagan if her question was answered. Commissioner Branagan said she was trying to see if the resident's concerns were addressed and they are adding 90 additional parking spaces so, hopefully, that will help.

Commissioner Raffin asked Attorney Bennett whether any parcel in town would get approval based on having contracts with outside vendors for parking. He used the scenario of Community Hospital wanting to build a million square foot hospital without enough parking but with a parking agreement with someone else. Attorney Bennett said it could qualify to have a partial meeting of the parking requirement. That, routinely, is a commitment that's on the property and that event has to be recorded. The town would essentially be a party to that so that it cannot be vacated in any fashion without the town's consent. Commissioner Raffin said that would be because the ownership could change at any time. Attorney Bennett said that was correct, and the use could change so if that parking is changed, it is binding both the existing property owner and the adjacent property owner. In that circumstance, and if that's the case, that commitment remains, and that requires the adjacent property owner, or whoever else is on the parking agreement, to be bound by it. Commissioner Raffin asked if the town staff had seen any of the parking agreements regarding overflow parking with the church. Attorney Bennett said, no, this the first that she'd heard of any; in fact, she said she did a quick calculation and if occupancy on this is at 1909, as was discussed, 636 is what is required and the 90 additional parking spaces would allow for over 500 additional people. If, however, the existing parking is not sufficient right now and they do have contracts with the outside parties, then clearly, they are well in excess of 1909 on any given Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday, or whenever it may be. She said she doesn't know anyone in town who is aware of (those contracts) but whether there are agreements or not, cars are parked in those adjacent parking lots during those services, so in the consideration that the parking may be even greater on-site with that additional parking, it is still not sufficient for what's happening before occupancy. She said if there are such agreements, they would clearly be something that would we want to consider because it would be obvious that any increase in occupancy that is going to increase that parking requirement as well. It would become a real problem if the adjacent property would say that there is no access. Commissioner Raffin said the petitioners should bring copies of the agreements with adjacent property owners to the staff for review. Attorney Bennett said she thought that was very relevant. Commissioner Johns said we will make an effort to try and make everybody happy, take care of the neighborhood, take care of property values, and take care of the church and its objectives.

Motion: Commissioner Johns moved to continue the public hearing on PC Docket No. 25-006 until July 8, 2025, pending additional information from the petitioners for review by the Plan Commission. The information requested are a traffic study, copies of parking agreements with neighboring property owners and any information relevant to the meeting discussions.

Second: Councilor Hofferth

Vote: Yes – 7 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries.

President Baker announced there were 3 Plan Commission processes for the same project address so for the sake of efficiency, there would be one presentation for the following:

PC25-007 SUBDIVISION PRELIMINARY PLAT: Scott Yahne, Attorney on behalf of Munster MOB I LLC requests review of Primary Plat for a subdivision at 9260 Calumet Avenue.

PC25-008 PUD AMENDMENT: Attorney Scott Yahne for Midwest Orthopedic at Rush requests an Amendment to the LAKE BUSINESS CENTER PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT located at 9260 Calumet Avenue.

PC25-009 DEVELOPMENT PLAN: Attorney Scott Yahne for Midwest Orthopedic at Rush requests approval of a Development Plan for a new 30,00SF, 2-story medical office building to be part of the LAKE BUSINESS CENTER PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, located at 9260 Calumet Avenue.

Attorney Scott Yahne of 3 Three Lincoln Way, Suite 201, Valparaiso, Indiana, said he's the attorney on behalf of the Munster MOB 1 LLC, at 9260 Calumet Avenue. He thanked the Commission members for the opportunity to appear before them. He stated that they were here last month, and he wanted to let them know that they listened. He said there are changes to the proposed plan and they would point out specifically what was adapted in response to the comments they received. He said there are 3 petitions that are intertwined. He said if this is approved, they will have a new address, 9410 Calumet Avenue. This will be a new lot; a single lot subdivision, a two-and-a-half-acre site within Lake Business Center. They are seeking to develop what they think is a first-class contribution to the town. The end user is Midwest Orthopedics at Rush. He said they have very high standards for what they want to develop and how they intend to maintain it going forward. He said, as was noted in prior meetings with the Plan Commission and Site Review, his clients are not looking for the minimum for stormwater or parking; they say they have to deliver a first-class product to this user. They have their own standards and are not just trying to meet the code. He said there are additional people joining them via Zoom, if needed, and the project leaders, Brian Avery and Emily Bateman, from Cannon Design are in attendance. He said they have been involved in this project from the outset and they would do an overview of this project. He said Odari Lewis is here from Kimley Horne; he can answer questions on engineering matters. He said there is a full parking study; they wanted to make sure they had not just enough parking, they wanted excess parking. The study concluded that they exceed their parking demand by 25%. He said that, perhaps, allows some extra relief for the adjoining property users. He turned the presentation over to Brian Avery from Cannon Design.

Mr. Brian Avery, architect with Cannon Design at 225 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, introduced himself. He walked through a presentation deck that was submitted and now shown on screen. He introduced slides of the north side of the project, an overall context site plan showing where there're located a little south of Community Hospital in the southern portion of Lake Business Center, and a rendering showing their location behind Potbelly and Starbucks along Calumet Avenue, just north of the Pepsi warehouse, and south of some medical office buildings on the north. He presented a survey showing the extent of the property that they're purchasing from the buyer which extends almost all the way to the west adjacent to the warehouse, north adjacent to the existing parking lot, and the access roads to the east and south. He described a slide showing their access to the facility would be from Calumet Avenue and Fran Lin Parkway. He said there are existing stop signs situated on Fran Lin where one would enter their site, progress either to the parking lot, or swing around to the drop-off. He said there is also an exit from their site, a fire lane is situated in the parking lot. He said the existing stop signs are depicted on the slide as half-toned red hexagons; the darker red hexagons are what they're proposing as new stop signs. That slide also shows how the traffic flow is coordinated between the 3-stop intersection into a four-stop intersection. The presentation included a stormwater plan and a landscape plan showing trees situated around the property, within the parking lot, along the west edge, and along the border between the warehouse and their facility. He pointed out that the first 15 feet of their

property, along the entire eastern edge, there is a utility easement; there are no trees allowed in that zone, but they do have ground covering, some shrubbery, and plants. He indicated where they're proposing some signage. A monument sign location is marked by a blue diamond shape, the green diamond shape indicates where they propose building signage. There were several additional renderings and information on existing conditions and proposed improvements to the site and traffic flow. He showed proposed views of the building from several directions. He described the uses within the building, the proposed elevations and features. He listed the materials including brick masonry, aluminum composite material, and a composite wood panel. He said he brought samples for the commission members. He concluded by showing some adjustments they made to the southern and west elevations following the preliminary meeting and comments from commission members. The changes can be seen in the rendering and include the additional penetration on the building when viewed from Calumet Avenue, additional banding on the building, and the proposed signage on the mechanical screen.

President Baker asked about the wraparound and how the glass line would line up as people view the building from Calumet Avenue and from Fran Lin. He said it might help the aesthetics and make the building look less institutional if they wrapped the glass further around the east side. Mr. Avery said it wraps around until it meets the elevator bank, beyond that is where the imaging rooms are located on both Level 1 and Level 2. He said they did add some additional windows to that elevation as a result of the comments made at the last meeting; those are spandrel glass with a solid wall behind them because it's the imaging department. President Baker asked if he could just take a right in front of the building and drop off under the canopy. There was a discussion on the traffic patterns from the point of view of the different renderings. President Baker commented that the stacking from Starbucks will go along that east wall. Councilor Hofferth said the east side of the building is blocked by Starbucks anyway. Councilor Shinkan said it is, so when driving by, you really don't care; you will come along Fran Lin and see a beautiful building-Rush. He said people are not going to be driving on Calumet Avenue and looking behind Starbucks. Councilor Hofferth asked if that road opens up to get out where Pepsi is or would that be blocked off. Mr. Avery said there's a trash enclosure at the termination of that access road. Councilor Shinkan said it reminds him of a building at the University of Chicago in Orland. They are facing north and when you turn in, you're seeing the façade. He said he doesn't even know what's on the sides of the building, because he could care less; he's driving up to the facade. Commissioner Branagan asked how many windows they added to the east elevation. Mr. Avery said there were 2 and they added 3 more. They also added a recessed a banding that wraps around the corner. Commissioner Johns said there is nothing on the first floor in the new elevation; the addition of the new windows is all on the second floor. Commissioner Branagan said this presentation is really great, easy to understand, and professional. She said she wished all of the petitioners would present like this. She said thank you for adding windows to the 2nd level. She said she likes it; she thinks it's a great building. She said all 4 sides are important but she agrees; it is behind Starbucks, so in this situation, glass in the corner on that ground level does the job. Councilor Hofferth asked to see the south side of the building.

Commissioner Raffin said everyone is going to Starbucks and stacking on the street.; he asked if Kimley Horn if they looked at that when they were doing all the traffic related studies. He said that is a tough little intersection to navigate at times.

Mr. Odari Lewis from Kimberly Horn at 4201 Winfield Drive, Warrenville, Illinois, said they did look at that intersection on the traffic study. He said on the site plan they're proposing a through lane and a left

turn lane addition there just to make the traffic flow better. Commission Raffin said that's a busy corner at certain times, especially in the morning. President Baker asked how long Midwest Orthopedics at Rush has been in Munster and if they'll be keeping the old location or moving everything to this new facility. Mr. Avery said they will be consolidating everything into this one, new location.

Commissioner Branagan asked for more information on where the different colored bricks would be placed. Mr. Avery said the darker of the brick represents the majority of the building brickwork. He said the resolution is little rough but there is a metal panel; the lighter brick is just a continuation of that metal panel on the north. Commissioner Raffin asked what joints they were using for the masonry. Mr. Avery said they are going with standard brick.

President Baker asked if the petitioners had any more to present. Attorney Yahne said there is a staff report for PC25-007. He said he and Director Mendoza worked together and they had engineers that went over every aspect. He said he believes they are fully compliant. He said there is a reference to note that has to be added to the final plat and that may be tweaked a little. Attorney Bennett said on page 4 of the staff report for the PC25-007 petition, Director Mendoza was referencing their zoning code and the approval process as is laid out in the Munster the subdivision code, specifically Section 26-278, described as follows:

Sec. 26-278. Action by plan commission.

After the public hearing provided for in section 26-277, the commission may, if it finds the preliminary plat meets all the requirements, take the following action:

- (1) Grant primary approval as to the general acceptability of the layout as submitted.
- (2) Introduce such changes or revisions as are deemed necessary to the interests and needs of the community

Attorney Bennett advised that is not compliant with Indiana law. If a preliminary plat meets code for the subdivision requirements having to do with the infrastructure or any layout of the actual subdividing of the lot. She said this is not a development plan. The Commission has been given an abundance of other details, however, for the plat itself, if it meets the subdivision code, it is a shell and there is no discretion in which to do that. She added that on page 5, there's reference to this as well; within the code specifically pertaining to the zoning that a plat has to be compliant with zoning standards and zoning rules. That is also incorrect in that compliance. She clarified that Director Mendoza was citing to the Commission from your code, from the Munster ordinance. She said this has to do with the plat, not the PUD, because the plat infrastructure is laying out the requirements of the subdivision code unless they are making modifications to that. She said language the petitioners have in plan documents are compliant with the subdivision code. Attorney Yahne said he wants to make sure there is no confusion later. Attorney Bennett said they are creating their own zoning district and those standards are up to them to establish. She said in the context of the platting, it is just separating this portion into another lot; what could be constructed on that is under separate documents. She said she wanted clarify that is not the area where the Plan Commission has discretion.

Commissioner Raffin said this whole Lake Business Center PUD had a lot of taxpayer funding over the years; he believes it was a huge TIF district and he thought a white table restaurant was supposed to be in this area years ago. Attorney Bennett said the original PUD as created as mixed-use restaurant and then they added warehousing. Commissioner Raffin asked if there were any safeguards as a taxpayer that a parcel remains a for-profit business. There have been a lot of hospitals in town that take over big

buildings and, sooner or later, they come off the tax rolls. Attorney Bennett said there is nothing in the context of anything by statute but for use purposes, that can be laid out in the PUD documents. It can just be medical; there is no restriction on profit or non-profit status. Attorney Yahne said in his experience, that comes up in the development plans; a development plan can set those thresholds. He said for the land itself, that is basically a developer getting money at a time. Usually there's an offset and that would be governed by the terms of the development. He said he has negotiated those terms. Commissioner Raffin said he just wondered if this parcel still went under that development plan for TIF. There was a discussion on this. Councilor Nellans said he didn't think any more TIF dollars went into this; they met their initial money, and that was it.

Attorney Yahne said, on the first item, PC25-007, they had asked for a motion to approve the preliminary plat for a proposed one-lot subdivision. On the second item, PC25-008, they had asked for a favorable recommendation to the Town Council. On the third item, PC25-009, they had asked for a motion to approve the development plan.

President Baker opened the public hearing for PC25-007. There were no comments made; he closed the public hearing.

Motion: Commissioner Raffin moved to approve PC Docket No. 25-007 Preliminary Plat: LOT 4 of LAKE BUSINESS CENTER SUBDIVISION FIRST RE-SUBDIVISION of LOT 3, located at 9260 Calumet Avenue.

Second: Councilor Shinkan

Vote: Yes – 7 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries.

President Baker opened the public hearing for PC25-008. There were no comments made; he closed the public hearing.

Motion: Councilor Shinkan moved to send the Town Council a favorable recommendation to the Town Council for PC Docket No. 25-008.

Second: Councilor Hofferth

Vote: Yes – 7 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries.

President Baker opened the public hearing for PC25-009. There were no comments made; he closed the public hearing.

Motion: Commissioner Branagan moved to approve PC Docket No. 25-009 granting approval of the Development Plan for a new 30,00SF, 2-story medical office building to be part of the LAKE BUSINESS CENTER PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, located at 9260 Calumet Avenue including all discussions and findings.

Second: Councilor Hofferth

Vote: Yes – 7 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries.

Continued Discussion Items: None

Other Business: None

Findings of Fact:

President Baker introduced the Findings of Facts for PC Docket No. 25-005 DEVELOPMENT PLAN: Jim Glascott of WT Group representing the School Town of Munster received approval of the construction of parking lot, bleachers, lighting, landscape, and expansion of a storage building at 8823 Columbia Avenue.

Motion: Commissioner Raffin moved to approve the Finds of Fact for PC Docket No. 25-005 granting approval of the Development Plan for 8823 Columbia Avenue.

Second: Commissioner Shinkan

Vote: Yes -7 Abstain- 0 No- 0

Next Meeting: President Baker announced the next regular business meeting will be held on July 8, 2025.

Adjournment:

Motion: Commissioner Raffin moved to adjourn.

Second: Councilor Nellans

Vote: Yes –7 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 pm

President Baker
Plan Commission

Date of Approval

Executive Secretary Sergio Mendoza
Plan Commission

Date of Approval