



BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS STAFF REPORT

To: Members of the Board of Zoning Appeals

From: Sergio Mendoza, Planning Director

Meeting Date: November 18, 2025

Agenda Item: BZA 25-008

Application Type: Developmental Standards Variance

Hearing: Public Hearing

Summary: Applicant is seeking a Developmental Standards Variance from TABLE 26-6. 405. B. CIVIC ZONE STANDARDS: Lighting, Screening, and Fencing, to increase the permitted height of fencing and screening, and light standards (height and head type).

Applicant: Jim Glascott, Engineer WT Group AEC

Property Address: 8839 Columbia Avenue

Current Zoning: CZ – Civic Zone (Community Park)

Adjacent Zoning: North: CZ – Civic Zone (Babe Ruth Fields)
South: CZ – Civic Zone (Community Pool)
East: CZ – Civic Zone (STOM HS)
West: CZ – Civic Zone (Community Park)

Action Requested: Public Hearing

Additional Actions Required: Findings of Fact

Staff Recommendation: Open and close public hearing
Review Conditions of Approval Questions
Review of Zoning Code(s)
Motion to approve

Attachments:

1. Exhibit A: Application
2. Exhibit B: Conditions of Approval
3. Exhibit C: Lease Agreement
4. Exhibit D: Alta Survey
5. Exhibit E: Site Plans
6. Exhibit F: Photometrics

PROJECT LOCATION

The site of the proposed variance is located in Community Park, generally located northeast of the Community Pool, and west of Munster Highschool; between Columbia Avenue, Calumet Avenue, and north of Fisher Street.

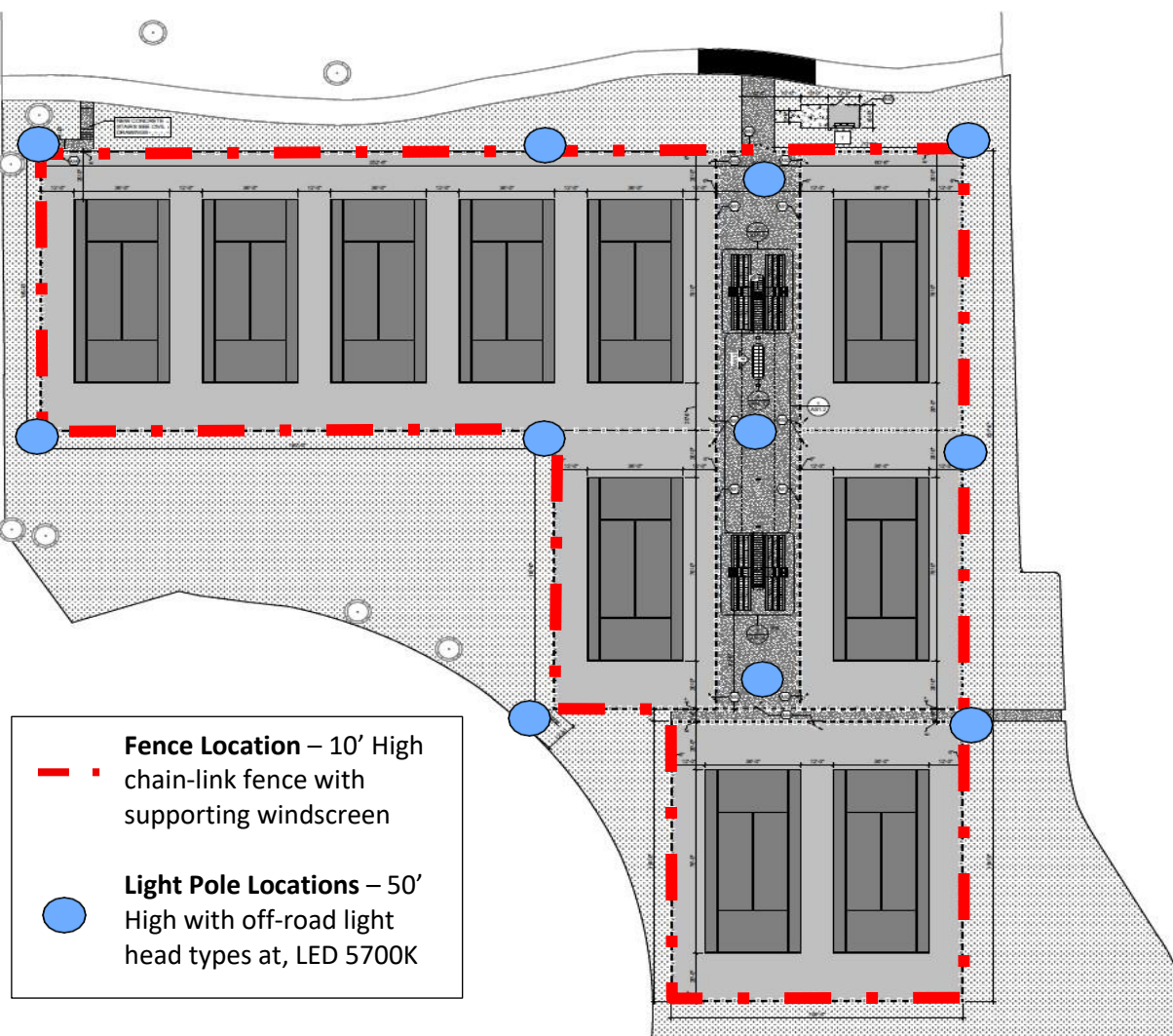


PROJECT SUMMARY

The applicant is requesting a variance to install over 2,000 linear feet of 10' high maximum chain link fence and screen and 11 stadium light structures at a maximum height of 50', a minimum of 4000k with off-road stadium light head types.

At October 14, 2025 preliminary hearing Board members recognized that the location of the proposed tennis courts are approximately in the same location that the parks department had tennis courts in 1970s and 1980s. Sean Begley, School Town of Munster Director of Operations stated the proposed tennis courts would replace the current tennis courts and the site of the current tennis courts would be replaced with a multi-purpose building and internal parking and drive areas to help improve campus circulation, and student drop-off. Mr. Begley also said the proposed tennis courts would be used by gym classes and athletic teams during the day, as well as host matches after hours and for use by the public. Mr. Begley concluded by stating the fence request is standard for this type of sport activity and that the proposed stadium lights would be on a timer for energy conservation and would support after-hours activities.

Below, outlined in red is reference to just the perimeter location of the proposed 10' high fence and screen, not identify is 10' high fence within the tennis court complex. In addition, the location of proposed stadium lights are identified in blue.



ZONING CODE**Private Landscaping and Fencing****Landscaping**

Around Civic Buildings **R** for 100% of setbacks, except for sidewalks and driveways. Civic Spaces in setbacks must comply with Civic Space standards.

Civic Space Per Civic Space standards

Walls & Fencing (not including Screens)

Height 3.5-4 ft. max at Frontage; otherwise 6 ft. max; height measured from avg. undisturbed grade of Adjacent property at property line

Construction Finished side must face Adjacent property, Thoroughfare, Path, Passage or Waterbody

Allowed Materials Natural Wood **P** at side & rear only

Brick or Stucco over Masonry **P**

Wrought Iron or Aluminum **P**

Vinyl **P** in 3rd Lot Layer only

Chain Link **P** at rear only

Barbed/razor **NP**

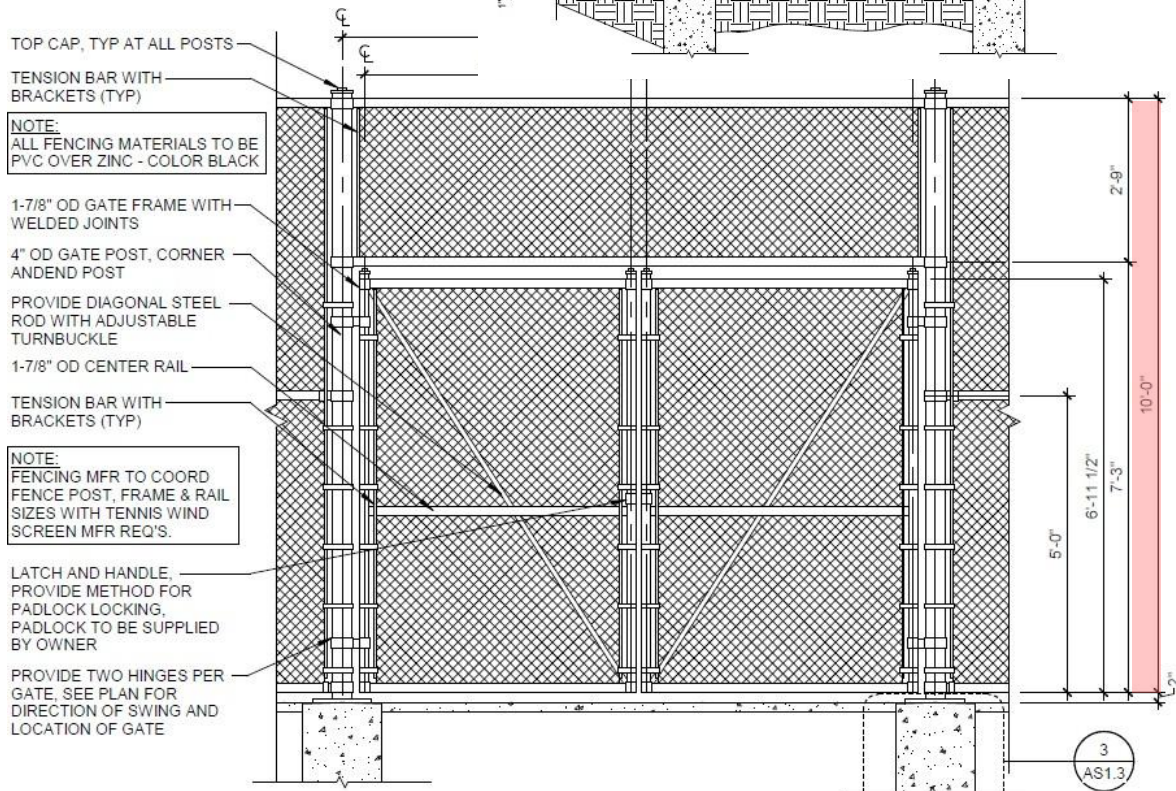
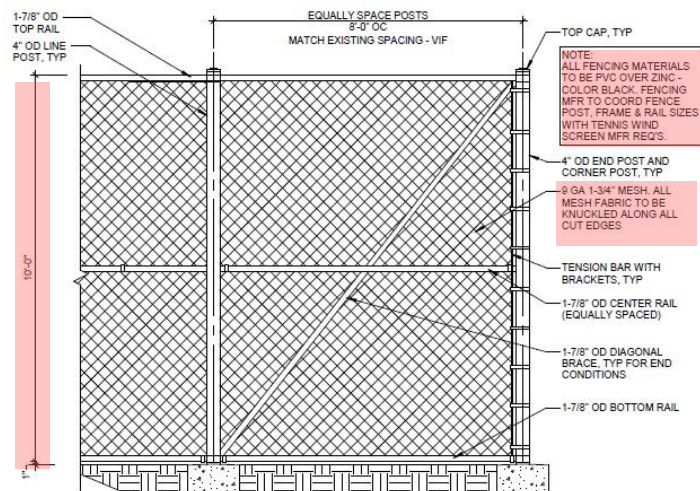
Screens

Wall Screen Height at Frontage or Adjacent to Civic Space 3.5 ft. to 5 ft.

Hedge Screen Height at Frontage or Adjacent to Civic Space 3.5 ft. to 5 ft. at installation; Min. 80% opacity within 12 in of grade

Wall or Fence Screen Height not at Frontage or Adjacent to Civic Space 5 ft. to 6 ft.; Min. 6' for Dumpsters and Trash Receptacles

Hedge Screen Height not at Frontage or Adjacent to Civic Space 5 ft. to 6 ft. at installation; Min. 80% opacity



SECTION 26-6.405.Q Private Lighting Standards

The following standards and requirements are applicable within all Districts and Civic Zones, except as otherwise noted:

1. Areas to be Lighted.

Except in Districts CD-3, CD-3.R1, CD-3.R2, CD-3.R3, and CD-4.R4, and SD-PUD, all Parking Areas, Parking Lots, Parking Structures, and accessways within the Lot shall be lighted.

2. Lighting Standards or Poles.

- Lighting standards shall comply with **Table 26-6.405.Q-1 (Private Lighting Types)**.
- A lighting standard shall be of a height and design consistent with the surrounding area Buildings but in no event higher than twenty feet (20').
- Standards shall be located at distances of four times their height.

3. Illumination.

- Illumination of Parking Areas, Parking Lots, Parking Structures, and all pedestrian ways shall be provided at an average of 1.0-2.5 foot-candles and a minimum of 0.4 foot-candles.
- Illumination at all Lot Lines shall meet the standard of **Table 26-6.405.Q-2 (Private Lighting Standards)**.

STANDARDS)

District	Min/Max Lighting Level at Property and Frontage Lines (in foot-candles)
CD-3, CD-3.R1, CD-3.R2, CD-3.R3	0 fc @ property line Adjacent to CD-3, CD-3.R1, CD-3.R2, CD-3.R3 Otherwise, 0-1.0 fc
CD-4.R4, CD-4.A & CD-4.B, CD-5 & SD-M	0 fc @ property line Adjacent to CD-3, CD-3.R1, CD-3.R2, CD-3.R3 Otherwise, 1.0-2.0 fc
SD-PUD	Per PUD Approved Standards

- Color temperature of lighting shall not exceed 3000K.

4. Lighting Fixtures.

Lighting fixtures must be full cut off or fully shielded and directed down.

5. Building Spotlights Not Allowed.

Spotlights installed on Buildings shall not be used to meet the lighting requirements of this Article.

TABLE 26-6.26-6.405.Q-1 PRIVATE LIGHTING TYPES

LIGHTING TYPE	CD-3 R1	CD-3 R2	CD-3 R3	CD-4 R4	CD-4.A CD-4.B	CD-5	SD-M	SD-PUD	CZ
HEAD/LUMINAIRE TYPES									
Cobra Head	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Off-Road Head	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Colonial Head	P	NP	NP	NP	P	P	NP	P	P
Coach Head	P	NP	NP	NP	P	P	NP	P	P
Acorn Head	P	NP	NP	NP	P	P	NP	P	P



Munster HS Tennis

LIGHTING SYSTEM

Structure/Fixture Summary

Structure ID	Structure Height	Fixt. Attachment Ht.	Fixture Qty	Fixture Type	Design Load	Circuit
T1	50'	50'	2	TLC-LED-1200	2.33 kW	A
T2	50'	50'	2	TLC-LED-1200	2.33 kW	A
T3	50'	50'	2	TLC-LED-550	1.05 kW	B
T4	50'	50'	4	TLC-LED-1200	2.33 kW	A
T5	50'	50'	4	TLC-LED-550	2.11 kW	B
T6-T8	40'	40'	2	TLC-LED-550	1.05 kW	B
T9	50'	50'	8	TLC-LED-550	4.22 kW	B
T10-T11	50'	50'	4	TLC-LED-550	1.11 kW	B
TL			40		26.18 kW	

*Fixtures in this design have dimmed output values to meet design specific needs.

Circuit Summary

Circuit	Description	Design Load	Fixture Qty
A	West Courts	9.32 kW	8
B	Championship Courts	16.86 kW	32

Fixture Type Summary

Type	Circuit	Source	Avg. Wattage	Avg. Lumens	L90	L80	L70	Quantity
TLC-LED-1200	A	LED 5700K - 75 CRI	1165W	148,836	>120,000	>120,000	>120,000	8
TLC-LED-550	B	LED 5700K - 75 CRI	527W	65,418	>120,000	>120,000	>120,000	32

LIGHTING LUMINAIRE SCHEDULE

TAG	SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION	MANUFACTURER SERIES OR CATALOG NUMBER	VOLTAGE/BALLAST	LAMPS/CROSS SECTION	MOUNTING	REMARKS
1A		8' SURFACE MOUNTED LED VANDAL RESISTANT FIXTURE	KENALL #TCD-8-A-45L40K-DCC-DV-17-X OR APPROVED EQUAL	MVOLT -	LED 4000K 7,000LM	CEILING SURFACE MOUNTED	

VARIANCE REVIEW

The variance process is established to provide relief to a property owner when, due to unique circumstances, compliance with the zoning code imposes a hardship or practical difficulty on a property owner. The BZA is under no obligation to grant a variance. It is the petitioner's responsibility to prove a hardship or practical difficulty. The BZA should ask the petition to address the criteria listed below.

Section 26-6.804. I. Deviation from Standards & Requirements (pg 392) of the Munster Zoning Code states that the basis for a variance is as follows:

g. General Standards.

A variance may be granted only if the Decision-Making Authority has made the following determinations for such variance:

- i. The practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships that would be incurred by strict application of the Use or Development standard, as applicable, are unique and not shared by all properties in the vicinity and are not self-imposed;
- ii. Such Variance is the minimum Variance that will relieve such practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships, as applicable;
- iii. Such Variance is in the spirit of the general purposes and intent of this Article as stated in Division 1; and
- iv. Such Variance is so designed as to provide reasonable consideration to, among other things, the character of the neighborhood, District, or Civic Zone, the conservation of property values in the vicinity, and the guidance of Development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.

h. Specific to development standards variances:

A variance from development standards may be approved or approved with conditions only if:

- i. It will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community;
- ii. The use and value of the area Adjacent to the property included in the Variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner; and
- iii. The strict application of the Development standards will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property.

The applicant has addressed these criteria in Exhibit B

STAFF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed variances for fencing, screening, and stadium lighting are typical for outdoor tennis court facilities. The inability to obtain relief from these standards would create practical difficulties for the intended use and result in unnecessary hardships if the strict application of the zoning code were enforced. Additionally, staff finds that the adjacent community swimming pool and softball/baseball fields employ similar fencing, screening, and lighting configurations that exceed current zoning standards. Therefore, the proposed variances are not expected to adversely affect the use or value of neighboring properties or detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or the general welfare of the community.

MOTION

The Board of Zoning Appeals may consider the following motions:

Motion to APPROVE BZA25-008, a request for Developmental Standards Variances to allow a fence and screen not to exceed ten (10) feet in height, and stadium lighting not to exceed fifty (50) feet in height, utilizing off-road or similar type light fixtures with a color temperature not to exceed 5700K for the proposed tennis courts, including all discussion and findings.