To: Members of the Plan Commission

From: Tom Vander Woude, Planning Director

Date: May 8, 2020

Re: **PRELIMINARY HEARING**

PC 20-006: Town of Munster Plan Commission seeking to amend certain sections of the Munster Zoning Ordinance related to gasoline station signs.

Action Requested: Schedule a Public Hearing

Additional Actions Required: Forward Recommendation to Town Council
Approve Findings of Fact

Attachments: Photo inventory of Munster gas station signs

Background

On December 23, 2019 the Munster Town Council approved Ordinance 1788 and adopted the Munster Character-Based Code as a replacement zoning code.

The previous version of the zoning code permitted changeable copy signs, but not electronic message boards or electronic changeable copy signs. Despite this restriction, gasoline stations had installed electronic price boards on their monument signs.

As shown in the attached photos, currently ten gas stations in Munster have electronic price boards. Two gas stations, the Speedway station at the corner of Calumet Avenue and 45th Street and the BP station at the corner of Calumet Avenue and Main Street, still have the non-electronic price boards. The BP station has inquired about installing electronic price boards.

The current Munster zoning code states the following:

Section 26-6.701.B.5.s.
s. No Sign may have changeable copy except for a Canopy Sign with physically changeable letters, or an Outdoor Display Case with removable printed items, a Sandwich Board Sign, or <u>a Sign on a gasoline pump permitted under Section 26-6.701.B.5.g.ii</u>.

Section 26-6.701.B.5.g.ii.
ii. one (1) Sign no larger than two (2) square feet may be attached or affixed to each side of each gasoline pump on a site, provided that the total square footage of all such Signs on a site shall reduce the square footage of the Monument Sign otherwise allowed on the site.

Staff believes that the underlined section above was incorrectly written in the code, since changeable copy is typically installed on gas station monument signs, not pumps. We recommend the following revision:

s. No Sign may have changeable copy except for a Canopy Sign with physically changeable letters, or an Outdoor Display Case with removable printed items, a Sandwich Board Sign, or ~~a Sign on a gasoline pump permitted under Section 26-6.701.B.5.g.ii.~~ *a gasoline station monument sign with physically changeable or static electronic or digital letters and numbers that conform to all other monument sign standards.*

Process

Amendments to the zoning code require a public hearing before the Plan Commission and Town Council approval.

Recommendation

The Plan Commission may wish to consider the following motion:

Motion to schedule a public hearing for PC 20-006.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

BP Gas Station — 747 Ridge Road

The non-illuminated price changers were used in 2009 and digital were installed by 2013.

Last permit was issued on 12/9/2016 at a cost of $25,000.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

BP Gas Station — 10444 Calumet Avenue (Calumet Avenue Sign)

Both signs are currently non-illuminated gas price changer monument signs.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

BP Gas Station — 10444 Calumet Avenue (Main Street Sign)

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

Citgo Gas Station — 323 Ridge Road

The non-illuminated price changers were used in 2013 and digital were installed by 2016.

Last permit was issued for repairs on 8/8/17 at a cost of $2,000.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

Citgo Gas Station — 1750 45th Street

The non-illuminated price changers were used in 2009 and digital were installed by 2013.

Last permit was issued for repairs on 5/15/18 at a cost of $2,000.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

Exxon Mobile Gas Station — 10 45th Street

The non-illuminated price changers were used in 2013 and digital were installed by 2017.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

Go Lo Gas Station — 750 Broadmoor Avenue

The non-illuminated price changers were used in 2013 and digital were installed by 2017.

Last permit was issued on 3/9/2016 at a cost of $5,800.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

Marathon Gas Station — 7890 Calumet Avenue

The digital price changers were installed by 2011.

Last permit was issued on 11/6/2017 for a face change at a cost of $3,000.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

Marathon Gas Station — 9451 Calumet Avenue (45th Avenue Sign)

The non-illuminated price changers were used in 2009 and digital were installed by 2013.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

Marathon Gas Station — 9451 Calumet Avenue (Calumet Avenue Sign)

The non-illuminated price changers were used in 2009 and digital were installed by 2013.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

Shell Gas Station — 8310 Calumet Avenue

The digital price changers were installed by 2013 (photo is from 2009).

Last permit was issued on 8/5/2016 for a face change at a cost of $2,500.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

Speedway Gas Station — 444 Ridge Road

The digital price changers were installed by 2009.

Town of Munster — Gas Station Freestanding Price Signs

Speedway Gas Station — 9600 Calumet Avenue

The sign is currently a non-illuminated gas price changer monument sign.