**MUNSTER PLAN COMMISSION**
MINUTES OF REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
Meeting Date: April 11, 2023

The announced meeting location was Munster Town Hall and could be accessed remotely via Zoom, a video conferencing application.

**Call to Order:** 7:36 pm.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

| **Members in Attendance:** | **Members Absent:** | **Staff Present:** |
|---|---|---|
| Andy Koultourides | Steve Tulowitzki | Tom Vander Woude, Planning Director |
| Bill Baker | | David Wickland, Attorney |
| Roland Raffin | | |
| Rachel Branagan | | |
| Lee Ann Mellon | | |
| Brian Specht | | |

**Approval of Minutes**:

a. **March 14, 2023, Regular Plan Commission Meeting**

**Motion:** Ms. Mellon moved to approve the March 14, 2023, Regular Plan Commission Meeting minutes.
**Second:** Mr. Koultourides
**Vote:** Yes – 6 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

b. **March 14, 2023, Plat Committee Meeting**

**Motion:** Mr. Koultourides moved to approve the March 14, 2023, Plat Committee Meeting minutes.
**Second:** Ms. Branagan
**Vote:** Yes – 6 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

**Preliminary Hearings:**

a. **PC 23-005 RXHST Munster, LLC requesting approval of an amendment to the Lake Business Center Planned Unit Development to revise the site signage plan for the Lake Business Center PUD at 9200 Calumet Avenue.**

Mr. Vander Woude said this is a petition to slightly revise the overall sign plan for the Lake Business Center PUD. The applicant is RXHST Munster, LLC, formerly CA Health and Science Trust which is the owner of the east portion of the Lake Business Center. This application appeared before the Plan Commission months ago; they were seeking a PUD amendment to revise the site signage plan. At the time, they had proposed a comprehensive wayfinding and branding plan for their portion of the Lake Business Center. That was given a favorable recommendation by the Plan Commission to be adopted by the Town Council. After that adoption, the applicant came forward and said they would also like to make

some modifications to the two gateway monument signs that are located at Braden Way and Fran Lin. The two signs are multi- tenant signs intended to be a gateway to the development. Because the sign plan, as adopted, is very detailed including the text and materials that are permitted for each sign, their proposal to change those materials has, unfortunately, triggered another amendment to the PUD. What they are proposing to do is to change the materials for the Lake Business Center text on the top of the signs and replace it with a much more visible white channel letter sign. Instead of "Lake Business Center", it will say "Munster Medical Campus". Instead of the Lake Business Center branding on the side, it will have the address, 9200. In addition to that, the tenant panels will be internally illuminated. This is a minor amendment to the overall sign plan. Since those materials are specifically spelled out in the adopted ordinance and development standards, the only way to modify those is through an amendment to the PUD. They are seeking a favorable recommendation to the Town Council to further the site sign ordinance. Mr. Baker said the only thing the Board is looking at is the 2 monument signs, Mr. Vander Woude confirmed that. Mr. Baker asked Mr. Vander Woude to point out the differences since they look the same. Mr. Vander Woude said they are very similar. The sign itself is the same but the materials for those letters and the illumination of the sign are specifically detailed in the PUD ordinance. Like any other sign standard in our zoning ordinance, you have to comply with it unless you receive a variance. In this case, we prefer not to grant variances to PUDs. We prefer to amend the PUD such that it is compliant. Mr. Baker asked if only the name of the development is illuminated and not the individual tenant signs. Mr. Vander Woude said the individual tenant panels will have a metal face with clear lettering that is internally illuminated. Mr. Baker asked what the staff's understanding is about switching tenants; will they have to take the whole panel down or are they going to scratch it off and put something else up there. Mr. Vander Woude said they would have to replace the tenant panel. As stated in the signed plan, it is routed aluminum so it would have to be replaced. Mr. Raffin made a motion to set this for a public hearing.

**Motion:** Mr. Raffin moved to set PC Docket No.23-005 to a public hearing.
**Second:** Mr. Koultourides
**Vote:** Yes – 6 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

**Public Hearings:**

a. **PC 23-007 Town of Munster Parks and Recreation Department requesting approval of a development plan for a new Pro-Shop building and Cart Storage barn at 1005 S. Centennial Drive.**

Mr. Vander Woude first noted that he received additional, more detailed, materials and has uploaded them to the agenda page this afternoon, 4/11/23. It includes a more detailed drawing of the site plan that includes dimensions, a landscaping plan, and a lighting plan. The Department of Parks and Recreation are no longer able to use the Centennial Village clubhouse. In order to maintain the operation of the golf course, they need to build a new cart storage barn and Pro Shop. That is what they are proposing to do here. Our zoning ordinance does require that any building, even a government building, be submitted to the Plan Commission for review and approval just to ensure that they are meeting the developmental standards for a civic district. They have advertised that this is a public hearing. In a civic district, the standards are fairly flexible so there is not a lot to review. The building materials and construction are intended to match the existing buildings on site and will be constructed of brick, metal,

and timber. They are, therefore, compliant. The landscaping plan has now been provided and appears to be compliant with our standards, which basically just requires foundation landscaping around the building as shown in one of the newly uploaded exhibits. In terms of storm water, they are providing detention with the existing pond at Centennial Park. A new photometric plan was provided, and it appears to be compliant now. The previous plan that was included in the staff report did not meet our standards for color and material; that has been adjusted. In terms of parking, they will not provide additional parking, and none is needed. There is an existing parking lot there. In terms of miscellaneous architectural standards, this project was presented at a Site Plan Committee meeting. We reviewed all the relevant standards which relate to façade, openings, roof pitch, etc. We found them to be compliant with all of those standards as well. The recommendation would be to approve the development plan subject to final engineering and staff review of building elevation, landscaping plans and photometric plans. Mr. Baker asked if they are required to do a signage plan. Mr. Vander Woude said they have not proposed a sign plan, he hasn't seen one. Mr. Baker questioned that there will be no signage for these big buildings. Mr. Vander Woude said there is an existing monument sign at the entrance. Mr. Baker asked about the grade when walking up the hill, how the building will sit with the façade and how it faces the parking lot. Mr. Vander Woude shared a rendition of the view from the parking lot. Mr. Baker said the grade is significant. He asked if there is a retaining wall and, if so, what is the material. An audience member answered that it would be an extension of the existing retaining wall. Mr. Baker asked the gentleman to introduce himself at the podium if he was going to answer questions.

Mr. Tom Kuhn, owner and President of CSK Architects at 6919 West Lincoln Highway, Crown Point, IN, said the existing segmented retaining wall will be extended around the new cart storage building on the right. There is a small segment of a retaining wall at the base right behind the parking lot so they can add the landscaping material to the Pro Shop. Mr. Baker again asked what material the retaining wall will be. Mr. Kuhn said there is landscaping in between them that will block the view of the segmented retaining wall. It is a concrete block material. Mr. Baker asked if there is going to be landscaping between the curb and the wall when he parks his car there. Mr. Kuhn said that is correct. Mr. Baker asked if the concrete block is split block. Mr. Kuhn said it matches what is out there now as close as they can get. There will be different layers of landscaping that you will see behind the cars. Ms. Branagan asked if they were the architects for the first building. Mr. Kuhn said no. Mr. Baker asked if the public could get between the cart barn and the Pro Shop. Mr. Kuhn said they are extending the path behind the cart storage building. There will be a path that wraps around the building. Mr. Baker asked how they will protect the public from going over the side of that retaining wall if you have a path right next to it. Mr. Kuhn said there will be landscaping there, a flat area. The path will be rerouted. Mr. Baker asked if when walking up from the parking lot, if he looks to the right at the old building, what will prevent him from falling off that retaining wall. Mr. Huhn asked which wall. Mr. Baker answered the big retaining wall that is 10 feet high. Mr. Huhn said these are tiered retaining wall, they are only 3 or 4 feet tall and there is landscaping in between. Mr. Baker said that is good to know but he wants to know if there will be any fencing or railing for somebody on their bike or in the park having a challenge. Mr. Kuhn said they are trying to get the top at grade level. Mr. Baker said he saw the photometric plan and saw no detail for the lighting on the path, noting there is no railing and no lighting. Mr. Kuhn said there is lighting in the back of the building. Mr. Baker said he is concerned about the liability of someone falling off. Mr. Kuhn said they will provide fall protection. Mr. Baker said they may have a plan, but they are not providing it, so he is not so sure. A rendering was shown where it is a wall so you can't fall off. Mr. Vander Woude said Mr. Baker raised a good point. Given the lack of detail in some of these plans, that is why they have the condition that the

plans are subject to final engineering approval. Ms. Mellon said the siding is similar but asked if it is the same as what is currently on the clubhouse. Mr. Kuhn said that it matches the building on the top of the hill, it is a metal siding and stone and brick. He clarified that they are going to match the building on the hill and the clubhouse. Ms. Mellon said what is throwing her off is the contracts of colors on the buildings. She is asked if they could look at a lighter color brick to better contrast with the red and the brick. Ms. Branagan said the sone on the Clubhouse is a lighter color. Mr. Kuhn asked if they wanted a different color red. Ms. Mellon said the red siding is fine, it is the red brick that could be lighter. Mr. Kuhn said they can look into that. Ms. Mellon said from a distance it is light looking. Mr. Kuhn said they were not going to match the brick on the clubhouse, they were planning a red brick. Mr. Raffin said a lighter brick would lighten the look of the building.

Mr. Baker opened the public hearing. Hearing no comments, Mr. Baker closed the public hearing.

Mr. Raffin said there are concerns about public safety and the walkways, they must be made to meet code. He said he would vote to approve this based on the recommendation that was made to have the brick and stone match the existing building as well the garage door and everything. Color wise, it should all flow with the existing building. Mr. Vander Woude noted that there was someone on Zoom with their hand up. Mr. Baker reopened the public hearing.

Theresa Martin, 224 Belmont Place, asked what makes it so this building won't sink like the last one did. Is it because it is built on a slab that it is not going to sink like the clubhouse did, making it unusable. Mr. Kuhn said they are boring down to bedrock. Part of the project would entail this building being built on structural steel piles that will support a structural flex core slab and all the other structures they are proposing.

**Motion:** Mr. Raffin moved to approve the structures for PC Docket23-007 provided they meet the code for railings and sidewalks for access and egress as well as matching the existing building materials that are shown on the original Centennial Park building drawings.
**Second:** Mrs. Branagan
**Vote:** Yes – 6 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

**Findings of Fact:**

a. **PC 22-023 OKW Architects on behalf of Simborg Development requesting approval of development plan for 9,000 square feet of warehouse space, additional truck docks, new parking areas, and landscaping at the Lake Business Center Planned Unit Development at 9200 Calumet Avenue.**

**Motion:** Mr. Koultourides moved to approve the Findings of Fact for PC Docket No. 23-023.
**Second:** Ms. Mellon
**Vote:** Yes – 6 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

b. **PC 23-001 Community Foundation of NWI requesting a rezoning of the property at 800 MacArthur Boulevard to a Planned Unit Development to permit the addition of two stories of parking and a heliport deck to an existing 3-story parking garage.**

**Motion:** Mr. Koultourides moved to approve the Findings of Fact for PC Docket No. 23-001.

**Second:** Ms. Mellon
**Vote:** Yes – 6 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

c. **PC 23-003 Community Foundation of NWI requesting approval of a development plan for the addition of two stories of parking and a heliport deck to an existing 3-story parking garage at 800 MacArthur Boulevard.**

**Motion:** Mr. Koultourides moved to approve the Findings of Fact for PC Docket No. 23-003.
**Second:** Ms. Mellon
**Vote:** Yes – 6 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

d. **PC 23-004 Linda Twomey requesting approval of a preliminary plat of Twomey's Addition to the Town of Munster consolidating two residential lots at 8345 and 8349 Kraay Avenue**.

**Motion:** Mr. Koultourides moved to approve the Findings of Fact for PC Docket No. 23-004.
**Second:** Ms. Mellon
**Vote:** Yes – 6 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

**Additional Business/Items for Discussion:**

a. **PC 23-006 Linda Twomey requesting approval of a final plat of Twomey's Addition to the Town of Munster consolidating two residential lots at 8345 and 8349 Kraay Avenue.**

Mr. Vander Woude said the Board has just approved the Findings of facts for the preliminary plat. This is for the approval of the final plat. The preliminary plat was approved by the Plat Committee without a public hearing last month. The application is to consolidate Lots 26 and 27 and create Twomey's Addition, Block 1 at 8345 and 8349 Kraay Avenue. These are two lots each of which has a single family home on it. The applicant is seeking to consolidate them so she can combine the two houses into a single house. The plat has been approved and seems to meet all of the standards for a subdivision. There are no public improvements required because it is on a street already. There is no need for a financial surety or bond of any kind in order to approve the final plat, which is a requirement. Ms. Twomey has provided both the site plan showing the two houses combined as well as an architectural rendering of the final product. Mr. Vander Woude noted that there is a condition of this approval; there is an existing garage that encroaches into the alley so the plans show that that garage will be reduced in size so that encroachment is eliminated. Mr. Baker asked if that needs to be a condition of what is approved here. Mr. Vander Woude said he doesn't think it does because the final plat will end up being recorded. We would likely hold off on signing the plat until we saw definite plans to build the house as proposed because there are two structures. That connection has to happen, and that garage has to be modified. We would hold off on that administratively until those things happen. The staff recommendation is to approve the final plat as presented. Mr. Raffin said this is a really cool project for Munster; it will make that neighborhood look even better.

**Motion:** Mr. Raffin moved to approve the PC Docket No. 23-006 granting approval of a final plat of Twomey's Addition to the Town of Munster consolidating two residential lots at 8345 and 8349 Kraay Avenue.
**Second:** Mr. Specht

**Vote:** Yes – 6 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries

**Next Meeting:** Mr. Baker announced that the next regular business meeting will be May 9, 2023.

**Adjournment:**

**Motion:** Mr. Specht moved to adjourn.
**Second:** Mr. Koultourides
**Vote:** Yes – 6 No – 0 Abstain – 0. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm

_____ _____
President Bill Baker Date of Approval
Plan Commission

_____ _____
Dustin Anderson Date of Approval
Town Manager