

PLYMOUTH PLAN COMMISSION

June 4, 2024

The Plymouth Plan Commission met in regular session in the Council Chambers of the City Building, 124 North Michigan Street, Plymouth, Indiana on June 4, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

Commission President Doug Feece called the meeting to order for Commissioners Alex Eads, Mark Gidley, Shiloh Carothers Milner, Beth Pinkerton, Linda Secor, Dan Sellers, Fred Webster, and Paul Wendel answering roll call who were physically present. Commissioner Randy Longanecker attended virtually. Commissioner Angela Rupchock-Schafer was absent. Others present were Building Commissioner Dennis Manuwal, Jr., City Attorney Jeff Houin, Plan Consultant Ralph Booker and Mayor Robert Listenberger. The public was able to see and hear the meeting through Microsoft Teams.

Commissioners Webster and Eads moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the last regular meeting on May 8, 2024. The motion carried.

The following legal notice was advertised in the Pilot News newspaper on May 23, 2024:

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
The Plan Commission of the City of Plymouth, Indiana will hold a hearing on June 4, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the City Building, 124 N. Michigan St. (Garro St. entrance), Plymouth, Indiana on the following matters:
PC 2024-07: Garden Court, 400 W. Washington Street, Plymouth, IN 46563: A rezoning of eight (8) acres from R-2 Suburban Residential District to R-4 Multi-Family Residential District on parcel 50-32-94-000-001.000-018, located at Bayless Street, Plymouth, IN 46563, zoned R-2, Suburban Residential District.

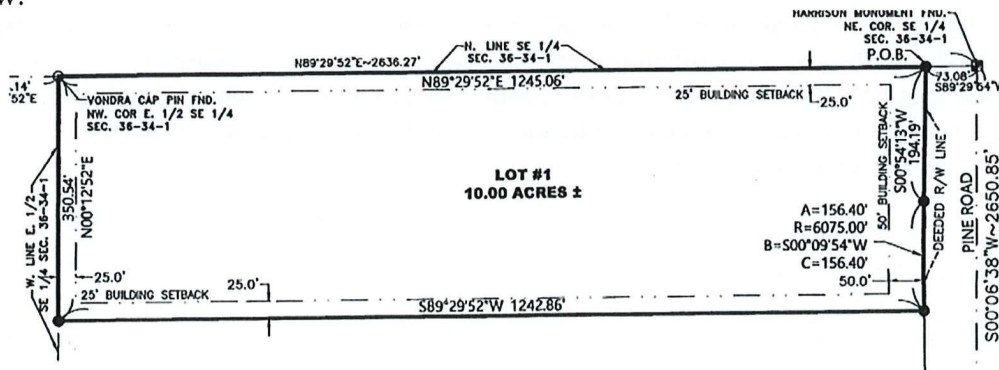
PC 2024-08: Graber Commercial Properties, 3965 E. Countyline RD, Nappanee, IN 46500: A Minor Subdivision of ten (10) acres on parcel 50-41-36-000-007.000-017, Pine RD, Plymouth, IN 46563 to build a manufacturing facility, zoned I Industrial District. Information on these matters may be obtained at the office of the Clerk-Treasurer, 124 N. Michigan St., Plymouth, IN and telephone #574-936-2124. Written objections to the proposal filed at the Clerk-Treasurer's office will be considered and oral comments will be heard. The hearing may be continued from time to time as may be found necessary. If you are disabled and need special accommodations, please call the ADA Coordinator at 574-936-2948.

116 Legals
Kyle Williams, Recording Secretary, Plan Commission, May 23, 2024

Feece declared at the start of the meeting that they would reverse the two cases.

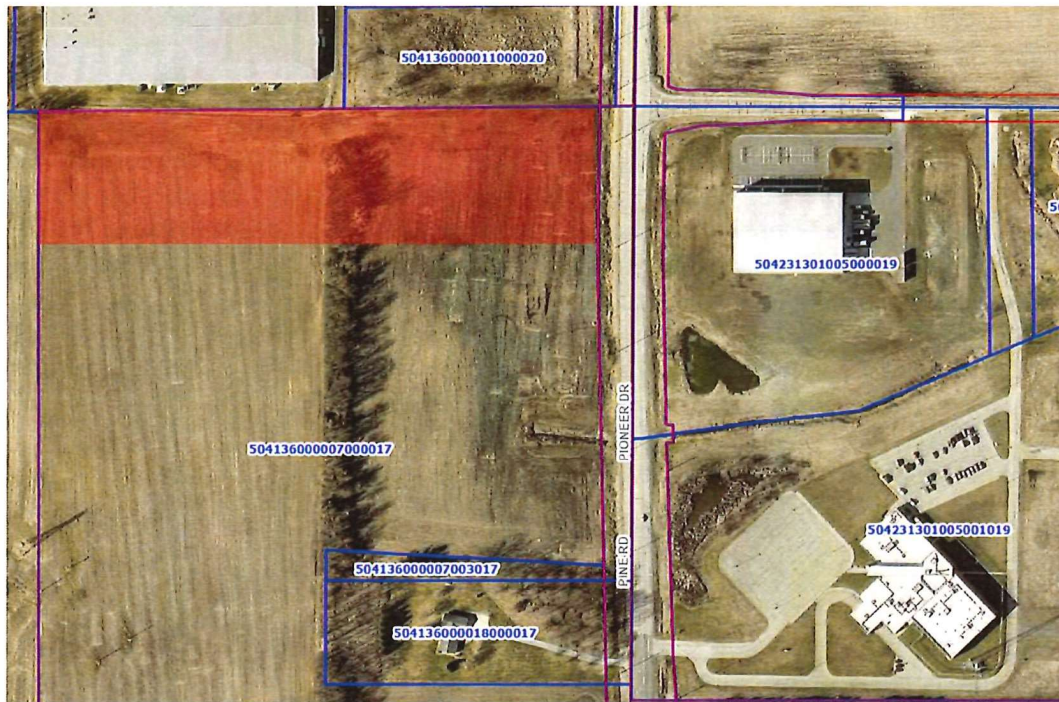
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Plan Consultant Booker reviewed the findings of fact and the request from the applicant. He shared the map below:



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Booker explained that on the west side of the road, it was considered Pine Road, but on the east side of the road it was considered Pioneer Drive, as part of it was maintained by the County and the other was maintained by the City of Plymouth. He stated if it were to be approved that there would be another plat they would have not received, yet that would show a drainage area that goes through the lot and that needed to be on the plat. He stated they also had a signature block for the Building Commissioner that did not need to be on the plat. He stated his recommendation if it wanted to be approved that night was that they would get the signatures at a later time.

Pinkerton asked if it would be necessary to table this request.

Booker replied that it would not make much difference as it was just a couple of corrections on the plat. He expressed that they could table it, but he did not believe it was necessary.

Houin added that the plat could be approved subject to the corrections.

Booker explained that the split would be on the northern part of the parcel. He showed the drainage ditch that needed to be on the plat and explained that it was controlled by the Marshall County Drainage Board. He explained that no building could be built within 75 feet on either side of it unless they went before the drainage board and got a variance to do it, and it would be up to the developer. He explained that the meeting was just for dividing off the land.

Webster asked, since the property would not abut city property if he had contacted Craig Cultice about the gap between the city boundary lines.

Houin answered that he had not contacted him yet as that was part of the process. He stated the applicant intended to file a petition for annexation as well, so they would deal with that as part of the annexation. He stated there was a strip there that belonged to the county.

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Loren Graber (3965 E. Countyline Rd., Nappanee, IN 46550)

Graber stated that they would like to work with the drainage board to get the tile moved. He stated they would be adding 20-30 jobs as they moved the company from Missouri to Plymouth.

Commissioners Gidley and Webster moved and seconded to open the public hearing. The motion carried.

Daniel Sharp (12111 SR 17, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Sharp stated that he owned adjoining properties to the north of the plat. He stated he had no concerns about the project, but his only concern was that they had a detention area to the north of the parcel between the Zone and the old Zone. He explained that all the water from Miller Drive was going southbound and collecting behind the Zone. He stated there was a tile that was not in the picture, that came out of the detention pond and ran parallel through the property. He needed to ensure that it got addressed because way back in the day when it was all developed there was potentially a drainage plan from VanVactor Farms that allowed the drainage to take place, which also could not be seen on the map.

Booker stated that it was discussed at the Technical Review Committee (TRC) meeting and that it was the reason they put it on the plat. He stated they were aware it was going to be a private drain, but nobody seemed to know where it was at.

Sharp replied that he had a pretty good idea about where it was at. He explained that it ran just out of the detention pond due south to the center of the parcel in line with the toe ditch on the south end.

Booker stated that those items should be addressed when the contractor went for the drainage plan.

Sellers asked Sharp if they had an easement for the tile that went across the particular property.

Sharp replied that he did not believe there was an easement, and it was concerning to him. He stated they were not holding any water in the detention area currently because when it rose it went down. He explained that he had been out to clean it but believed that it ran through the tile that went through the center of the property. He needed to ensure that it did not change and said it was important to keep in mind that they were draining everything from Miller Drive south into the detention area.

Graber asked for clarification about the middle of the property and asked if he meant the middle of the detention pond.

Sharp explained that the detention area was on the corner of the parcel he owns.

Graber asked if that was where the treeline was.

Sharp stated that it was further east.

Graber said the idea was to put the building east of the treeline, but they would need to investigate it.

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Sharp explained that there was a structure at the corner of Jim Neu Drive, just north of the property line in the detention area, that he believed came straight down through the center of the field in a southern direction. He stated he did not have an easement as he did not develop it, but he did not have any record of it.

Booker stated if they had found an easement then they would have put it on the plat.

Sharp stated it was not draining to the Pioneer ditch, so he would assume with reasonable certainty that it went straight through the low area and headed straight down to where the green line was that feeds down to the ditch.

Booker stated it was the assumption at the TRC meeting as well.

Sharp said he did not oppose it and wanted to make it as easy as they could. He stated they just wanted to ensure they did not have a lot of drainage issues as they had a lot of water coming down from the north into the area, and they needed to make sure that it was handled correctly.

Dave Miller (1405 N. Michigan Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Miller stated that he was with VanVactor Development and back in the late 1990's was when they developed that phase. He said his recollection was that they had an agreement with the Read family, but it was obviously not recorded. He said Sharp was correct that it runs from the parcel that is dedicated to the retention and detention southerly and ties into that tile. He believed it was actually repaired less than 10 years ago, but was uncertain whether the Marshall County Drainage Board had a record of it.

Commissioners Webster and Eads moved and seconded to close the public hearing. The motion carried.

Sellers asked Graber if he would be willing to have an easement across the land if the retention does in fact drain through that tile.

Graber replied that it would depend upon the easement as they could get ridiculous with 75 feet on each side. He stated the last thing he would want to do is build on tile, but would work with Sharp if they had to reroute it. He explained if it was on low ground they did not plan to build on it, but they would have a driveway across it. He stated it would be crazy to sit on low ground as there was plenty of room behind it. He reiterated that he would be willing to work with them, but would have to know what the easement was before he agreed.

Commissioners Pinkerton and Milner moved and seconded to approve PC 2024-08 with corrections to the plat as presented. The motion passed by roll call vote.

In Favor: Eads, Gidley, Longanecker, Milner, Pinkerton, Secor, Sellers, Webster, Wendel, and Feece

Opposed: None

Absent: Rupchock-Schafer

PC 2024-07: Garden Court, 400 W. Washington Street, Plymouth, IN 46563: A rezoning of eight (8) acres from R-2 Suburban Residential District to R-4 Multi-Family Residential District on parcel 50-32-94-000-001.000-018, located at Bayless Street, Plymouth, IN 46563, zoned R-2, Suburban Residential District.

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Feece expressed that there would be a time to speak and that everyone would have a two-minute time frame to speak. He stated to everyone who wished to speak that they should go up to the podium and provide their name and address. He asked that they not repeat what the prior person said as well because if they were to let everyone speak, they would all be there until the following morning. He clarified that the meeting was just a recommendation to the city council for the property.

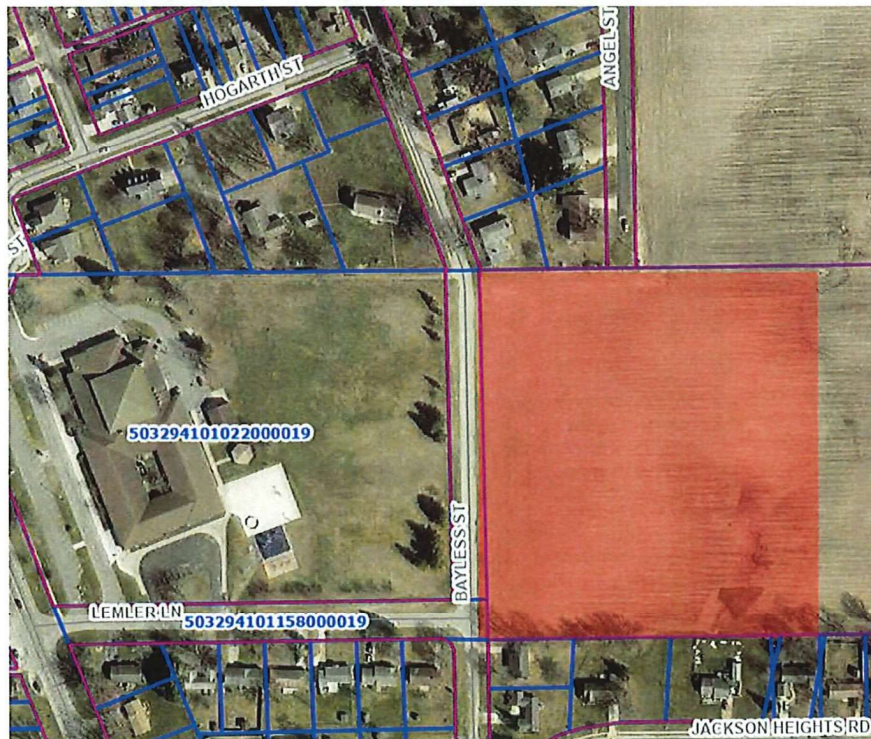
Plan Consultant Booker reviewed the findings of fact and the request from the applicant. He read the applicant's letter aloud (see attached letter below). He added that there was currently no property within the City of Plymouth that is zoned R-4, but it was in the Zoning Ordinance.

Justification for Request / Project Description

This eight (8) acre parcel is proposed to be developed into a combination of multi-family and single-family housing. Garden Court, Inc., a locally owned non-profit, has optioned the property for the construction of a 36-unit integrated housing project. Additionally, the City of Plymouth is in the process of applying for a READI 2.0 grant to support the construction of work force single family housing. A summary of integrated housing is attached to this application. Garden Court is a well-known housing provider with multiple projects in the Plymouth community.

Presently, there is no property in the Plymouth Corporate Limits zoned R-4 (multi-family) that is vacant. Therefore, regardless of the multi-family project and its location, a re-zoning is required. The site, which is currently farmed, is bounded by residential development to the north and south and an elementary school to the west. The corporate limits surround the property on three (3) sides.

City Water utilities lie adjacent to the property on Bayless Street. City sanitary sewer facilities lie on Lemler Street approximately 70 feet from the property.



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Booker explained the differences between R-2 & R-4 zoning along with their uses.

R-2

Suburban Residential District

The Suburban Residential category refers to low to medium density residential areas developed beyond the core neighborhoods around Plymouth's downtown. Characteristics of development in this category are comparatively larger lot sizes, curvilinear streets, and the use of cul-de-sacs. These areas are dominated by single-family residential development, but may also include schools, parks, and small-scale churches or institutional facilities. New residential growth will occur in this category as Plymouth expands outward into existing rural areas.

<p>Permitted Uses</p> <p><u>Residential Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessory Structure • Single Family Residential • Modular Home • Manufactured Home - Type B • Child Day Care Services (in home) • Home Occupation <p><u>Agricultural Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crop Production • Forestry and Logging <p><u>Public Administration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Parks and Recreation <p><u>Transportation, Communications, Utilities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooftop, micro, and small ground mount solar installations 	<p>Special Uses</p> <p><u>Residential Uses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Based Business <p><u>Public Administration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Center / Building for Govt Service <p><u>Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bed-and-Breakfast Inns • Caterers • Cemeteries and Crematories • Child Care Center • Churches • Colleges, Universities, and Junior Colleges • Elementary and Secondary Schools • Libraries and Archives • Nature Parks and Other Similar Institutions <p><u>Transportation, Communications, Utilities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wind Turbine
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R-4

Multi-Family Residential District

The Multifamily Residential category encompasses areas with the highest residential densities in Plymouth. This includes land already developed as apartment complexes, condominiums, and mobile home parks. Multifamily Residential areas are intended to provide high-density residential options near appropriate commercial goods and services, transportation routes, and parks and open spaces.

Permitted Uses

Residential Uses

- Accessory Structure
- Child Day Care Services (in home)
- Home Occupation
- Manufactured Home - Type B
- Modular Home
- Multifamily residential
- Single Family Residential
- Two-family residential

Agricultural Uses

- Crop Production
- Forestry and Logging

Public Administration

- Government Parks and Recreation

Transportation, Communications, Utilities

- Rooftop, micro, and small ground mount solar installations

Special Uses

Residential Uses

- Assisted Living Facility
- Condominium
- Group Home
- Home Based Business
- Residential Mental Retardation, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Facilities

Public Administration

- Community Center / Building for Govt Service

Services

- Bed-and-Breakfast Inns
- Cemeteries and Crematories
- Child Day Care Services
- Churches
- Colleges, Universities, and Junior Colleges
- Elementary and Secondary Schools
- Libraries and Archives
- Nature Parks and Other Similar Institutions
- Nursing Care Facilities

Transportation, Communications, Utilities

- Wind Turbine (micro)

Pinkerton asked what the cost of affordable housing would be.

Booker replied that he was uncertain whether he was qualified to answer the question. He stated what they were addressing that night was rezoning and that was the only concern he could address. He stated he would defer the question to the applicant.

Eads asked how many R-4 properties there were in the City of Plymouth.

Booker replied that there were no R-4 properties. He expressed that it had been in the zoning ordinance since it's inception, but they had never made any properties R-4. He stated there may be some properties that could be zoned R-4, but they would have been grandfathered in, so they still had the overlaying zoning district since the zoning ordinance was established. He stated this would be the first R-4 zoning in the Plymouth jurisdiction.

Eric Holsopple (12727 20B Road, Argos, IN 46501)

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Holsopple stated he served as the local Hospital Administrator, sits on the Marshall County board and has been a part of the housing project. He read an excerpt from an article called, "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child: Understanding and Expanding the Concept of the "Village"."

The phrase "it takes a village to raise a child" originates from an African proverb and conveys the message that it takes many people ("the village") to provide a safe, healthy environment for children, where children are given the security they need to develop and flourish, and to be able to realize their hopes and dreams. This requires an environment where children's voices are taken seriously (2) and where multiple people (the "villagers") including parents, siblings, extended family members, neighbors, teachers, professionals, community members and policy makers, care for a child. All these 'villagers' may provide direct care to the children and/or support the parent in looking after their children. However, the village, in many countries today, is dissipated and fragmented and individuals are increasingly isolated and are not eager to ask for, or provide help to, others. Family breakdown, economic pressures, long working hours and increased mobility have all contributed to families feeling less connected to extended family members and others around them (3).

He stated he believed this sets them up for where they are at. He explained that a recent study by United Way had a sample size of about 105 participants, and they found that 68 out of 105 of those participants had currently or previously experienced homelessness and stated it was a high number. He stated the median income for those in the study was \$960/ month. He explained that out of that \$960, \$676 was the cost of rent. He stated if they did the math, that was \$71/week, which left absolutely no margin. He expressed that every extenuating circumstance had now become an emergency. He provided the examples of an extra trip to go pick their kids up from school or an added trip going to the grocery store or doctor could be the choice between gas or food. He stated, based on the 2020 data, over 50% of the students in Marshall County are on free and reduced lunch. He stated 11% of the households in Marshall County met the poverty level and 30% of those were individuals who were working and were low income restrained. He stated there was a real need to bridge a gap in our community and this was not just a housing issue. He explained that it was a socioeconomic and workforce issue and this project would start to address some of the issues on hand with a heavy emphasis on children and youth. He stated there were questions about who would be eligible for that area and who would be able to apply. He read aloud all individuals up to the age of 24 who present as a household. This could include unaccompanied youth with a household size of one and multiple youths who were seeking assistance together. He also listed young parents, women or men, up to the age of 24 who are the parent of at least one child or children. He also listed domestic violence survivors, individuals or families with at least one person who identifies a domestic violence incident. He listed youth up to the age of 24 who are survivors of human trafficking, sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking. He listed persons who have been released from correctional facilities that were homeless before entering prison or jail. He listed pregnant women, regardless of age or whether they have any additional children. He listed persons in the early stages of Alcohol or Drug (AOD) Recovery. He listed individuals or families with at least one person who had recently begun receiving services to assist in the recovery of AOD. He stated this could include but was not limited to people who had recently been released from a treatment center or other institution. He lastly listed veterans. He stated this would be an integrated housing model with 36 total units, with 8 of which being permanent supportive housing which receives supplemental services such as therapy, counseling, case management, medical evaluation and treatment, education, life skills, and job training. He stated the remaining 28 were tax credit housing with 18 of them being 3-bedroom

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units. He explained that for those individuals who were applying for that type of housing, they would be assigned a vulnerability index based on the characteristics that they have, and that vulnerability index would help place them whether they qualify or not, so those with the most vulnerable family go to the top of the list. He stated it did not matter how long they have been on the list, so they are addressing those individuals who are deemed highly vulnerable. He said the question he had was what they plan to do about the problem they have at hand here in Plymouth.

Gidley asked Holsopple if he was on the Garden Court Board. Holsopple disagreed. Gidley asked if someone from the Garden Court Board could go up to the podium.

John Myers (8302 SR 17, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Myers stated Holsopple was at the last meeting and spoke about the fact that he started in that type of housing, and they could see where he was today. He expressed that he was certainly a pillar of the community. He explained that the Garden Court approved looking at and trying to do another project to help the City of Plymouth with low-income housing around two years ago. He said it would be for people below a certain income threshold, and they came to what they believed was a great location last year and were turned down by the city council and the Plan Commission board had a tie vote and went to the city council with no recommendation. He stated they were told to go find a place that was better suited for it as the prior location was prime commercial property, yet as of today, it still sits empty. He stated when looking for properties, they found property that had residential on two sides, single family housing, and apartments right down the street from the property. He stated it seemed to them that this would be a piece of property that would fit right in with the current type of housing in that area. He explained that they were purchasing eight acres, but only needed four acres for what Garden Court wanted to do with the 36 apartments. He stated that they would like to see single-family housing developed on the other four acres, as single-family housing and multiple apartment buildings fit with the neighborhood. He said he was aware there was a lot of information floating around as his wife went to him with a Facebook post, but he told her that he does not read Facebook, so he didn't see what was being said. He said he knew there was a need in Plymouth for more low-income housing, and explained that they do not attract people to Plymouth with their housing, as concerns have been there already whether they like it or not. He stated that Plymouth is a lot different from how it was 54 years ago when he and his wife moved here to raise their family, and explained that it has changed a lot and not all for the good, which he was sorry about because it was a great place to raise a family and still is. He stated that Plymouth needs low-income housing and businesses need people to work in it, whether it be retail, manufacturing, school custodians, etc. He asked how they planned to deal with it in Plymouth without Garden Courts, and said maybe someone else would handle it and if they did, then that would be fine from his standpoint. He expressed that Garden Court does not receive anything from this as all the Garden Court apartments that they have are self-sustaining. He stated the owner of Garden Courts Inc. receives no revenue from them as they have been doing this as a service to the communities they serve. He listed Plymouth, Bourbon, Argos, Culver, LaPaz, and Mentone and stated they get nothing out of any them. He stated they do this because someone needs to do it. He explained that Garden Courts was started because something needed to be done to help the elderly. There was discussion about whether that was something they should keep doing just for the elderly, but they saw a further need for people who, for whatever reason, needed some help.

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Rodney Ludwig (10590 Kings Ct., Plymouth, IN 46563)

Ludwig believed he could answer a lot of the questions that he was aware were going to be asked, as he would share a bit of the information on the program. He listed the question about what was affordable, and explained that half of the units were based upon 60% of the area median income or below. He shared the example of a family of four with an income of \$52,020 and stated that they could live there. He said the concerns he hears about the most are the permanent supportive housing, and said that those are only 8 of the 36 units. He explained that the others are more workforce-style housing but have income restrictions. He stated there are 11 units that are 30% area median income, and explained that a family of four making \$26,000 would have a \$676 rental payment for a three-bedroom apartment that would also include utilities. He said that it was very affordable for a family of four and said that they would not be able to find a new three-bedroom apartment for \$676 in Plymouth. He stated there would be a wide range of people who would get housing, and stated there would be units for the 30%, 50%, and 60% median income. He explained that 8 units would be permanent supportive housing and shared that everyone would be screened as they would not allow criminal sex offenders. He listed what would not be allowed during the screening process.

- Record of any conviction involving a sex crime.
- Record of any conviction involving harm to a child.
- Record of any conviction involving harm to an animal.
- Applicant is or ever has been subject to registration under a State Sex Offender Registration Program.
- Sex offender status for prior offenses.
- Record of any crime involving the manufacture, distribution, or sale of meth.
- Record of any conviction for violent crime.

Wendel asked for confirmation that the above listing is one that would disqualify an applicant in the screening process. Ludwig agreed. Wendel stated that he wanted that to be clear.

Ludwig said that it used to be under the federal housing that any drug offense would automatically eliminate someone, but explained that there could be a situation where someone was arrested for marijuana when they were 18 and said that it would not keep them out. He expressed that there may be people currently undergoing dependency issues, but as long as they have not committed a crime against people or something because of that, then they would be allowed. He reiterated that it was for the 8 units. He stated that a lot of the concerns they may have heard have been incorrect, as they thoroughly vet these people. He stated the housing would be very similar to Riverside Commons as they are just lower income people that need an affordable place.

Wendel asked Ludwig if he worked for The Bradley Group. Ludwig agreed. Wendel asked if he managed the various properties that are already in Plymouth.

Ludwig replied in agreement and said he managed several Garden Courts as well as Riverside Commons. He stated Mayor Glaub started the Garden Courts back in the 1970's.

Wendel asked how often police were called to any of the Garden Court facilities.

Ludwig replied that most of them are not even once, but said it was different for Serenity Place, which had 18 permanent supportive housing units, when it first opened, but said it had definitely calmed down. He said it was noticeable when looking at the call logs. He provided the example of a child who pulled

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the fire alarm because he saw the fire department at another nearby location, and wanted everyone to be safe. He expressed that sometimes it was just not understanding the proper thing to do in different situations. He said he had heard so many people slam Garden Courts and said it has been the model for affordable housing and Plymouth should be proud of it. He stated it grieved him to hear people talk poorly about Garden Courts. He shared that his grandma lived at Garden Court West and his mother lived at Garden Court East currently, and expressed that he would not put his mother in a drug-invested or crime-ridden property. He stated they attempted for approval of the property near Martin's Supermarket, but said it did not work out. He said there were not a lot of sites in Plymouth, so this was the best option they had.

Pinkerton stated that one of the concerns people had expressed to her was the traffic near the school. She asked if there were any plans to address the traffic issue.

Brent Martin (15413 12th Road, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Martin commented on her statement that they would normally calculate 8 vehicle trips per day in a dwelling unit, so that would roughly be 400 vehicles per day. He stated that it sounded like a lot, but that it was usually a car every couple of minutes. He stated there are times that traffic there is busy and other times that it is less busy, but a typical city street could handle roughly 8,000 vehicles per day before traffic starts backing up. He stated he would not know the traffic counts on Bayless, but he had imagined they were somewhere south of 2,000-3,000, so he did not see an issue.

Eads stated, if he remembered correctly from the image, that the driveway does not go out onto Bayless Street.

Martin stated that it was correct, as the driveways were behind. He said the front doors ran up to Bayless Street, and they were rear loaded.

Feece stated he saw provisions in the example provided that allow for future development to the east. He expressed that he would not want to see another entrance/exit like Jackson Heights had, as it is difficult to get in and out of.

Wendel asked what the timeline was for the second phase of single-family housing.

Martin replied that he was unsure if they wanted to discuss it that night, as the first stage of the project was due by the end of July. He said they would know if it was going to be funded by November of that year. He stated the READI program was a big statewide program with a Regional Development Authority (RDA) that received \$95 million for projects within their three-county region of St. Joseph, Elkhart, and Marshall County. He stated the city had identified some priorities and some of those included housing, and because they auctioned the 8 acres, the thought was that they would have plenty of room for the Garden Court project, and it would make sense to build single family workforce housing for the other half. He stated sometime in the next 60-90 days that the city would be submitting their application to the RDA for READI funding. He stated that the city would also have to make a match that would defray the cost of those homes because they could hardly even build small homes without spending over \$200,000 on new construction. He stated that it had become unaffordable for people making the average wage, so they would become housing burdened. He stated they had heard earlier from Holsopple that 40% of people in the county were already housing burdened, and the theory was that they could defray the cost and have people get into a house where the mortgage wouldn't kill them.

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Webster asked whose name would be on the title of the property.

Martin replied that it would be Garden Court.

Webster asked for clarification of all 8 acres being auctioned. Martin agreed. Webster asked for clarification that Martin was only interested in 4 acres for single-family housing. Martin agreed. Webster asked if he would be spinning all of them off individually as lots or if he would be handling it differently.

Martin replied that Garden Courts intention, and hopefully he could speak on their behalf, was to donate the four acres to the City of Plymouth.

Sellers asked for clarification that the concept plan was not set in stone.

Martin replied in agreement that there had not been topography, civil engineering, and explained that after he did the drawing, he found a legal drain that cut right where the detention basin was. He added that it made it a good spot for it. He stated there was a legal drain that cuts off the bottom corner that was not charted when he did the sketch. He stated he did not see the School Corporation there, but they ran an uncharted drain across the property that they would have to intercept and reroute. He stated it was similar to the previous case they heard in that they were not aware of where it was at. He stated they were working with Jones Petrie Rafinski (JPR) on civil engineering. He stated their layout and all the improvements would have to come back to the Technical Review Committee (TRC), then back to the Plan Commission for approval as there would be a plat.

Sellers asked for clarification that the Plan Commission would be reviewing a proper plan with proper parking.

Martin replied in agreement, as this was all conceptual because they can't exactly spend the hundreds of thousands of dollars before they even know they have a project. He stated they were all currently working as volunteers.

Wendel asked Booker if they were to approve it, would the whole 8 acres be approved for R-4 multi-family housing? Booker agreed. Wendel asked if it could be amended for the 4 acres needed for the Garden Courts project and keep the other 4 acres R-2. He said he could see in the next 10-15 years someone wanting to build multi-family homes or rental units there.

Myers stated if the other property was given to the city, which was their intent, the city would control it. He stated if they wanted to put multi-family units on it, then that would be the city's decision, as it would not be theirs anymore.

Houin stated he was not sure if Myers directly answered the question, so he explained that within the R-4 district, they could build single-family homes. He stated if the property were replatted with 13-15 single-family lots, even if it remained R-4, it could be built with single-family homes. He stated if it became appropriate to rezone it back to an R-2 or R-3, it could be done, but it would not be necessary. He explained once they were subdivided, it would become very hard to put a multi-family on a single lot.

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Wendel stated that they say that a lot, but there are a lot of single-family homes that are used as multi-family homes.

Houin stated, as Martin did, if that were a concern, there was a lot of work that had to go into the replat and the final design, and if Garden Court moved forward with the project and the single-family lots were donated back to the city for a future development, they could always consider rezoning at that time.

Longanecker asked if the property was donated to the city, what its financial liabilities would be.

Houin replied that it would be the same as any other city-owned property. He stated the intent would be for the city to develop some sort of plan. As Martin mentioned, there was the idea of applying for a READI grant that would help offset the cost of development. He said the city's contribution to the development would be the donation of the property. Therefore, the city would not continue to own property once homes were built on it, the city would not be the landlord of those single-family homes.

Booker explained that the sizes of the lots for single-families for R-4 was 6,000 square feet and R-2 was an acre. He said that was one major difference he had forgotten to mention in his report. He stated for all that is not being rezoned, the minimum lot size would be an acre.

Commissioners Gidley and Webster moved and seconded to open the public hearing. The motion carried.

Booker read aloud the only letter received in regard to this request.

Bob Garrison (517 N. Michigan Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

“Hello! Bob and Sandy Garrison here. We know many of you, but for those we do not, by way of introduction, Sandy grew up in Plymouth. We met and married in Chicago, but moved back here in 2001. We are writing to share a concern with all of you. Last week a friend showed us a flier she had received regarding the proposed Garden Court community near Angel and Bayless Streets. In reading it, we were reminded of similar concerns that were voiced when Serenity Place was in the planning stages. At that time, Sandy's dad was on the Garden Court board, so we were very familiar with the project. It is our understanding that the fears neighboring residents had then did not come to fruition. We also understand that the school located near the new development has been contacted and that the principal is supportive of the project, thinking it may help families of some of her students.

Through Jim's time on the board, and more recently, through helping a co-worker of Sandy's go through the Garden Court admission process, we are also acquainted with the methods Bradley and Bowen use to prescreen residents. It is quite thorough; not all who apply are accepted. In the case of the person we were trying to help, she was facing homelessness due to increasing rental costs and ongoing health issues. Over the course of almost a year, we searched and searched, made phone calls and went on appointments with and for her. She continued to work but her savings was dwindling and the situation becoming more dire. Please take a minute to try and imagine how frightening this is for all involved. There is simply very little out there for local folks in these circumstances. It was a happy day when she was finally accepted at Garden Court and has mentioned multiple times how grateful she is for a nice, safe place to live.

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We are keenly aware of the need for both supportive and affordable housing in our area, and are writing to ask you as local leaders to carefully consider this opportunity. Thank you for your time and for your service to our community.”

Steven Harper (1030 Bayless Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Harper shared that he lived adjacent to Webster School and across the street from the project, so it would be the view of his backyard. He said if they were rezoning the entire parcel as R-4 Multi-Family Residential, it would be the highest density that would be allowed for the City of Plymouth. He explained that he lived to the north and his house had an acre lot, and most of the surrounding homes had large lots and were above average square footage and that did not bide well with the project that was going on because they would all be smaller homes. He explained they had already run into issues with traffic, and they were talking about the R-4 zoning, not the project. He said once they let it out of the bag and turned it into R-4 zoning, the whole thing could end up being apartments without ever having to go back to the zoning board as it would comply as the density would already be allowed. He shared that he had been involved in government for a long time and said that very few things ended up exactly as originally planned. He stated he was against the project because it would increase the traffic, and explained that his driveway was blocked twice a day during school time, and welcomed them to go by to look. He stated that Dr. Lindsey’s mailbox had been taken out plenty of times due to people speeding through, and last year they had a tree taken down by the end of his property. He stated he was not in favor of the project and said R-2 was much more desirable zoning.

Tamilla Stayton (404 William Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Stayton stated she moved to her home in 2021, and she disagreed with the project. She said she was fine with R-2 as there were no problems, but she was trying to bring her home back up to good standards. She mentioned regarding the traffic that when she was trying to get out to go to work at 7:30 in the morning she couldn’t get out on the street because of the congestion due to everyone trying to get to the school. She explained that if they put a housing development there, more residents would try to get out to go to school or to work, and they would not be able to walk to work because it was too far, especially in the winter, so it was not a good place. She stated they needed to do R-4 somewhere else, but not around a school, because they are also stating that the people who are being screened may not have a criminal background, but they do meth, just have not been caught yet. She said she knew it because of where she works. She shared that people go in a lot to get detoxed, and they cannot accept them due to their meth usage.

Wendel asked where she worked.

Stayton replied that she worked at Michiana Behavioral Health. She explained that they do detox for alcohol and marijuana, which is covered by insurance, but they do not cover meth or any other hard drugs.

Wendel asked if her neighbor did meth.

Stayton replied that he did.

Wendel commented that he lived on William Street so he knew.

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Stayton stated the person next to her did marijuana and she was about ready to report it the next time she smelled it.

Wendel commented that it could be anywhere.

Stayton replied that it was exactly right. She stated there were kids there and it was not safe. She stated even if they screened them and they said they were not a sexual offender, they may be as they would not have to fully tell the whole truth.

Sister Connie Bach (9601 Union Road, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Bach stated that she lived part-time in Donaldson and part-time in South Bend. She explained that she came down several days a week and there were about 70 volunteers who worked together to feed about 145 people every Tuesday and Thursday at the Economy Inn and Red Rock Inn. She stated she had worked out there for about four years now and has had the pleasure of personally interviewing 72 of them for the most recent January Point-In-Time (PIT) Count and 68% had experienced or are currently homeless. She explained that there were a lot of issues, but the biggest one was the security deposit and first month's rent when you earn a low income. She stated another issue was low-paying employment, and as of recently, a lot of employers have started offering only 8-12 hours per week, and nobody can afford a house or apartment with those few hours. She explained there was a lack of transportation for many and was aware of the Marshall County Council on Aging, and said when one is only making \$967 per month and paying \$720 in rent, on top of food and medicines for children, they just cannot do it. She said that there were currently 20 children living in the hotels. She explained that the children did not belong in those hotels, and they needed to get them out of there. She said it was a bad enough place as it was, but for children to grow up in that environment was horrible. She shared that she had been an educator for many years as a teacher and principal, did therapy for many years and understood the trauma of it, so there needed to be a way to get the children out of there and this was one way to do it. She thanked Mayor Listenberger, Jamie Fleury, the Police Department, and many others in the room who had been out there trying to build relationships as it was really important for the children. She stated 18% of the people they interviewed said if they did not have a hotel, they would be living in their cars, 22% couch hopping, and 60% said they would be living on the street or in a shelter and added that Plymouth did not have a shelter. She stated that 99% relied upon charity for assistance, 36% relied upon the Township Trustee who ran out of funds in October of last year, and said that Link to Hope was currently out of funds as well, so that meant the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ assisted over 150 people last year.

Jack Davis (14083 Lawrence Lake Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Davis expressed that one of the items that had been mentioned, but not emphasized enough, was that it was a Garden Court project that they would take care of, and stated that they had been around for a long time, and they were going to be around for much longer. He explained there had been a housing survey that had been done recently, and it showed the number one concern in Plymouth was transitional housing for the underserved and homeless. He stated they were aware that it was a problem and if they had a conversation with anybody in Plymouth about housing, they would quickly hear mention of the Red Rock Inn and the Economy Inn. He said they knew that it was an issue, and shared that he had been going to the Red Rock and Economy Inns for the last three years on numerous occasions. He explained that there were great people out there, including children, who did not have a bedroom, a refrigerator or things that our neighbors should have. He stated they knew housing was a problem and the Garden

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Court project was a multi-use and multi-economic program. He stated he really felt that it was one of the better projects that would look good in the community. He added that it would probably look better than some of the things that were two blocks from some of the houses that had already been talked about. He believed that Garden Court had a positive representation in their community and allowed them to give to a few individuals and families, possibly from the Red Rock and Economy Inns. He emphasized that only a few of the 8 units would end up housing families from the hotels, and the children and their families would have a living room, a bedroom, a kitchen, and maybe a playground.

Donna Hartz (18232 Chickasaw Trail, Culver, IN 46511)

Hartz stated the terminology mentioned earlier, “retarded or retardation,” was out of line and needed to be changed. She explained that they did need a place for homeless people in Plymouth, but if they built the facility and got it up and running, the Red Rock Inn and the Economy Inn would still be there, and they would just fill up again. She asked what they were going to do about the hotels and why the owners were not held accountable for taking care of the people who were there, such as the drug addicts, as they needed help. She explained that if it were someone’s home, and they got busted for doing drugs, the citizens would be responsible and said they did not need to be thrown in jail, unless they were criminals. She expressed that we couldn’t judge people by where they were in their lives, and they needed to give them tools to help them. She asked where the tools were going to come from, as they couldn’t just build housing for individuals without providing the tools to help them build their lives back up.

Pinkerton replied that her question was most likely a question for the authorities and not the Plan Commission.

Longanecker reminded everyone that they were only in charge of matters regarding zoning.

Adrienne Alvarado (1804 W. Jefferson Street Apt 205, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Alvarado shared that Serenity Place apartments gave her a lot, as they allowed her to grow and allowed her and her children to get stabilized after trauma and abuse. She explained that she had been working on building a new life since moving into her apartment while working and advancing to better and better jobs. She stated her children were safe from harm and as a community they supported each other, kept each other safe, and watched out for one another. She expressed that they created an environment of safety and support for each other because they had all been there. She stated they had all been through something and she, herself, had been able to work through a lot, and she was going through the process of getting a forever home because she had the support and her voucher. She stated without Serenity Place apartments it would not have been possible, and she would for sure have been lost to the streets.

Feece stated he knew Alvarado and had worked with her personally and stated that she spoke truly from her heart. He expressed that she had been helped a lot.

Kip Cook (1044 Angel Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Cook stated the project they were discussing that night would be directly south of his home. He explained that Angel Street went to the end where there was a concrete abutment with a house at the end, which was his house. He stated he had been involved a little bit with the project, and he had noticed that the local news media kept talking about misinformation. He explained that when one does not like

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what they hear, they label it misinformation. He stated he was going to share some misinformation, and said that Garden Court was not a locally owned and run organization and the currently listed owners of Serenity Place were an LLC or corporation out of Nappanee. He stated when Garden Court was started it was a great program, and they should have stayed with the idea of helping the elderly and offering them affordable housing, but they threw that idea right out the door. He stated that they made it so confusing because everyone who was there that night was talking about the eight units in the middle of the potential new facility. He explained that if they were just talking about the single-family homes on either side that were for low-income housing, not even a tenth of the people would have been there. He stated the problem was the eight units in the middle, and they were telling them that they were not going to move people from Garden Court to the new facility, but at the same time the prior woman just spoke about moving families from Garden Court to it. He explained they talked about this great vetting process and how they were not going to have any problems with the eight people in those apartment units because they had a wonderful vetting process. He stated just moments ago the gentleman from the Bradley Group explained that it would be a new project, and it would take a while to get firm. He believed the first two years to be the best. He acknowledged that his time was up, but continued. He explained that what was not misinformation was that in the last year Serenity Place had 95 police calls to their location and the Garden Courts, with their great vetting process, had gotten 95 police calls. It may take a village to raise a child, but it only takes one person from one of those apartments to walk across the street, unrestrained and interact with the children at the school, and implied that the people that night wouldn't even stand up against it. He stated the low-income housing was great, and they loved it but all they were doing was putting lipstick on a pig.

Chris Morrow (920 Angel Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Morrow stated that she did not believe anyone was denying that homelessness and poverty were problems that needed to be addressed, but she was going to refer to Booker's suggestion as it was a Plan Commission issue. She stated the items they needed to look at when rezoning was whether the rezoning followed the Comprehensive Plan, because she did not know if additional subsidized housing was in the Comprehensive Plan. She questioned if it was the most desirable use of the land, and said that in her understanding of government subsidization, that there were income restrictions, and questioned if it would disincentivize success. She said that the adjacent properties of Ewing, Bayless, Hogard, and Angel Streets did not equal a subsidized housing development and asked if this was responsible growth for their city. To build their city, she suggested that if their percentages were so high for low-income and reduced lunches, they should bump the numbers up of people who have jobs and income so that the percentage was lower. She explained that the percentages were all based upon their total population and suggested changing the total population. She suggested that they look at their Comprehensive Plan, the most desirable use of the land and property values of adjacent properties, and asked if it was responsible growth.

Michael Slaninka (905 Bayless Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Slaninka stated he was opposed to the project, and he was opposed because of the traffic. He stated he agreed with Mrs. Morrow about reviewing everything she said. He highlighted how Holsopple did a really great job at tugging at everyone's heartstrings and then instilling a sense of urgency that they had to act upon immediately. He stated that it could actually be tabled. He expressed that it was a wonderful sales tactic if they were selling something, but said they were not selling anything and asked them not to buy. He stated anytime someone is trying to sell something, they are generally in it for themselves. He shared that he lived in the neighborhood and has a child and there were also children who lived

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across from them. He stated that the eight units in the middle were the problem. He stated if any of those children did get harmed because a background check failed, that he would go back and ask each one of them if they did what they were supposed to and hoped that they did.

Patricia Moberly (111 Webster Avenue, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Moberly believed the location was in the wrong place and said she had spoken with a couple of people who talked about putting it on Jefferson Street. She mentioned there were a couple of businesses and a lot of residents who had an issue with it. She believed it was a great thing, that it was wonderful, and that it was so well needed, but believed they were looking at the wrong location. She suggested they go back to the Jefferson Street location as they had a new City Council and a new Mayor, and it was worth addressing again. She restated that she had heard a couple of businesses were against it but a couple of businesses in that location were car sales and other things. She agreed with Harper that if they changed the zoning, they would open up a can of worms. She believed they should hold off on the zoning, have meetings and look at the Jefferson Street property again. She stated there were a lot of people who cared about their neighborhoods and stated Jefferson Street would be perfect, as Martin's Supermarket had no issues with it. She added that she currently had a warehouse two-three doors down from Serenity Place, and she had never seen a police car there. She stated when it was brought up that they had all these problems. She said that they may have had them in the beginning, because she had never seen any problems. She shared that she thought it was terrible that Serenity Place only had a slide in their little park.

William Deeter (418 Ewing Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Deeter stated he had lived at 418 Ewing Street for the last 27 years and remembered when Bayless Street was closed to traffic before they opened it up. He brought up the point that Martin had mentioned earlier about a traffic study not being done in that area. He stated if there had not been a traffic study done in that area, then one needed to be done because he saw people speeding along Bayless Street all the time. He explained that they went around Ewing Street and down either way toward the 100-400 block of Michigan Street. He said there were children who lived at the corner of Angel and Ewing Street who had a little plastic "Go Slow" doll in front of their house that he had seen run over by cars who did not even stop. He shared that he was over at Harper's place collecting acorns from his oak tree a couple of years ago and Harper relayed to him that he had better head home because school traffic was going to start parking there and blocking him in. He stated that he hadn't realized how bad it was until then. He explained that nine months out of the year, twice a day, for two and a half hours, there were standing cars from Ewing Street all the way down Bayless Street to Lemler Lane, and back around to the school, sometimes it was even further down to Webster Avenue. It concerned him with EMS, Fire, and Police trying to get through in an event of an emergency. He explained he was not going to be able to stop the traffic of people waiting to pick their children up or drop them off, and he was not asking that of the Plan Commission, he just wanted to let them know that they needed to have some type of survey done on that traffic area. It worried him most about the safety factor of people trying to pull out of their properties and getting hit by someone racing through. He restated that it was clogged nine months out of the year.

Richard Avery (2300 Hillcrest Avenue, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Avery stated he did not agree with rezoning and that everything that had been stated about the congestion of the area had been accurate. He stated he did not believe if they were to remove the

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Economy Inn or the Red Rock Inn that those types of individuals would just disappear into the woodwork and that it would be an ongoing problem. He stated they should not grant it.

Kenneth Ziessler (14673 Lincoln Highway, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Ziessler stated he also owned the house at 1201 Bayless Street which abuts the project. He stated that due to the specific eight units, he did not want to see the project done and agreed with what Mrs. Morrow and a lot of other people had said. He stated he had no problem with low-income housing as long as it looked nice and did not decrease his property value. He stated there were a bunch of people in the other room who agreed with him and said they had a year to figure out how to sell their houses because it was ridiculous. He said as far as going back to the Jefferson Street location, it was not a good idea and was not the place for it. He explained it was not just a couple of businesses, but instead there were multiple businesses that were against it. He stated his real thought was to put it out near the jail because half of them would end up back there anyway.

Mallory Magee (14211 Lawrence Lake Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Magee stated she believed she was probably the youngest person there and probably the only person who could speak from her perspective. She stated she would like to address a few of the things that some of the other citizens had talked about regarding the traffic being one of the main concerns. She explained that if traffic was the reason for denying the project, in changing someone's life for the better, it brought to her mind the term Not In My Backyard (NIMBY). She said a lot of people in the area were talking about not wanting to see it and how they did not want it to affect them, instead of presenting a location for it or offering to do some research just like Garden Court did. Garden Court presented the Commercial Property next to Martin's Supermarket, and it was denied, so they came back with something else that was also a great location. She stated it was by a school and their children could go to that school. She stated there was a screening that their candidates would have to go through and someone brought up the point of a lot of police reports at Serenity Place. She stated, in doing her research, when discussing it with a Police Officer, she found out that anything within the area, similar to a car accident or something that happened was just grouped into Serenity Place. She stated the woman who is a resident of Serenity Place talked about how great of a location it was and, of course that at the start of something, there can be some conflict, but it is thriving now. There were one or two calls in the month of April that were actually domestic cases, but to say you were going to deny someone a chance to live the life that Plymouth is trying to provide, a life where you can grow and have a family. She asked that people be a little less selfish and think and care about others, because Plymouth is a place where we can be kind and let others enjoy their time here.

Marilyn Fortin (9191 Suter Road, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Fortin stated that she had some real concerns about the current conditions. She said one of the individuals who spoke said it was going to be similar to the building on Baker Street. She stated if anyone went by that building, they could see that they were in a group of homes that fit into a tiny space and there was no place for children to play. People could look out their front window and see into the house right next to them. She said the way they were jammed in there was a nightmare and an eyesore and none of us should be proud of that facility. She then asked if Serenity Place was an R-4.

Booker replied that there is no R-4 in Plymouth.

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Fortin stated that she knew it wasn't, but asked if it should be. She explained that it was a multi-housing apartment building and to her, it should be an R-4. She stated that Plymouth already had R-4. She said another thing she really questioned were all the people at the Red Rock Inn and asked if they were even residents of Marshall County. She said she knew a lot of people who knew her as a nurse at the Marshall County Health Department and said she loved people and had helped millions. She stated she was not opposed to helping people but questioned if the residents at the Red Rock Inn even lived in Marshall County and asked if Plymouth was inviting a more serious problem there, because they were taking care of people who were not even Marshall County residents. She asked if Plymouth really needed the facility, as she believed many of the Garden Courts around here required them to go out of the county to find people to live there because they did not have enough people in Plymouth to fill them.

Pamela Risi (406 E. Garro Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Risi said she had not planned on talking that night, but felt she needed to. She shared that her daughter was a recovering drug addict and when she was at Serenity Place, she was with a bunch of other people who were not approved to be there, doing drugs. She explained that it was the same at the Garden Court, and she knew for a fact that they could approve somebody to be there, but asked how they could keep them from bringing in their friends who sat there and did drugs. She explained that there was a 68% recidivism rate for drugs, and stated that they could not control it, so the eight people who they were hoping would not have a relapse on drugs, most likely would. She believed that families or anyone else should not be living at the Red Rock Inn, and stated that it should be purchased and raised to the ground. She said that she paid taxes, a lot of taxes, because she had a nice house and worked four jobs at one time to pay her mortgage and support her family. She stated she agreed with the woman who was well-dressed that Plymouth needed houses that were nicer, of higher income, who could pay their taxes, for social services, and pay for their schools that really need help. She stated she was against it and believed it was asking for trouble. She stated she had to deal with this with her own daughter, and she was not proud of that fact. She stated she had seen what can happen and knows what will happen.

Linda Yoder (901 N. Michigan Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Yoder stated she was the Executive Director for the United Way of Marshall County and currently lived about a block north of Webster School, which was her neighborhood as well. She stated she was a part of the project team, and it was the second time the United Way had been involved in the Housing Institute with Angela Rupchock-Schafer representing them in the first round. She said she had taken Rupchock-Schafer's place in the new project, and it was a great team that one had to be invited to. She explained that the reason they were in Marshall County was because of the Stellar designation, as they got the attention of the Indiana Department of Health, and they started attending their bi-weekly meetings about health and wellness in Marshall County. She said when they heard them talking about the issues that Plymouth had with the hotels and the housing insecurities, they invited them to tour the facilities with them and invited them to the Housing Institute. She added there were only five communities, with teams of eight to ten people, who were invited to the Housing Institute, who struggled with all the issues that were being talked about. She stated they learned from prior projects of other communities and, as part of the institute, were learning to better their next projects. She stated when they did the housing gap analysis, they were able to get the funding from the State Health Department. She stated when they looked at it, they talked about the whole housing chain and said it would not solve everything, but they needed to start somewhere. She informed them that they had a lot of folks who were housing insecure, and it was only getting worse. She stated the high cost of living due to inflation and said that she had heard someone say regarding housing that \$350,000 was the new \$250,000 when

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talking about a home. She stated it was that way with interest rates and with the cost of construction, and it was making it less and less affordable to purchase a home.

Wesley Lucas (1012 Angel Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Lucas stated that his home was a few houses up from where the project was proposed. He mentioned the discussion earlier about it taking a village, and expressed that he lived in a village. He stated he could count on any one of his neighbors to help him out with anything immediately if he needed.

Webster asked if he could speak to the board, so people online could hear him.

Lucas stated he was not good at public speaking and explained when he spoke to his representative about it being a nice walking distance, he was unsure about what jobs were in that neighborhood. He stated he worked in South Bend but lived in Plymouth because he loved Plymouth. He stated that he was not for the project at all and had a lot of reasons, but felt he was not eloquent at enunciating them.

James Causey (1107 River Birch Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Causey shared that he served 12 years on the Garden Court Board and the last 10 years of it he served as President. He stated his overriding goal for the last few years of that tenure was to get Serenity Place over the finish line, which took them five years to do, but they did it. He stated from the land acquisition to the zoning hearing, to construction, and a pandemic that intervened in the meantime to mess things up, they finally got the job done and had a grand opening two-three years ago, so he knew a little bit about permanent supportive housing. He stated the current particular project behind Webster School was somewhat different from Serenity Place. He explained that Serenity Place was 100% permanent supportive housing and the current project was less than 25%, which seemed to be dominating the entire conversation. He stated Garden Court was really taking a beating, and he did not believe they deserved it. He said everyone in the room at some point needed a helping hand, whether it was from a family member, a parent, a pastor or a good friend, and stated that he was certain that he was correct. He explained that all they were trying to do with 22% of the people was put out a helping hand and shared that, in his opinion, the project needed to move forward and urged their approval. He added that the dad referred to in the opening letter for the public hearing was him.

Rebecca Mear (724 Colony Court, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Mrs. Mear stated the street she lived on dead ends at the field where the project would be and said there were only four houses on it. She said she did not believe people understood the traffic situation during the nine months out of the year. She stated there were children who walked to school, especially from the Jackson Heights area as well as other areas, but there were no sidewalks on Lemler Lane, on Jackson Heights, except for part of it, or on Bayless Street. She explained that there was a lot of traffic while the children were walking or riding their bikes, trying to get to and from school safely. She stated that Harper was correct in saying that his driveway was blocked for two hours, twice a day. She explained that the streets become one-way streets as two vehicles can not be driven down those streets in the opposite direction, and the Jackson Heights area had only one entrance. She stated that she does not believe R-4 was so bad, but once it was changed, it would be open for anything. She believed if they wanted to build more buildings or donate the property to the city, that would be great. She asked why the four acres could not remain R-2 instead of R-4, so the city could have some control over it. She said that her understanding is that low-income people do a lot of walking to get to where they need to be,

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such as the library, getting medical care, grocery store, etc. The closest location for them would be Dollar General, but they could only get a few items there and stated she was totally against the location.

Booker added that any project that went on that property would have to put sidewalks in, so there would be sidewalks all along Bayless Street.

Wendel asked if a portion of that property could remain R-2.

Booker replied that they could not expand the area, but they could reduce it.

John Puetz (12040 Lupine Lane, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Puetz stated that people in horrible situations need help and, although this was all based upon choices that were made, they still need help. It was just not at this location because the control that was being discussed was an illusion and did not exist. He stated that low-income housing did not bring economic stimulus to their community and said the history of low-income and substance abuse did not equal desirable workforce employees. He explained that housing for working-class American citizens needed improvement, and they needed it in Plymouth. He stated there was vast employment available for those who wished to work and Plymouth deserved to grow with more responsible citizens who brought economic stimulus to Plymouth.

Ann Baker (310 Charles Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Baker stated she lived on the corner of Charles and Bayless Street and had lived there for 22 years. She stated she agreed with Harper, that the traffic was very busy from opening up Bayless Street to the Jackson Heights apartments. She understood that Plymouth was looking to grow and looked toward the future, so the decision on rezoning could be very important for their future. She explained there was more farmland to the east, and that 10-20 years from now it may also be developed into potential apartment complexes. She said if that were the case, however, it would be important to see where the access roads were. She asked about how many access roads there were from Jackson Heights and pointed out that there was currently Bayless Street, Lemler Lane, and Jackson Heights Road and asked where the other roads would be placed for the growth, not only for this particular project. She stated it was about looking toward the future for their children and grandchildren who may be living in the community. She stated they were landlocked with the railroad, and they also had private residential to the south of Dollar General and also the Jackson Heights Apartments. She expressed that there was so much traffic in that area that there needed to be a traffic study performed to understand what they were looking at on a day-to-day activity level. She explained the more vehicles and the more residents in that area create more traffic for both pedestrians and vehicles, and expressed the critical nature of the particular decision in rezoning because in the future they needed to know what the next step would be for development, as all the farmland may be sold to eventually become residential anyway.

Christine Deutscher (312 Niles Street, Mishawaka, IN 46544)

Deutscher stated she was an affordable housing consultant in Indiana and was proud to have worked with Garden Court on the Serenity Place project. She said she was also working on a similar project in Warsaw that was integrated supportive housing. She shared that she and her colleagues did this work because they believed that homelessness was possible for anyone and, beyond that, this work was a model for solving complex social challenges that kept so many who were struggling from achieving

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their goals. She listed generational poverty, domestic abuse, mental health issues, and addictions are all addressed in the supportive housing model. She explained that the Bowen Center, who was an industry leader in the area, was joining them as a supportive service provider for the eight units. She explained that they were not just providing them with housing, but additional support for different services as well. She stated she was aware that one of the goals in the project was to address the low-income individuals and families living at the Red Rock Inn and the Economy Inn. She said she called the Inns earlier that day, and learned that rates for one person range from \$40/night to \$200/week. She explained that prices increased with additional people, which could be a couple or a single parent with children or pets. She explained that it was \$10,400/year for housing only and listed, for context, someone who worked a minimum wage job, 40 hours/week for 52 weeks per year with no time off earned \$15,080 before taxes and explained that was 60% of their gross income going towards housing costs. She explained that for the current project, affordability was considered less than 30% and those people needed options. She stated that the proposed development provided those options and helped address situations that caused a household to become homeless in the first place. She believed that Americans in particular believed that the power of ingenuity and spirit would solve any problem, but in reality, many of them were a couple of paychecks or social security checks away from missing their mortgage or rent payments. She stated unless there were supportive systems in place to help neighbors in need, it would be very difficult for them to better their situation and those people were already in their community and needed their help. She asked the Plan Commission to consider approving the variance that was needed to build the essential resource for Plymouth.

Scott Mear (724 Colony Court, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Mr. Mear stated that they had lived on Conger Street for 40 years and the subdivision had smaller homes on smaller lots like the R-2 and the R-4. He explained that if they started putting those smaller lots in their neighborhood, their property values would go down. He expressed that he had lived in those smaller areas and one could actually be able to reach out to the neighbor's house, which was too close. He stated if they started doing that in their neighborhood, it would start looking like the Conger Street neighborhood. He said he did not have too many problems with his neighbors except for one, and explained that they could not resolve their issues because the properties were so close, and the neighbor was always on his property. He stated his neighbor could always do stuff to them as long as he was on his own property. He explained that when one is five feet from their neighbor, it was too close, but the police could do anything about it because of the rules, so he was totally against the rezoning. He stated his other concern was that it was so far away from any grocery store or anything like that, so it was not a practical place for low-income people to live.

Mike Delp (3746 W. Shore Drive, Bremen, IN 46506)

Delp stated he used to live on South Michigan Street, near the property and was present to support the request. He stated he was a former City Council member and if it were him, he would vote for the project as housing needed to happen. He believed it was well-thought-out and was right across from the school where kids could play. He stated his family still owned multiple commercial properties in Plymouth, so he was a taxpayer and he supported the project. He stated that Angel Street had just been improved, and the project would tie into the process. He believed that Bayless Street was on the list for improvements soon as well. He explained that with those items listed, he believed the infrastructure was there to accomplish the project.

Janis Holiday (20850 11A Road, Plymouth, IN 46563)

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Holiday shared that she was the Director of the Marshall County Council on Aging, and they also ran the public transit system for Marshall County. She stated that she did not have a lot to add, but explained that they serviced all the Garden Courts and the two Inns multiple times per day, so she was rather familiar with a lot of the cases. She added she was even familiar with a lot of the people who had spoken that night, and added that the concerns she had heard from people happened everywhere, and it had nothing to do with just this complex. She stated drugs were everywhere and traffic was at every school in the county, twice a day for nine months out of the year.

Janice Colenso (613 Jackson Heights Road, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Colenso stated she was against the project as her backyard went right up to the farm field. She stated they had a decent neighborhood in Jackson Heights and the subdivision. She stated there were so many kids not only in the Elementary School, but in the whole neighborhood, and they did not need people from the Red Rock Inn who might have any kind of problems that could be a problem for the kids. She stated they could be very vulnerable as far as accepting drugs from people, and they did not need that there.

Feece asked if there was anyone online who had any comments.

Houin replied that there were currently 48 people online and there was one person with their hand raised. He invited them to unmute themselves if they would like to make a comment.

Angie Kain (11579 9A Road, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Kain shared that she worked in the community with people trying to find affordable housing and other resources that were needed for mental health or just a sustainable life. She stated it just came down to meeting simple needs because they had barriers that, in one way or another, were not able to achieve those factors without some help. She stated she was also a foster parent, and they were able to take their foster daughter to Serenity Place to be reunited with her mom. She explained that her mother had worked very hard and if it had not been for her mother having safe, affordable housing, she and her kids would not have been able to reunite. She stated that Garden Court had actually been very helpful with clients she had who needed affordable housing, and she supported the program. She explained that it was needed and there were problems and issues everywhere they went as anything could happen at any time. She expressed that they had to help each other help each other.

Loretta Peters (219 Shalley Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Peters asked if it was appropriate, since she was in favor of the project, to ask for a show of hands of others in attendance.

Feece replied that he did not mind.

Peters asked who was in favor of the project and the room appeared split almost down the middle between those in favor and those against.

Thomas Keb (10499 Tyler Road, Bremen, IN 46506)

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Keb stated that everyone knew he was from Plymouth as he lived and breathed Plymouth. He shared that he sat on the board of Link to Hope in Marshall County and explained that they helped customers pay their rent, utilities and medication out of donated money received from all over, such as churches, local people, United Way and are supported very heavily. He highlighted that it was not just an issue at the motels, but was across all of Marshall County, including Plymouth, because people were struggling. He explained that last year they spent from \$75,000 - \$113,000 supporting housing and challenged everyone to find a place like that in Plymouth, as the numbers thrown around that night were pretty accurate and said that what they paid out was astronomical, as people were paying thousands of dollars for rent. He stated rent was \$800 plus on the high side each month and said they needed to do something to help people, so he was in support of the project.

Jo Fisher (1113 W. Adams Street, Plymouth, IN 46563)

Fisher said she only had one question. She asked what was going to happen to the Red Rock Inn and the Economy Inn once people were moved. She asked if they would still exist.

Feece replied that he did not believe they were going to empty the motels, and explained that the meeting was about rezoning and had nothing to do with the motels.

Fisher stated that they had to make it clear because every time she turned around, people were saying that the people living there would be in the new complex. She asked if Serenity Place was transitional and asked where the Mayor was.

Mayor Listenberger greeted her and stated that it would be a question for the people from Garden Courts.

Houin clarified that it was a public hearing and not a public question and answer session. He stated to Fisher that she was welcome to make her comments but if there were questions about other properties or specific projects that were not relevant to the request, then those questions should be asked in a different format and not at the public hearing.

Fisher stated that was fine, but everyone there needed to know and needed to understand that there were big outliers to it. She stated that she and her son had a nonprofit and had helped thousands of people for ten years in Plymouth and surrounding areas. She stated that they only helped two families, out of those thousands, more than one time because they required them to do community service with a nonprofit, and only two families stepped up to do that. She stated that everyone wanted hand outs and not a hand up to better themselves.

Mrs. Morrow went back up and said she still had 30 seconds left as she timed herself. She believed they were losing their focus as they were all good people and wanted to help people. She stated that the question was zoning and whether it met the criteria that Booker described and if it was responsible use of the land in the neighborhood. She asked if it should be used for something better to build more prosperous growth. She stated she was all for helping poor people and, honestly, everyone there should volunteer and help people, and then they could all feel good about themselves. She stated making the decision that night would not make any one of them a good or bad person, but said responsible growth should be the focus of the meeting.

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Myers commented that he had not had two minutes to speak during the public hearing and wished to speak. He agreed with Mrs. Morrow that this was about rezoning, and shared that he had sat where the board sat for 13 years. He asked if any of them had been on the board back when he was there.

Feece replied that he had been on the board since Mayor Jack Greenlee was in office.

Myers stated the meeting was about rezoning and whether it fit with the Comprehensive Plan. He stated they had single family and multi-family dwellings all around there and asked what best use they would use for it as it was currently agricultural. He stated he did not believe it would be good commercial land or light industrial land, so he asked what else the land would be good for. He believed it should be some type of residential building, and they were asking for R-4 because there were already apartments in the area, and it would not change from that standpoint.

Commissioners Wendel and Webster moved and seconded to close the public hearing. The motion carried.

Houin asked that before they took any action if they would allow him to give some legal thoughts. He reminded the board that Booker explained earlier in his presentation that what they were asking to do that night was to make a recommendation to the city council, so they could make a final decision on amending the zoning ordinance. He explained that they could send it to the council with a favorable recommendation, unfavorable recommendation, or no recommendation if they could not agree if it was favorable or unfavorable. He stated in making the recommendation, they should be considering the criteria that Booker had listed for them, which were the Comprehensive Plan, current conditions, desired future use, impact on property values, and responsible growth and development. He listed those as the five criteria and stated he explained it because they had been there for two hours and had heard a lot of comments. He stated he wanted to ensure they were focused on what their duties were legally as a Plan Commission.

Wendel asked for clarification that they just had to recommend yes or no to city council.

Houin replied that they made a recommendation and made no decisions on rezoning that night. He stated that the recommendation, whatever it may be, would go to the City Council, and he was aware that City Council members were anticipating hearing their decision, and they expected to hear the request at their meeting on June 10th.

Pinkerton asked when the City Council needed to make their decision based upon their recommendation if they had to listen to all of this again.

Houin replied that they did not, as the public hearing portion of it was that night. He elaborated that it was an amendment to an ordinance of the city, so it required multiple hearings before the council as June 10th would be a first hearing of the ordinance amendment along with their certified recommendation. He stated they would not take final action at that meeting either, and then they would be able to hear it at the second or third meeting later in June. He stated they did not have to hold a public hearing on the particular request.

Feece asked if it were approved could they put in a stipulation for only one multi-family.

Houin replied that he believed they could.

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Booker added that a written commitment would have to be recorded at the county if they wanted to limit the use of the particular property. He said he knew in the county they had had several properties rezoned for their use. He mentioned one in LaPaz where a grain elevator was zoned industrial, but they did not put all the industrial uses in it. He stated they made a written commitment to build the grain facility and a supply store that he did not believe had ever been built.

Houin added that it would also only be a recommendation to the City Council, so a written commitment or any other alteration of the zoning standards would require an amendment to the ordinance. He said it would be up to the City Council to decide what action they would take and if they would adopt their recommendation.

Sellers asked Booker when they discussed the lot sizes as he missed it as he could not hear him.

Booker replied that the minimum lot area per residential unit in R-4 for a single family was 6,000 square feet. He stated that it could be larger, but a two-family was 4,000 square feet and for a multi-family it was 2,000 square feet. He stated it becomes confusing because the minimum lot area for a single-family was 6,000 square feet but for a two-family it was 8,000 square feet. He stated the multi-family was 20,000 square feet. He explained they divided it into 20,000 square feet by the minimum lot area, so they could have multiple on that particular property.

Sellers asked for clarification that they were being asked to zone an 8-acre piece of land R-4. Booker agreed.

Pinkerton asked for assistance on how to word it.

Feece commented that when he mentioned one building, it would not be one building as there were four buildings with 36 units, from what he understood.

Booker explained that they were not really approving the proposal but rather the rezoning. He stated they could, and he thought he may be speaking out of line, but said they could rezone it to a multi-family and they could sell it to someone else. He stated they could give a favorable recommendation, an unfavorable recommendation, or no recommendation.

Commissioners Pinkerton and Gidley moved and seconded to provide a favorable recommendation of PC 2024-07 to the City Council as presented. The motion passed by roll call vote.

In Favor: Eads, Gidley, Pinkerton, Sellers, Wendel, and Feece

Opposed: Longanecker, Milner, Secor, and Webster

Absent: Rupchock-Schafer

Williams stated there were six votes in favor and four opposed.

Comprehensive Plan Update:


There were no updates at that time.

Other Business:

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There were no updates at this time.

With there being no other business to come before the Commission, Commissioners Wendel and Eads moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.



Kyle Williams, Recording Secretary