

**Starke County Plan Commission  
Regular Meeting & 1 Public Hearing  
April 12, 2021**

- ❖ Call to Order-President Crase called the meeting to order
- ❖ **Pledge of Allegiance**
- ❖ **Roll Call:** Bill Crase, president & surveyor; Todd Jackson, vice president and citizen member; Bryan Cavender; Commissioner; Howard Bailey, councilman; Phil Woolery, extension educator; Mark Allen, trustee; Todd Lawrence, Denise Cultice, and Karl Swihart, citizen members; Martin Bedrock, commission counsel; Wallace (Boz) Williams, building commissioner; Robby Blodgett, code enforcement officer; and Pamla J. Starkey, administrator. There were (4) visitors present.
- ❖ **Approval of the minutes** of the March 17, 2021 meeting: Vice President Jackson made a motion to approve minutes as written, seconded by Commissioner Cavender. Motion carried (9-0)
- ❖ **Public Hearing-Pursuant to the laws of the State of Indiana contained in I.C.36-7-9, the Starke County Planning Commission hereby orders that the buildings located at 6835 E SR 10 Knox IN 46534, legal description: S18 T32 R1 NE NE Exc 3A NE Cor 12 acres. State ID #75-11-18-200-002.000-008, owned by Tina Rudd and Andrew Knapp, must be demolished or rehabilitated.**
  - President Crase read the request then opened the Public Hearing.
    - Ms. Rudd was present and explained that last summer they jacked up the front of the house 3 foot and put concrete in and a new window and someone from the county came out and told her that she needs to stop after she did it then preceded to tell her that she needs to tear it down, they didn't ask to look around or check anything. She also went on to say what construction she has done and showed pictures. Ms. Rudd let the board know that she wants to rehabilitate it as it is a part of Bass Lake history, she has the windows for it and some of the building materials for it already and started to fix and then they told her to stop and didn't know what to do, then asked the board to give her the opportunity to rehab the building and said that she has made a lot of progress. Ms. Rudd said that she had people in the house that do construction and they told her that the only part of the house that isn't real stable is the front wall. She went on the explain what has been done and what needs to be done. Ms. Rudd also told the board that there are about 500 endangered brown bats and according to federal law you can't hurt them and asked how can you tear down a house without hurting them.
    - President Crase stated that they are only endangered during their season which is April 1<sup>st</sup> thru October 1<sup>st</sup>
    - Extension Educator Woolery stated that they are endangered all of the time but they wouldn't be staying in the attic in the winter time.
    - Ms. Rudd said that they do stay in the attic in the winter time, she went up there and doesn't know why they don't leave.
    - Councilman Bailey asked if there is any feces up there.
    - Ms Rudd said that when they get to the attic part of it she will call someone to come out and remove them
    - Councilman Bailey said that his one concern now is that bat feces can be hazardous.
    - Mike Demo (sp) who came with Ms. Rudd, said that he and about 6 other people went up there and you could see feces but not much.
    - Councilman Bailey said he is not saying that is a reason to demolish, he just brought it up so that it doesn't come to that.
    - Ms. Rudd explained that she doesn't even know if she wants to live in the house it is just about the history of it.

- Councilman Bailey asked how long the house has been vacant
- Ms. Rudd said she really doesn't know but an elderly man lived in the front house for a while then moved to the back house
- Ms. Rudd asked the board again to give her another chance.
- Councilman Bailey asked how long she owned the house
- Ms. Rudd stated that it is going on her second year
- President Crase asked Ms. Rudd while the public hearing is open if there was anything else she would like to say
- Ms. Rudd said that she has done tons of work, put new roofs on, new windows in, and more windows sitting there to be put in, but didn't want to continue until she was told she is able to fix it.
- President Crase asked if anyone else had anything else to say.
- With nothing more from the public, President Crase asked for a motion to close the public hearing.
- Member Cultice made a motion to close the public hearing seconded by Member Swihart. Motion carried (9-0)

➤ Board discussion

- Councilman Bailey said that her intentions are to rehabilitate the home and asked what kind of time frame is she asking for
- Ms. Rudd said that she would like to get the outside leveled and siding on the building within the year, which Terry White offered to give her siding for free because he doesn't want to see his family legacy gone and she has her windows, siding and the majority of the wood. She stated that she doesn't know how long it will take her to get the inside done and as long as it looks presentable on the outside she doesn't think it should matter how long it takes for the inside.
- Councilman Bailey asked Ms. Rudd if all of the trees have been removed.
- Ms. Rudd replied that yes the trees around the structure have been removed, the only trees that are left are nowhere near our house
- President Crase stated that he vaguely remembers some things about it but with COVID we didn't have the opportunity to meet a whole lot, but there was a point in time that your son had some plans of remodeling and came to a couple of meetings that we had and gave us the status of what he was doing. He went on to say that we were working on some time frames and we pretty much saw a stop in progress and it was his understanding that it was after that you received the letter, the main thing for the board is a timely matter in making sure that it is structurally safe and sound and along with that comes building permits and inspections. He stated that one of the problems for this county is that although it has went through a few different names in the last nine years and it has been an eyesore for the county for quite some time so and we have worked with her in the years prior and maybe two years ago there was a name change but our problem is that we are still dealing with it. With it being a main roadway of coming from Culver into Bass Lake. President Crase asked her how much longer would it take to have it safe and closed in.
- Ms. Rudd replied that it would be within the next 3 months, she just stopped everything when she got the letter. She also said that she has the windows and most of the wood.
- President Crase asked if any of the other board members have any questions
- Member Cultice asked Ms. Rudd how dedicated is she to getting the work done
- Ms. Rudd stated that she will be out there everyday and she can do most of the stuff herself and by the end of summer she should have the front of the house and at least around to the

kickouts completely done with OSB and windows and wrap because she wants to fix the rest of it before she starts siding it but if you really want the front sided she will do that

- Building commissioner Williams asked if she is planning on doing the west side concrete like east side concrete when he looked at the other day it was like sections of cobble stone
- Ms Rudd said the was the part that was built in 1901
- President Crase asked if she is planning on doing this work herself
- Ms. Rudd said yes
- President Crase asked if she understands that you need to go to the office and get a new remodeling permit, you do have to call in for inspections which are during the week and these steps have to be followed
- Ms. Rudd said that she does not have a problem with that
- President Crase said the reason we are after these and working on these so much is because we do a lot of economic development and this was one of the things we scored low in was the way our county looks and we are trying to get our county looking better to draw companies here and these abandoned structures was one of the biggest issues that we have with some of the new businesses that come here and drive around our country side and we would like to get them cleaned up. He also stated that along with this if we decide to give you an extension, we would expect it to be cleaned up including the yard to be mowed, we want everything to be cleaned up especially our main thorough fairs coming into the lakes and different things, so it is up to the board, we've been dealing with this for 9 years, been through several different owners then went on to ask for a motion on what the board wants to do.
- Councilman Bailey asked if she has owned the property for 2 years and Ms. Rudd answered yes
- Attorney bedrock said to Ms. Rudd that Councilman Bailey asked if you owned the property for 2 years, but you owned the property with Carl Rudd
- Ms. Rudd said that she did not own the property with Carl Rudd, that they were buying it on land contract and that she personally owned it for less than 2 years
- Councilman Bailey continued on by asking if tearing down the barn, cleaning up of the trees and the work that has been done, if she was the one that has been doing that.
- Ms. Rudd stated that she did not tear down the barn but did clean up the yard and the trees and has cleaned out a ton of stuff even in the back where the man had buried his garbage.
- Councilman Bailey stated that one of his concerns is the bat feces and that it can be very hazardous to humans and would like to be assured that will be controlled
- Ms. Rudd stated that she needs to get more into it to figure out how she can get rid of them. She went on to say that she would like to see the property become something like a museum
- President Crase asked her to stop up at the surveyor's office and he will give her some phone numbers to call for the brown bats. You can deal with the DNR and there are other places to deal with that
- President Crase asked if anyone had a motion they would like to move forward with
- Vice president Jackson stated that based on the things that you said that you have done, last thing he would want to see is tearing down a historical structure, and that she has made some progress and have things lined up to move forward with the support of Mr. Williams. He went on to say, he would like to give her until the August meeting with Mr. Williams having an inspection at least once a month and provide updates to the board on a monthly basis with the progress that she has made in these 4 months, which gives time because of the holidays and knowing the hill that she has in front of her is big and that is his motion,

giving her a 4 month period, until the August meeting, we will have another conversation with her and have a report from the building inspector on a monthly basis on the progress being made and in the August meeting, if you have met your deadline, then we can talk about what extension you might need if not we can proceed as a group to remove the property

- President Crase included that he would like to see a representative at our meeting every month to give a report on the work that is being done and Boz is going to inspect it on a monthly basis making sure everything is being done and asked vice president Jackson to carry on with his motion, with that being said vice president stated that was his motion with the addition of what president Crase added and giving until the August meeting, seconded by member Swihart. Motion carried (9-0)
- President Crase told Ms. Rudd that she has 4 months and needs to see her here every month and asked to get her remodeling permit applied for and to get her inspections lined up with Mr. Williams and also said that we need to see action within the next 4 months and doesn't want this to go on for another 10 years or more.

#### ❖ **Building Commissioners Report**

- President Crase let the board know that Boz has been out doing inspections
  - Administrator Starkey stated that she hasn't had the time to show the building commissioner the reports that need to be done every month as he is trying to fulfill two jobs right now and our office has been extremely busy and said that they will work on that for future meetings. She also let the board know that he is working hard and doing a really good job.

#### ❖ **Code Enforcement Officer Report**

- Case #78, The Lane Street Center/Matthew Zinc-2860 W SR 10 North Judson (see code enforcement officer notes attached to minutes) Ms. Blodgett asked the board if they want to clean this property up
  - President Crase stated that he personally would like to see it cleaned up and the fence resecured so you can't see what is behind it but the fence needs to be put back up and the front of the building still needs to be cleaned up
  - Ms Blodgett said that she has been working on this one since 2018 and they just recently removed the van and stuff
  - President Crase asked if she had contact with them and she said never. He then asked her to reach back out to them and if nothing else we will set up a public hearing requesting them to attend because he would like to see it cleaned up.
- Case #170, Heide Brewer/Shannon Trusty on Lincoln St in Monterey (see code enforcement officer notes attached to minutes) Ms. Blodgett feels that she gave them ample time to clean up the property, they removed the shed but they didn't remove the camper and junk.
  - Attorney Bedrock asked if they were gone
  - Ms. Blodgett replied that they are gone and removed the shed but left the camper and junk
  - President Crase asked if it was up for tax sale
  - Ms. Blodget said no they were just living there, Heidi Brewer actually owns the property
  - Vice president Jackson asked if she knows where they are now and if she had any communication with them
  - Ms. Blodgett said she has the address where she has been writing them but hasn't had any contact with them
  - President Crase asked attorney Bedrock to write them a letter with his letter head
- Case #178, Bart Egolf 10702 W San Pierre Rd, San Pierre. (see code enforcement officer notes attached to minutes) Ms. Blodgett stated that she will check this property on April 26, 2021 as

Mr. Stephenson gave them until then to remove the semi van trailers and junk and debris although she went out there today and nothing had changed

- Case #187, Carol Hulme 0960 N 600 E Knox (see code enforcement officer notes attached to minutes) Ms. Blodgett stated this is all cleaned up except for the tires which she referred them to Environmental Management office
- Case #193, William & Linda Kaply 201 N Broadway San Pierre (see code enforcement officer notes attached to minutes) was put on hold last year because of the weather but will start again on May 3, 2021
- Case #179, Clinton Sanders 8405 S Ridge Rd Monterey (see code enforcement officer notes attached to minutes) Ms. Blodgett has been working with his daughter because Mr. Sanders has passed away and she is showing progress each month

#### ❖ **Old Business and Violations**

- Race track located at 0135 W SR 10 North Judson
  - Attorney Bedrock sent letters to the property owners with no response
  - President Crase stated that he would like to schedule a tech committee meeting on 4/28/2021 at 9:00 to start on our race track ordinance that we are dealing with across the county that keeps bouncing between the 2 properties along with a noise ordinance that goes along with it. He asked if anyone from the tech committee can't make it please let him know so that we can reschedule.
  - Admin. Starkey stated that we need a forth member for the tech committee and let the board know that Extension Educator Woolery said that he would be willing to sit on the tech committee.
- Attorney Bedrock let the board know that set for proceeding supplemental for Nokes is on May 12, 2021 at 1:00 on zoom

#### ❖ **New Business and Violations**

##### ❖ **Report from Starke County Development Foundation-**

- Member Cultice stated that she didn't get to go and they are cutting the members on the board so at this time we do not have a member on that board

##### ❖ **Public Comment**

- Councilman Pearman asked if that was the economic development meeting last week
  - Member Cultice said it was
  - Councilman Pearman stated that we didn't miss a whole lot, the IEDC was there and Matt is taking over for John Stanom (sp?) and what it really boiled down to is a presentation for the development foundation and talked about Skittle (sp?) not a whole lot of strategy discussed there Pearman also stated that he stressed that he was upset that we didn't here of the amazon project in Merrillville and Valparaiso and some other things. He also said that he asked Matt for some assistance for a project they have going on in Hamlet with some support with the state. He said that they are taking 10 people off of the board or something like that
  - President Crase thanked councilman Pearman for the update. He stated that he still would like to stay in contact with them in case any grants come through or some of these clean ups and that he has asked a lot of the state representatives if they could help us get that grant changed a little bit, because right now it goes to the towns and cities, the counties are not allowed to apply for it. He said that he spent a lot of time with Ed and Boswell and KIRPC trying to go over how to get some funding for these unsafe structures and right now they won't let the counties apply for that so he went and talked to a lot of our state representatives hoping that could get us a little bit of help to get some of this grant money to get rid of some of these structures.

- Councilman Pearman said that they brought up the 30 Coalition and the problem he has with it is, he got some of the information from Todd, one of the things he told them was what his fears are the fact that we may become a “fly by county”
- President Crase stated that he had a lot of concerns with that also
- Councilman Pearman went on to express more of his concerns

❖ **Other Business from the Board**

❖ **End of the month reports**

❖ **Next Scheduled Meeting-** will be Monday, May 10, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

❖ Admin. Starkey informed the board that the board of zoning appeal still needs another member and we already have 2 members from our board so the commissioners will need to appoint someone.

❖ Vice President Jackson stated everyone knows that Bill is fighting the BIG C and was a member of the North Judson Fire Department for 20 years and they are putting on a sausage and biscuit breakfast with all of the fixings at the fire house on Saturday May 8, 2021 from 6-10 a.m. and asked for everyone to come to support him.

❖ **Adjournment-**With no further business, Member Cultice made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Trustee Allen. Motion carried (9-0)

This meeting was recorded and will be on file in the Starke County Plan Commission Office.

Unless stated otherwise all Plan Commission meetings will be held on the second Monday of every month at 5:30 p.m. with the Board of Zoning Appeal meeting on the same night the latter of 6:30 p.m. or the conclusion of the Plan Commission meeting.

Pamla J. Starkey  
Administrator