

**WHITLEY COUNTY ADVISORY PLAN COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT**

**24-W-REZ-7**

**ZONE MAP AMENDMENT**

Whitley County Redevelopment Commission

120± acres, on Yellow River Road between Lincolnway and US 30

**NOVEMBER 20, 2024**

**AGENDA ITEM: 5**

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL**

Current zoning: AG, Agricultural

Proposed zoning: IPM, Industrial Park/Manufacturing

Property area: 120.34± acres

The petitioner, owner of the subject property area, is requesting a zone map amendment for approximately 120 acres located in Section 23 of Union Township along Yellow River Road between Lincolnway and US 30. The property has an address of 6336 East Yellow River Road. The requested zoning is IPM, Industrial Park/Manufacturing.

***Existing zoning classifications and land uses***

Currently, the subject area is zoned AG, Agricultural. The property consists primarily of tilled fields. About 13 acres is a farmstead and woods. The property is bisected by Yellow River Road, with approximately 32 acres to the north of that road along Lincolnway.

The following table lists current surrounding zoning classifications and land uses:

	<i>Current zoning</i>	<i>Current land use</i>
<i>North</i>	AG	[Lincolnway], residences, agricultural (field)
<i>East</i>	AG	[Yellow River Road], agricultural (field), woods, residence
<i>South</i>	IPM	[US 30], industries
<i>West</i>	IPM, AG	Industries, residence

***Proposed land use***

The petitioner is requesting the zoning amendment in anticipation of developing the property for industrial or commercial uses. Some infrastructure projects are expected, such as construction and/or reconstruction of roads and installation of sewer, but exact uses and timeframes are yet to be dependent on a developer or end user.

***Zoning code criteria***

The IPM zoning district permits various enclosed industrial and non-retail commercial uses, which would reflect the usage proposed.

**REVIEW CRITERIA**

Indiana Code §36-7-4-603 and Section 12.2(F) of the zoning ordinance state the criteria listed below to which the Commission must pay “reasonable regard” when considering amendments to the zoning ordinance. Staff’s comments are under each criterion.

**1. The most recently adopted Comprehensive Plan;**

The 2022 Comprehensive Plan describes the Future Character and Land Use plan as “the overall look and feel of a place—the impression it makes on residents and visitors and the qualities of buildings and spaces that make it different from other places.” The plan describes community character “to help guide growth and change to support places that are attractive, draw people to want to spend time there and are compatible with adjacent areas, without being overly specific to

every parcel's individual land use." So, the Plan emphasizes that the overall character of an area, while making allowances for some deviations that would not be detrimental to the overall area.

For the subject property, the Future Character is designated as Employment Center, character intensity of 3.5-4.5 (moderate to high intensity) which is generally intended to "promote opportunities for larger employers to locate and conduct business." Generally, light industrial and office uses in a business park setting would be expected, although some larger or more intense uses could also be of character. Supporting uses such as retail, multi-family, and public areas should be planned for to create a "multifunctional campus-like environment".

Goal 4 of the Comprehensive Plan generally supports business development, with Recommendation 4.5 being more specific: "Encourage business and industries to locate in areas with sufficient transportation and utility infrastructure and to focus on infill and redevelopment of underutilized sites."

It seems the proposed IPM zoning would align with the suggested character and would support the Plan's recommendation.

**2. The current conditions and the character of current structures and uses in each district;**

The site is currently improved with a farm, with the surrounding area being a mixture of residences, fields, woods, industries, and collector and arterial roads. Development of industrial and commercial uses, and associated infrastructure, would change the character of the immediate area, although it would be in line with the development patterns of the wider area.

**3. The most desirable use for which the land in each district is adapted;**

The adjacent properties have been used for industries for many years, and the property has been located in an economic development TIF district since the early 1990s, so the desirability of such industrial uses in this vicinity is established. This specific property is located near transportation and major utilities. On November 13, it was announced that 700 East and US 30 would be developed into an interchange, which would also support the development of this property for industrial and commercial uses.

Overall, the site appears suited for relatively intense development, although a small portion may have constraints due to drainage or rolling topography.

**4. The conservation of property values throughout the jurisdiction;**

Developing this property for industrial should have a positive effect on property values throughout the jurisdiction by creating new business and employment opportunities, among other effects. Of course, that is dependent on the quality of the development itself and the intensity of the land uses. These would be regulated and checked by the zoning and development plan processes.

Impacts on the immediately adjacent properties will vary.

**5. Responsible development and growth;**

Since this property has been planned for development for decades and since utilities are in near proximity, it seems that the rezoning would be responsible. This will be further checked during subdivision and development plan reviews.

**6. The public health, safety and welfare.**

Industrial uses may have health effects, but these are regulated and monitored by many agencies. The IPM zoning district permits primarily lower intensity industrial and commercial uses, so protection of the public health should be reasonably ensured.

Public safety could be affected by increased traffic on adjacent roadways. These effects have been partially anticipated in future transportation planning but will need to be reviewed in more detail as development is proposed. Other safety aspects would likewise be reviewed at that time.

Since this land use has been expected for quite some time, it seems that the general welfare would be maintained.

Date report completed: 11/13/2024

**PLAN COMMISSION ACTION**

Motion:

By:

Second by:

Favorable recommendation \_\_\_\_

Unfavorable recommendation \_\_\_\_

No recommendation \_\_\_\_

Conditions/Commitments? \_\_\_\_

<b><i>Vote:</i></b>	<b>Baker</b>	<b>Banks</b>	<b>Drew</b>	<b>Emerick</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Hodges</b>	<b>Johnson</b>	<b>Kurtz-Seslar</b>	<b>Wolf</b>
<i>Yes</i>									
<i>No</i>									
<i>Abstain</i>									

