PLAN COMMISSION
-MINUTES-
Monday, August 3, 2026 - Commenced at 1:45 P.M. & adjourned at 2:55 P.M.
City Council Chambers – Municipal Building

The Elkhart City Plan Commission was called to order by Jeff Schaffer at 1:45 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT
Bil Murray
Andy Jones
Rochali Newbill
Diana Lawson
Aaron Mishler
Jeff Schaffer

MEMBERS ABSENT
Dan Boecher
Dave Osborne

REPRESENTING THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT
Eric Trotter, Assistant Director for Planning
Kyle Anthony-Petter- Planner II
Chris Godlewski-Planner I

LEGAL DEPARTMENT
Maggie Marnocha, Corporation Counsel

TECHNOLOGY STAFF
Enzo Gurgel

RECORDING SECRETARY
Carla Lipsey

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
Motion to approve by Mishler; Second by Lawson. Voice vote carries.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Motion to approve by Mishler; Second by Newbill. Voice vote carries.

APPROVAL OF PROOFS OF PUBLICATION
Motion to approve by Mishler; Second by Lawson. Voice vote carries.

26-SUB-05 PETITIONER IS GIADA, LLC, CORY WHITE MANAGING MEMBER
PROPERTY IS LOCATED AT VL Southwest Corner of Woodfield and Kershner Lane
Per Article 4 of the Subdivision Ordinance, approval of a Preliminary Plat for a 38-lot, +/- 9.99 acre major subdivision, to be known as Foxwood Section of Walnut Trails Phase 3 and Phase 4; a part of the Northwest Quarter of Section 35, Township 38 North, Range 5 East, Osolo Township, Elkhart County, Indiana.

STAFF ANALYSIS
Per Article 4 of the Subdivision Ordinance, approval of a Preliminary Plat for a 38-lot, +/- 9.99 acre major subdivision, to be known as Foxwood Section of Walnut Trail Phase 3; a part of the Northwest Quarter of Section 35, Township 38 North, Range 5 East, Osolo Township, Elkhart County, Indiana.

The preliminary plat, known as Foxwood Section of Walnut Trail, Phase 3 and Phase 4, provides for a residential development that connects existing stub streets in creating a more highly interconnected subdivision road network. The +/-9.99 acre development fills a void bound on all sides of existing and fully developed residential subdivisions. The section fronting Deer Run Drive will have twenty-six (26) lots; four (4) lots will front Woodfield Lane; and the remaining eight (8) lots will front Kershner Lane.

The proposed retention for the newly extended street will be directly south of Deer Run Drive and directly south of Kershner Lane, as depicted on the plat, across parts of future Lots 35, 36, 37, 38. An additional proposed retention pond, as depicted on the plat, across parts of future Lots 26 and 27 on the west of Deer Run Drive. A proposed drainage easement should encompass lots 26 & 27 to accommodate the placement of a drainage structure to connect the proposed retention basin with stormwater infrastructure in Deer Run Drive right of way. A proposed stormwater easement should encompass both retention basins for the benefit and maintenance of Foxwood Section of Walnut Trail, Phase 3 & 4.

The street connection for the new Phase will connect from the north at the intersection of Woodfield Lane and Kershner Lane and the south near the intersection of Kershner Lane and Denwood Court. Kershner Lane will be extended as a sixty (60) foot right of way and Deer Run Drive will extend as a fifty (50) foot right of way. Phase 3 consists of Lots 1-5 which already have streets and utilities in place but will require sidewalk improvements. Phase 4 consists of Lots 6-38 will provide for all required public improvements – utilities, curb, gutter, street and public sidewalks.

The project meets the requirements of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances including lot size, layout, and street width. It has been submitted to the city's Technical Review process and staff have had review of the project. There are some minor outstanding issues, however staff does not anticipate any insurmountable issues.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Per IC 36-7-4-702, a plan commission must consider when determining whether to grant primary/preliminary approval of a plat, the plan commission shall determine if the plat or subdivision qualifies for primary/preliminary approval under the standards prescribed by the subdivision control ordinance.

Under the 700 Series of the Indiana Code Statues, the review of primary/preliminary plats are ministerial and if the proposed preliminary/primary plat has adhered to all of the requirements prescribed by the subdivision control ordinance, the plan commission must grant approval, thereby,

The City of Elkhart Planning Staff has reviewed the subject petition and recommends **approval** of a Preliminary Plat for a 38-lot, +/- 9.99 acre major subdivision, to be known as Foxwood Section of Walnut Trail Phase 3; a part of the Northwest Quarter of Section 35, Township 38 North, Range 5 East, Osolo Township, Elkhart County, Indiana.
The lots meet the minimum lot area requirements for the R-1, One-Family Dwelling District;

1. Lots proposed for single-family development meet all of the bulk standards of the R-1 Zoning District, One-Family Dwelling District, specifically, minimum lot size, and property development setbacks;

2. The proposed subdivision meets the stormwater requirements. Establishment of stormwater easement areas across parts of Lots 26, 27, 35, 36, 37, 38 and a drainage easement encompassing lots 26 & 27 should be presented on the plat.

3. In review of the proposed preliminary plat for a new major subdivision, Staff finds the petitioner has demonstrated compliance with all the enacted regulations of both the City of Elkhart Zoning and Subdivision Control Ordinance.

CONDITIONS

1. The approval is preliminary only. The applicant must submit the required application materials for Final Plat Approval to the Plat Committee as per Article 5 of the Subdivision Ordinance prior to the issuance of any permits for construction or sale of property.

2. Subsequent approvals may be required from the appropriate City Departments. Those approvals may include plans for water supply, storm water retention, sewage disposal, grading, roadway construction and other infrastructure prior to final plat approval.

3. Approval is tentative and shall be valid for a maximum period of twelve (12) months. The City Plan Commission may grant an extension upon written request. If the final plat has not been recorded within the time limit, the primary approval is null and void, and the preliminary subdivision plan must be resubmitted for approval.

The project must be reviewed and approved through the City's Technical Review process prior to the submission of the final plat to the Plat Committee.

Trotter states that 97 letters were mailed and 17 were returned in opposition with comments. Comments were:

The proposal is opposed due to concerns that the current infrastructure cannot support the number of houses being proposed. It is estimated that the development would add approximately 100 vehicles, each making two or three trips in and out each day. Additionally, there are worries about the size of the lot, the impact on wildlife, and the increased population density leading to speeding in the neighborhood.

Schaffer noted for the record that Andy Jones arrived at the meeting at 1:55 PM.

Schaffer asks if there are questions from the Commission.

Mishler inquired about the minor concerns and asked Trotter to provide further details.

Trotter replies that the retention and retention easement are recorded on the final plat.

Schaffer inquires whether the proposed plans include sidewalks and curbs.

Trotter responds with a yes.

Schaffer continues to ask about the R1 and R2 zoning districts, specifically what land uses are allowed in these areas.

Trotter replies, residential single-family detached

Schaffer inquires whether the development is zoned R1 or R2; it will still be considered single-family residential use.

Trotter confirmed that the Planned Unit Development (PUD) called for that to be the case.

Schaffer asks what the difference is between R1 and R2 zoning districts.

Trotter states that lot 9500 is for R1 and 7200 is the minimum for R2.

Schaffer continues to inquire about the predominant zoning district in most residential areas.

Trotter replies that R2 is the most frequently seen zoning district in the city.

Schaffer calls petitioner forward.

Tim Saylor, located at 697 Bungalow Drive, encompasses lots 1-5, which represent one phase of the project. This development is divided into two phases: lots 1-5 have existing streets in place; therefore, upon the final plat, there are no additional public improvements needed.

The remaining lots, 6-38, constitute phase 4, which will require the construction of public utilities. This is the reason for the phased development. The design has been assigned to the staff and engineering team. This 10-acre parcel is the last piece of a project that dates back to the 1970s, and it has always been intended to be developed in this manner.

Mishler asks what the average cost is.

Cory White, located at 215 Prairie Street, reports that the situation is currently unclear. The target mark is between 325,000 and 350,000.

Schaffer opens for public comments in favor or opposition of the petition.

Robert Slaski of 3714 Denwood Ct is opposed to this petition. He was informed that Kershner would never be connected, as it would disrupt the quiet neighborhood, turning Kershner into a busy street and raising wildlife concerns.

Laurie Reed, of 8 Salem Court, is opposed to this petition. She believes that the proposed stilt-built homes will not align with the values of the surrounding properties. Instead, she advocates for development that is more consistent with the current lot sizes in the area.

Sara Eppers, of 1616 Evergreen Place, opposes this petition. She is concerned about the impact on wildlife and the woods, as well as the safety of young children. Additionally, she worries about increased traffic and a potential decrease in property values for the

houses that back up to the woods. She questions whether there will be a barrier to obscure the view of the houses behind the woods, if a line of trees will be planted, how the construction will be funded through tax dollars, and what the timeline for the construction will be.

Jill Szyarto, of 1627 Evergreen Place, opposes this petition. She is concerned that the proposed development of 38 houses and a retention pond does not align with the current property, and the house lots are larger than what is being proposed.

Kristin Newberry, of 3620 Fox Court, opposes this petition due to concerns about the safety of children and the development in her backyard.

David Skinner, of 3714 Denwood Ct, opposes this petition. He is concerned that the lot density does not align with the neighborhood's standards and raises issues about traffic and safety. He believes that entering and exiting Bristol will be difficult. Additionally, he has concerns about the utility infrastructure and wildlife.

Schaffer closes the public portion of the meeting.

Schaffer asks if there are questions from the Commission.

Jones asks White whether he will consider making each lot larger and reducing the number of units required by the setback requirements.

White replies that he met with Mike Huber to discuss the feasibility of numbers based on R2 standards, which allow for 6 units per acre. They determined that 3.8 units per acre are the most economically viable option due to development costs. There is a significant demand for lots and housing, and the goal is to make the process efficient for consumers.

Jones expresses that he is seeking greater consistency within the neighborhood.

White replies that we have larger lots than Cobblestone, which has the neighborhood's highest property values.

Schaffer states that, as we proceed to make a motion, we should consider what we did not hear that was inconsistent with the staff report. This application meets the R1 and R2 requirements. As the staff mentioned, we are obligated by state law, as a ministerial body, to review whether this application complies with zoning and subdivision requirements. The council zoned this property many years ago, and we cannot change that. The staff has reviewed this application, and, in their opinion, it complies with the zoning and subdivision ordinance. We are bound by state law to take that into account.

Schaffer calls for a motion.

Mishler makes motion to approve with a Do-Pass Recommendation to the; Second by Murray. Motion carries.

Jones- Yes
Newbill- Yes
Lawson- Yes
Murray- Yes
Mishler- Yes
Schaffer- Yes

26-FSP-02 PETITIONER IS Elkhart General Hospital, Inc. (Beacon Health System)
PROPERTY IS LOCATED AT 600 East Boulevard

As required by Section 20.10.A.2, a minor amendment to an approved Final Site Plan to allow for a 4,800 sq ft emergency room addition with updated ambulance access service area. This minor amendment did not require public notice.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The petitioner is requesting Final Site Plan Approval of a new emergency room addition along East Boulevard. The 4,800 square foot emergency room addition with updated ambulance access service area will be placed at the east side of the site.

This request qualifies as a minor amendment. Major amendments are modifications to final site plans in which the land area is changed, there is a change in density, allowing a use not previously permitted or the Plan Commission feels the City Council should

consider the request a new development – this addition to the emergency room does not meet any of the elements to consider this a major amendment.

The updated plans depict an enlarged emergency room with updated private patient rooms and a new restroom. The new 4,800 square-foot building addition will be expanded closer to East Street to allow for better and more efficient programming for the department. To the south, the ambulance queuing area has also been expanded to accommodate more efficient transport movement.

The exterior of the building has been updated with a modern split faced engineered stone and metal panels. The updated signage will make the arrival area more discernable to the public.

The site plan has been reviewed at Tech Review. There are several outstanding items to be addressed prior to permitting. None of the outstanding comments are critical. Staff will ensure they are addressed prior to permitting.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Staff recommends **approval** of the amended final site plan based on the following findings of fact

1. The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community as the new addition will be constructed as per all applicable building codes;

2. The proposed use is permitted within the underlying zoning of the Planned Unit Development;

3. The project does not change the land area of the PUD nor does it change the density of the PUD;

4. The use does not interfere with the Comprehensive Plan which calls for residential type uses;

5. The proposed use should not be detrimental to the property values of adjacent properties.

Trotter states there were 99 letters mailed, 99 returned in favor with comments. Comments were:

Schaffer asks if there are questions from the Commission.

Schaffer calls petitioner forward.

Jeff Ballard, 1643 Commerce Dr: The renovations inside the building are quite extensive. They are aimed at better serving the community and making the emergency room more efficient. The majority of the additions will be an expanded waiting room to improve patient intake and provide more space and comfort for patients. Additionally, we will create a healing therapeutic garden to further enhance patient comfort. We are also modifying the drainage structure.

Newbill inquired about parking.
Ballard mentioned that parking is currently taking place on East Boulevard. We plan to relocate this parking to the north side, which is currently occupied by Riverpoint Physicians. Their parking will be moved to another area of their building to improve efficiency and safety.

Newbill is asking whether they need to buy any residential properties to accommodate parking.

Ballard states no.

Mishler asks whether parking in the existing parking area and then walking to the emergency room (ER) door would be the same distance as parking in the current parking area.

Ballard states that it is similar to what is happening now. We are providing an ADA ramp from the proposed parking area down to the ER, aiming to make drop-off more efficient than our current system.

Mishler inquires whether there will be security cameras monitoring the new parking lots.

Ballard confirms with a yes.

Mishler continues to inquire about the need for additional treatment rooms and behavioral health support within our community.

Ballard indicates they are expanding some existing rooms and upgrading the technology to make the ambulance drop-off area more spacious and efficient.

Ballard mentioned that the parking garage at Elkhart General is heavily used.

Schaffer mentioned that whenever there have been concerns regarding residents on Arcade Avenue about patients or hospital staff parking on the street, he has promptly sent an email to Elkhart General. In response, they have quickly communicated with their staff to ensure that parking remains within their designated areas. This demonstrates their commitment to addressing the issue.

Schaffer opens for public comments in favor or opposition of the petition.

Schaffer closes the public portion of the meeting.

Schaffer calls for a motion.

Mishler makes motion to approve with a Do-Pass Recommendation; Second by Newbill. Motion carries.

Newbill- Yes
Jones- Yes
Lawson - Yes
Murray- Yes
Mishler- Yes
Schaffer- Yes

STAFF ITEMS

26-SI-07
Approval of proposed addresses for the City of Elkhart.

STAFF ANALYSIS
The Planning and Zoning Department is requesting approval of the addresses that have been reserved for structures in the City of Elkhart.

Residential

Residential Subdivision

Commercial

3701 South Main Street	Suite 200A, 200B Readdress for two added suites	
2201 West Franklin Street	New Indoor Storage Facilities	20-06-07-333-008.000-012
103 Lakeview Drive	New Commercial Building	

Industrial

1012 Borg Road	Correction Certificate	20-02-28-151-005.000-027

Recommendation
Staff recommends that the Plan Commission assign the proposed addresses based on staff recommendations.

Schaffer asks if there are questions from the Commission.

Schaffer calls for a motion.

Mishler makes motion to approve; Second by Lawson. Motion carries.

Eric introduces Chris Godlewski, the newest Planner 1, to the planning department staff. He has extensive experience from LaGrange County, Elkhart County, and the private sector.

ADJOURNMENT

Schaffer calls for a motion to adjourn meeting. Jones approves motion to adjourn and is seconded by Murray. Meeting is adjourned and all are in favor.

Jeff Schaffer, President

Diana Lawson

Diana Lawson, Secretary