CITY OF EAST CHICAGO BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
Public Hearing Minutes
June 4, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS:
Cesar Perez, President
Ralph Peterson, Vice-President
Lydia Lopez, Representative
Lilia Ramos, Representative

STAFF:
Eduardo Fontanez
Marino Solorio
Tracy Ailes

Reported by: Fissinger & Associates, Ltd.
By: Peggy S. LaLonde

Call to Order: 5:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Present in Chambers: Cesar Perez, Lilia Ramos, Ralph Peterson

Staff Present in Chambers: Tracy Ailes, Secretary
Eduardo Fontanez, Attorney

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

MR. PEREZ: I would call to order the meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals Commission for June 4th, 2026. It's 5:00 p.m.
Motion for approval of the regular meeting minutes of May 21st, 2026 as written.

MS. RAMOS: Make a motion.

MR. PETERSON: Second.

Questions/Comments: None

Roll Call: "All in Favor": Cesar Perez, Lilia Ramos, Ralph Peterson Abstain: None Opposed: None

MR. PEREZ: Motion carries.
Has a quorum been established?

MS. AILES: A quorum has been established.

MR. PEREZ: New Business.

A petition for a business development standard variance within a C2 Zoning District (General Commercial) on the property commonly known as 3417 Watling Street, East Chicago, Indiana 46312. The variance is to permit the property owner to exceed the total amount of signage allowed per municipal code and to permit a nonconforming sign.

So the purpose of this hearing is defined by the Zoning Code in accordance with the following sections that I will read. The Ordinance number 2752, which states:

WHEREAS, the Common Council of the City of East Chicago, Indiana, deems it necessary, in order to conserve the value of the property in the City of East Chicago, and to the end that adequate light air, convenience of access, and safety from fire and other dangers may be secured, the congestion of public streets may be lessened or avoided, and that public health, comfort, convenience, morals, and general welfare may otherwise be promoted in accordance with the general plan for the use and development of all property throughout the City of East Chicago.

Ordinance number 0-00-0016 states:

WHEREAS, the Plan Commission and the Common Council of the City of East Chicago, Indiana have determined that proposed uses, at proposed locations within the community should promote the public interest, promote public health, safety, and welfare, should promote public convenience and should not adversely affect property values, and

WHEREAS, the Plan Commission and the Common Council of the City of East Chicago have determined that proposed uses which are not permitted uses within a zoning classification should confirm for the purpose, intent, and the spirit of the Zoning Ordinance, be compatible with the surrounding area, and should not be detrimental or injurious or create excessive nuisance in the surrounding area, and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the citizens of the City of East Chicago to amend the Zoning Ordinance to provide for certain uses to be classified as "Special Uses" and allowed in certain zoning classifications only upon showing that the above criteria have been met; and

WHEREAS, Indiana Code requires that the Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals hold a public hearing and make Findings of Fact to determine whether the above criteria have been met before forwarding the Special Use Permit request to the Common Council.

MR. PEREZ: Have all required public notifications, documents, and receipts been completed and received for this variance petition?

MS. AILES: I certify receipts for funds to cover public notices, published notice receipts from the local press, and receipts from certified mail have been received.

MR. PEREZ: Any response for it or against it?

MS. AILES: I've received nothing written.

MR. PEREZ: We have someone here today?

MR. Kalischefski: Yes, Chris Kalischefski.

MR. PEREZ: Please give us your name and spell your last name and tell us your position here.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: My name is Christian Kalischefski, and I'm the architect. We are also the civil engineers for the project. Shamir actually is caught in traffic, the owner, I apologize for that. There's been a couple accidents today, but I can go on with our presentation.

MR. PEREZ: Go ahead.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: Basically we are higher -- let's go through the next slid. We are looking at a site that's across from your new fire station, relatively new fire station. And may I walk over there and point?

As you know, here is our main avenue and this is a ramp going through here, and this is our site here. So we are bordered on three sides of the site.

When we were at our Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, we were told, very disheartenly, this

drive, this ramp is closing. I did it last time too, I touch the screen and moved it, sorry. That there is a new interchange occurring just off the screen here and that is limiting 40 percent of our customers that we are counting on.

A gas station, as you know, you are not sitting in your living room watching the football game and then, oh, my car is empty. I got to go fill it. You are going to work. You are coming home from work. You are, on the weekends, doing errands to fill your car, and so it's what is called a syphoning area. People will pass by the site and come by.

Before our movement was here and coming right back to the site. Now that this is going away, the people are going over here and we need to clearly identify to all of them, our customers, how to get back to us.

So what we are proposing is, on the corner there would be the high rise sign that's going to match our other signs. You have a sign over this area right here and there is one right across the street. It's going to be exactly the same height, but will be much smaller in terms of square footage. That's our overall site layout.

If we go to the next slide, please. This is Shamir, the owner as well.

Here is all our parcels, consolidating, buying all these parcels except for this little corner and putting it all into one. Next slide.

Again, just that's showing it all in one parcel. Go to the next and keep going.

There is our color segments, a little bit of layout of lanes. Of course this is Michigan, and then here's where the fire station is, just for your reference standpoint.

What we are proposing is to put in six, what is called 6 islands or island canopies. This will be for the autos. And then we have just under 43,512 square feet of convenience store. We have a food offering there, maybe a drive-thru, and then also have commercial fueling. Our main customers will be like the box trucks that are going to be on the roadway there. It's design is to fully allow semis to go through, but we know the big rigs, they have all their fueling contracts with the travel centers and stuff like that.

So, this is not a truck stop. We don't have a sit down restaurant. We don't have showers. We don't have a separate truck desk. We don't have a truck sales area, that kind of stuff. This is

just for the box trucks that are on the existing roadway at the time.

So as part of that, we actually have 1, 2, 3, and then we have a food offering here, so we have basically four bays on the site. And so our initial proposal we were asking for 40 more square feet. We are allowed 451, we were asking for 491. There is -- actually we adjusted our design a little bit and we turned it down and we reduced the high rise size by 30 square feet and we reduced the monument sign by seven. So we are almost right there. We are asking for three additional square feet from what is allowed by code. We are asking to place it in different areas, and so we'll go through that.

So the sign is the regular ID sign. This would be the high rise sign. We would have one sign on the front and on the corner here identifying the CQRS. We have three signs on the canopy. And then we, of course, have some signs on the canopy here. So just -- actually next slide, please.

This is just a layout, little bit more with showing the signs again. So here's the signs, three signs -- I'm sorry, little bit backwards -- three signs on the building, two signs on the auto canopy, two signs on the CFO, our ID sign on our high rise sign. Next slide.

This -- I know it's hard to read, but basically this was showing 456 allowed and 496 is what we have proposed. Again, we have just revised our sign design and so now we are actually just asking for 459 because we have reduced the high rise sign by 30 and we have reduced the other sign by seven. So we reduced to 37, so literally three square feet is what we are asking for.

What I do want to show is that we are asking for variances, seven of them. But the last four of them are for these, for the canopy. If you see the auto canopy and the diesel canopy, those are standard manufactured signs by the automotive companies. You allowed 16 and there is 21. So we are asking for five square feet for each of those, just because it's a standard size sign. And so that takes care of 4 to 7.

Number one is just we are asking for two ID signs. Typically your code only allows one ID code sign. In our unique situation there along Cline, it's a raised roadway, and we really need to pull that traffic. We are looking at losing 40 percent traffic coming off that ramp. So we really need those two ID signs. And so that's where our big discrepancies are.

In terms of the ID sign, we are allowed 109, but we are asking for 324. So that's where we are asking more. However, the wall signs for the building, we are allowed 251, but we are only asking for 90. So we are trying to give and take. We are not trying to grab the world.

Like I said, the success of this site is based on three things; safety, convenience, and allowing the customer to see the signage early enough that they make the turn and come off, because this is a syphoning use. It's not a destination use. You know, when you go to the restaurant, that is a destination use. You know what restaurant you are going to meet your friends at and everyone goes there, and that's your destination. Gas station, you are driving by going to or from work, running errands as I said earlier. So that's why it is so important to get the right signage in the right places. And so if we can go to the next slide please.

So this is our monument sign here. So we are asking for a little bit of the square footage in height. This is the ID sign. You can see this is much smaller than the big billboards that are out there that you see just a little bit to the west of our site. But we just want to have this on our site so that as people are going eastbound to pin our site. They see where our site is. Once people have that in their mind, it's easier. Even though the ramp isn't here anymore, it's way over here, they will still be able to come back to our site. That's what we are counting on with this signage.

Again, overall, our total signage for the whole site is three square feet above what code allows. Next slide please.

This is a canopy sign that we are talking about. That's what is called a Helios by BP and they make the Helios in standard size, that's why we are asking for that variance, and that is the second one over there. One more please. Thank you, Tracy, for doing this by the way.

Truck, diesel, semi, the same thing as the standard letter size and that's what the variance is. So these aren't big, huge, monstrous signage on the wall or anything like that. We are very much in tune with the context of the environment, which you will see on the next slide here.

This is actually where the Quick Run will go, right there. And then we'll have on the two sides there, the QSR for the food offering. And then if

you go to the next slide please.

And, again, as you see, the building is all masonry. It's a four-sided building. We are intuned to our neighborhood. We have got four streets all the way around and we really want to upgrade now the property values all around. So our building is four-sided masonry. However, this is going to be unique in that it is the latest and greatest in terms of the energy code and it's using a structural system called a structural insulated panel. So it's one of the most unique buildings out there. We are going to have fantastic R values and going to be saving energy throughout the whole site. So this is actually going to be a good model for future business moving forward. Next slide please.

This is an example. This is another site that we built. This one obviously is a different vendor. It's Shell versus BP, the Quick Run. So it's a very small signage, not a big blasting sign. Like I say, we are allowed 251 square feet. We are only asking for 90, which includes the Quick Run. And then the two QRS, you can see the design sign right there. Next slide please.

So this is a little bit, that's kind of the QSR. Next slide please. What I'm showing this slide for, what I said before about this being four-sided building, we really need it. The back of this building is as good as the front end of the building. It's going to be a very nice offering to the community. Next slide.

These are the signing that's just a little bit west of us. So this is the ID sign. This is 78 feet, 78 point 75 feet, to the top of it. And the reason it's so tall is because the roadway is right there, so it needed to be high enough. So the next slide please.

This would be the north side. This would be on the south side, and this one is actually 72 feet. And so we are proposing, you know, to be our site, we are much smaller than this. You can see how big this thing is. This is probably 400, 500 square feet and we are at 400 and change. I'll give you the exact figure from there. So it's going to be much smaller than that or roughly the same size. If you picture the sign will be single pole and then the signage will actually look like this. It will look like that rectangle. It won't have -- that won't have that. It's just it's so crucial for our business, especially since we are losing that direct access right passed the

fire station.

And I think that's the last slide, if you could double check that, and then maybe we can scroll down to the site plan.

So in summary what we are trying to say is that we are hoping to show that we are trying to meet the intent of your code. We are very respectful of your code. We know of the ordinances to control what people do and things don't get crazy, that's why we are only saying three square feet more. We are asking for that bigger ID sign. No bigger than those two signs that we saw coming down, which are just off the page right here. So it's very much -- so it's travelers going here. They are not going to be able to go off here anymore. They are going to have to go here and then come around and then come back, and that's so imperative for us to have a sign right there to show them that. I spoke way too long.

MR. PEREZ: You can come back to the podium when we are going to have some questions for you.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: And, again, Shamir is here to answer any questions from the ownership perspective, investment or business perspective.

MR. PEREZ: Are all your signs going to be lit up?

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: They will be except for the truck diesel, that's just an applique on the fascia of the sign.

MR. PEREZ: Are you separating the petition for all these signs or one particular sign right now?

MS. AILES: His petition is for extra square footage and signage, which I questioned how you came up with that number. Are you basing it on industrial or C2 because you are zoned as C2?

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: Pardon my bifocals, I believe we based it on C2.

MS. AILES: Which states 32 feet of signage, 32 in total. That location sign, for each business on-site, is up to 32 square feet and sign area, additional sign up to total sign area for each

additional business of 312 square feet. So it's 400.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: I'm trying to go to the chart. I apologize if I have some questions wrong, but okay. All right. So the total 456 would be comprised of the total of 456 -- total 456. Like I said, we were at 496. We reduced that down to 459 allowable for the diesel cab, 12 square feet on each side, so total of 48. The allowable for the auto canopy would be 48 and then allowable for the wall signs because our building is four streets, we are allowed for all the signage, that's five. And then we have the ID signs. There is a little bit off in the math there.

MS. AILES: So, but that doesn't follow the ordinance. So that's why I'm confused on how you are saying what you are allowed for each of those.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: I thought that's what we were looking at, 156.244, and perhaps that's what we interpreted the zoning code is saying. Obviously I'm interpreting it wrong.

MS. AILES: You are very excessive and I know we discussed this during Tech Review and Plan Commission, you know, the need for you to have it on the building. So we were willing to compromise and allow you to have that signage. I guess we are really addressing the huge pole sign, which would be 200 some square feet, which is what you originally presented, on each side.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: That would be true.

MS. AILES: So it's by four and some over that , correct?

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: No, I don't think your ordinance is taking both sides. Your ordinance is one side. I mean like it says --

MS. AILES: An identification sign for each business, a sign up to 32 square feet in sign area.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: Correct. That's usually interpreted per --

MR. PEREZ: I know what you are saying because it's both sides.

MS. AILES: Correct. So if we grant that, give you 21 on each side, we still don't come up to your figures.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: Right, that's why we are here. This project is -- quite frankly when we found out the news about closing that ramp, if it wasn't for Shamir's dedication to East Chicago, this project would have been dead in the water because it's a struggle. You know, when you are going to a gas station, you go to the one that's most convenient for you, and we are losing that ramp right next to the fire station.

Yes, we are asking for these variances, but we feel it's what we need for our business. And the hardship that we have is because when we bought this property from the City, we were not made aware of that ramp coming down.

MR. PEREZ: So are those parts on the east side across the street from the proposed site?

MS. AILES: On the south side.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: It would be on the east side of the street because you are actually on the west side of Michigan Avenue.

MR. MANHANI: Yes, west side of Michigan Avenue.

MR. PEREZ: Across the street, on he north side, you have got the fire station. On the east side you have got the apartment building. So are your light up signs going to be facing that apartment building?

MR. MANHANI: No, not on the side. I'm the owner of the property. Yes, you are correct. The fire station on the north side of the business and there are apartments on the east side. The sign, the tall sign is away from the apartments, behind the building.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: Also on an angle, not facing the building.

MR. MANHANI: Also, one more thing, we are not going to be a 24 hour sign. So at 11:00 p.m. we would be closing the business, so the signs, the lights

will be coming off. There will be some pole lights on for security reasons, but the sign would be turned off at nighttime.

MR. PEREZ: Your hours of operation?

MR. MANHANI: Yes, only Sunday maybe little bit late opening, like 7 to 11. But factories nearby are running shifts, so if we do have request to stay earlier open on Sunday we will. But most of the days 5:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Most of the Quick Runs are on 5:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

MR. PEREZ: Any other questions?

MS. RAMOS: I believe more of comments, I don't really have questions. I don't believe there is a gas station on that side of town. I don't believe you are going to have an issue with that ramp closing because with the convenience store and all the amenities that you have inside the gas station, that's going to already attract people.

I'm not sure if you ever had a visit around the City, but there isn't a gas station that's empty.

MR. MANHANI: We completely agree with you. You are correct. There is a C store/gas station need there, but that ramp really helps. Because at the end of the day, we do the gallons and something closes down, it does not help the gallon sales.

MS. RAMOS: This ramp isn't going to impact you. The traffic is going to come from Michigan and Watling as they come in from the plant. Because if you've ever been on that corner, that is a high traffic corner, which is directly going to go right in that area. And then I do believe that with all of the signs that you have already, I don't think you have a need to, for marketing purposes, I don't think you need to increase the signage. That is my opinion. Because you are going to have signage basically on the building, on the corner, on the opposite side.

MR. PEREZ: Are you trying to attract people off the Toll Road?

MR. MANHANI: Yes. The high sign we really didn't need it, but when we heard the news that

that ramp is being taken away from us, it's being closed, shut down; we thought that tall rise sign would help some people that do not come to Michigan, but by seeing our competitive price, we'll get that extra.

The sign, extra square footage on the canopy that we exceed is because of how those pre-made signs come, that goes on the canopy. That's the 36-inch fascia that BP or Shell, those logos that go on them. The request is because of that.

Now, if we were just doing a gas station, like many gas stations here, in any QSR, then again, we don't need extra footage on that sign. Due to bringing a food offering, the drive-thru there, that is -- please consider that a second business coming, not a gas station coming -- that will need to go on the price sign.

MR. PEREZ: Are you asking for a sign for that other business as well?

MR. MANHANI: It's already part of it.

MR. PEREZ: I understand. Okay.

MR. MANHANI: So that's why this additional ramp is not going away, no problem, the traffic is coming down.

MR. PEREZ: That Speedway, don't they have a big sign too?

MR. MANHANI: With the White Castle.

MR. PEREZ: I have no more questions. Anybody else?

MS. RAMOS: I wouldn't mind the signage that you are referring to, but the big sign is the one that I don't believe is needed.

Tracy, does this have to go before Council?

MS. AILES: This is just a developmental variance, so it only needs BZA approval.

Did you do a traffic study, because we have recent traffic studies in the area and at peak times there is over 800 vehicles in that area. Did you do a traffic study?

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: We have looked at it, to be candid, on the retail site, but we usually look for 20,000 cars for peak day area. So 800 may sound like a lot --

MS. AILES: That's in an hour. So that's one hour.

MR. MANHANI: Mostly, the Quick Run that we have on Indianapolis Boulevard, that was 41,000 car count, right in front of Sophia's Pancake House. The other one that we have that we just recently opened three-month, it's at Burr and 30, right next to the Jaguar dealer. That car count there is about 55,000 car. Burr is pretty busy and 30 is pretty busy.

MS. AILES: You also have one on 65?

MR. MANHANI: On Cline.

MS. AILES: You don't have a sign there.

MR. MANHANI: It was a leased site. The Quick Run new built from zero ground, those sites were like old sites that I acquired in a lease program. It was nothing that I had.

MS. AILES: I'd like to point out, what you were referring to as signage, that being the same, you are not comparing apples to apples. The signs that you are referring to are in M2 and those are billboard signs, which are totally different than a business sign that you are requesting.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: We understand that. Our point, from the motorist driving down, they don't know from M2 or C1 or whatever. They see a big sign.

MR. MANHANI: You are right, was a billboard, a big one. This is a smaller one.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: We are saying -- I want to make it clear, we are not asking for that big sign.

MS. AILES: As we discussed in private conversations about this sign, that the City suggested there is alternatives to you that you could do.

MR. MANHANI: I just wish I knew the ramp was not being taken out.

MS. AILES: We didn't know either. That's not ours, that's the State.

MR. MANHANI: That's why I request this.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: The important part is that the sign is on the property, so people see the sign, see where the property is, and make that connection. Whereas if we put like our sign on the billboard, it's not at -- the people are not making a connection and will not get off because they don't where to come. So that's our reasoning for that.

MR. MANHANI: Most of the Quick Runs don't have big signs. I own the one in Crown Point and 109th and Highway 65, exit right there. We do not have a high rise sign. We don't feel like there was a need. We just felt the need here, that's why we put the application.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: And this sign is expensive, but that's how important we feel in terms of traffic and drawing attention to the site. We feel that it will be in harmony with those other signs that are going to be out there where there is no other tall signs.

MS. AILES: But unfortunately this area is zoned commercial and the people do think it is industrial, but it is not. And one of the reasons that you were chosen was because it's starting to change the image of what we are trying to go with in this corridor. Other people recently purchased properties and are held to the same standards. As you discussed, you were hoping anybody else that came into the area would do the same. That's what we are trying to do here. We are trying to make it conform to the C2, in the image that C2 is zoned commercial like it's suppose to be and no longer making it look like an industrial corridor.

MR. MANHANI: That's the only thing. This is no truck stop or nothing like that. And due to the traffic of box trucks, that's why the canopies, otherwise we would not even have that.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: Again, the signage we

are allowed, the 32 square feet for the ID sign, but then the wall signs, per the ordinance, like I say, they allow us a much larger total for the wall signs, 251 versus 90.

MS. AILES: I'm not aware in the ordinance that you are allowed different signs.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: 516.224 is where the wall signs section is.

MS. AILES: Under the ordinance you are permitted two signs and identification for a business on-site, up to 32 square feet in sign area. And, yes, we do normally extend that to each side of the property. And then you get only, for each additional business, an additional two square feet in signing to each 100 feet of frontage. So my calculation does not come out to be the same as yours.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: I can show you the --

MS. AILES: That's okay. Like I said, the signage on the building, the City was willing to compromise and allow you to have that. It's just the huge pole sign in the back, additional signage, that exceeds -- the rest of it exceeds the amount of signage is really what is a concern.

We would be willing to grant you the same sign that you have on the corner of Michigan and Guthrie, on that side. But to go 80 feet in that corridor is not --

MR. MANHANI: 80 is the height of the road. If Cline was not that high, we wouldn't go that high.

MS. AILES: We have discussed the alternatives for you that you could do.

MR. MANHANI: I'll be honest, it would be --

MR. PEREZ: Attorney Fontanez, this is a new business in East Chicago. That's been a sight for sore eyes for a long time.

MR. FONTANEZ: The greater commercial visibility, you would maintain a business and can

survive there practically. The conditions with the height of the road, which hasn't changed. It's just you are talking about an exit that we have no control over. The design for greater commercial visibility is what you are talking about and that would push you away.

MR. MANHANI: Does Town Council make the decision on this?

MS. AILES: No.

MR. MANHANI: My request is, I want to be clear on something from my heart. I really didn't need the sign. None of my curriculum have the sign. I do have Quick Run right closer to Highway 65, that does not have the sign. They do have the ramps. They do have the entrances. Due to the ramp taken away, I would be asking this to the BZA or to you guys, to grant me this permission. It's all up to you if you want to grant it or not. I feel it's important. I am not saying because of the Speedway. That has nothing to do with it. Please don't think that. I am only requesting this because I had no idea the ramp was being taken out. Just so I can have extra signage for the same revenue or get closer to that revenue.

Anybody can tell you, if some road or some ramp closes next to your site, if it's a gas station, it would hurt, would not benefit. You need to meet as many cars as you can closer to your site. So that's why that ramp being closed hurts that.

My request to you guys is, if you could please hear me out why I need the sign, it's up to your ordinance or not. You guys are the end of the day making a decision on this. Thanks for your time.

MS. AILES: Just for clarification, the ramp has been closed, but there still would be a ramp basically where you are going to the Marina, that would be changed, and that will be the roundabout interchange. It's not moving that far.

MR. MANHANI: It's not next to the property.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: It's a pretty significant distance, because when you turn, there's those water tanks. It's going to be all the way over there. If you picture from the fire station to us versus the water tanks to us.

MR. PEREZ: When is this proposed ramp closing going to be done?

MS. AILES: Possibly next year they may begin work on it. Nothing is finalized or sent from the State yet.

MR. PEREZ: When are you proposing this site is suppose to be built?

MR. MANHANI: We are starting construction 60 days or so.

MS. AILES: We are trying to have them coordinate with when Michigan Avenue will be redone this year, so we are trying to coordinate so construction of the road and their construction kind of coordinate, so they don't lose out on any business during the period of construction.

MR. PEREZ: I'm going to make a motion to allow you, with no restrictions, to move forward with your signage. I am also a business owner, so I know and I deeply understand how important it is, especially when the roadway is going to be taken away. I know it's not going to be that much further away, but I know it's important to have signs that are light up advertising. So I will make a motion to say, yes, you can go ahead and we can vote on it.

MS. AILES: Are you making the motion to vote or making a motion for approval?

MR. PEREZ: I am making a motion for approval and we can vote on it.

MS. AILES: This is going to be yes or no to the project?

MR. PEREZ: It's going to be, yes, to move forward with their project.

MS. AILES: Cesar Perez.

MR. PEREZ: Yes.

MS. AILES: Ralph Peterson.

MR. PETERSON: Yes.

MS. AILES: Lilia Ramos.

MS. RAMOS: No. The reason is that we, like Tracy said, I think we are setting a precedent if we go ahead and allow this one. We are trying to get that area to fit with the commercial aspect of the corridor. So that is my only reason, because I do believe that you are going to have the business, even without that huge sign, you are going to have the business that you need. But that's the reason for it.

MR. PEREZ: So, yes has it. You can move forward. It's a hard decision for us right now. I know the area and I know it's industrial, but we are trying to turn it into commercial. I don't think a sign is going to make that not commercial or think of it as industrial; so it is approved.

MR. KALISCHEFSKI: Thank you.

MR. MANHANI: I would like to say one thing. I am thankful to City of East Chicago and I am really grateful to God to give me this opportunity to come and do business in this town.

MR. PEREZ: Like I said, we welcome new businesses and we don't want to deter them. I know you would put up your business without that sign anyway, but if this is going to help you a little bit, so be it.

MR. MANHANI: Thank you.

MR. PEREZ: Our next meeting date is Thursday, June 18, at 5:00 p.m., here in Chambers. Motion to adjourn.

MS. RAMOS: Second.

MR. PEREZ: Roll call.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": Cesar Perez, Lilia Ramos, Ralph Peterson Abstain: None Opposed: None

MR. PEREZ: Meeting is adjourned.

* * * * *

Approval of the Meeting Minutes of
June 4, 2026

Approved and signed June 18, 2026

Cesar Perez, President

Ralph Peterson, Vice-President

Lydia Lopez, Representative

Lilia Ramos, Representative

Tracy Ailes, Recording Secretary.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Peggy S. LaLonde, a competent and duly qualified court reporter, do hereby certify that I did report in machine shorthand the foregoing proceedings and that my shorthand notes so taken at said time and place were thereafter reduced to typewriting under my personal direction.

I further certify that the foregoing typewritten transcript constitutes minutes of the said proceedings taken at said time and place, so ordered to be transcribed.

Dated at Munster, Indiana, this 8th day of June 2026.

Peggy S. LaLonde

Peggy S. LaLonde, Court Reporter

Peggy S LaLonde
Notary Public Seal State of Indiana
Porter County
Commission Number NP0710216
My Commission Expires 2/6/2034