

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

BOARD MEMBERS

Steven Segura, President
Lilia Ramos, Vice-President
Cathy Wojas-Serrano, Representative
Monique Kurmis, Representative

Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 7, 2020 @ 4:30 p.m.

Reporter for Fissinger & Associates, Ltd.
By: Peggy S. LaLonde

Call to Order: 4:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Roll Call: Present Remotely: Lilia Ramos
Present: Steve Segura, Cathy Wojas-Serrano

Also Present: Belinda Bonilla, Recording Secretary
Richard Morrisroe, Acting Director

MR. SEGURA: I'm going to go ahead and call to order the Public Hearing of the Board of Zoning Appeals for today, Wednesday, October 7, at 4:30 p.m. For today's business we have a petition for an Expanded Special Use Variance to permit relocation of used car lot from 4244 Indianapolis Boulevard to 1316 Carroll Street.

Has a quorum been established?

MS. BONILLA: A quorum has been established.

MR. SEGURA: What staff is present?

MS. BONILLA: The following staff are present; Richard Morrisroe, Acting City Director, and myself, Belinda Bonilla, Recording Secretary.

MR. SEGURA: Okay. The purpose of this hearing is defined by the Zoning Code, in accordance with the following sections, that I will read. Ordinance No. 2752 states:

WHEREAS, the City, the Common Council of

1 City of East Chicago, Indiana, deems it necessary
2 in order to conserve value of property in the City
3 of East Chicago, and that adequate lighting, air,
4 convenience of access and safety from fire and
5 other dangers may be secured, the congestion of
6 public streets may be lessened or avoided, and the
7 public health, comfort, convenience, morals, and
8 general welfare may otherwise be promoted in
9 accordance with the general plan for the use and
10 development of all property throughout the City of
11 East Chicago.

Ordinance No. 0-00-0016 states:

7 WHEREAS, the Plan Commission and the Common
8 Council, of the City of East Chicago has
9 determined that the purpose of use, and proposed
10 location within the community should promote the
11 public interest, public health, safety and
12 welfare, should promote public convenience, and
13 should not adversely affect property values.

11 AND WHEREAS, the Plan Commission and the
12 Common Council of the City of East Chicago have
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14 permitted use with a zoning classification, should
15 conform to the purpose, intent, and the spirit of
16 zoning ordinance be compatible with the
17 surrounding areas and should not be detrimental or
18 injurious or create excessive nuisance in the
19 surroundings area.

15 AND WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of
16 the citizens of the City of East Chicago to amend
17 the zoning ordinance text to provide certain use
18 to be classified as "special use" and allowed in
19 certain zoning classifications only upon showing
20 that the above criteria have all by met.

18 AND WHEREAS, Indiana code requires that the
19 Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals hold a Public
20 Hearing and make findings of facts, and determine
21 whether the above criteria have been met before
22 forwarding a "special use" permit request to the
23 Common Council.

21 In accordance with the above, a petition has
22 been filed for expanding use variance at 1316
23 Carroll Street to permit location of a used car
24 lot from 4244 Indianapolis Boulevard.

23 I shall now ask for the staff to
24 give their recommendations.

25 MR. MORRISROE: Richard Morrisroe, Acting
City Planner. The one objection -- principal objection

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1 -- that the Plan Department has to this proposal is the
2 confusion of activities, that we have at this time a
3 collision and paint center, and this brings a certain
4 kind of clientele, and kind of understandable what it is
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13 143rd, and the collision and paint center in the Roxana
14 community. However, this has been zoned residential and
15 that brings another distinct kind of activity. This is
16 something that we at least feel we have to question.

17 MR. SEGURA: So all the documents have
18 been submitted?

19 MR. MORRISROE: All of that I would
20 present. If you have any questions about what I stated

21 MR. SEGURA: No, I'm good. I understand.

22 MS. BONILLA: I certify the following,
23 that documentation, exhibits, receipts for funds to
24 cover public notices, published notices, receipts from
25 local press, and receipts from certified mail.

MR. SEGURAS: I am going to call the
Petitioner forward for any presentation or
documentation.

MR. ALVAREZ: Jorge Alvarez, I'm the
owner of Collision and Paint Center. I have been in
East Chicago 41 years, at 4143 Indianapolis. So -- you
know -- with this business, we had the road --
Indianapolis was closed and we almost went out of
business. So I am trying to combine because I do have
two lots, 1316 and 1312. I'd like to see if I can
combine. It's hard to survive right now with the
business. I'd like to keep in business and I was
wanting to combine the two lots.

MR. SEGURA: Okay. Are there any
comments from the Board members?

1 MS. WOJAS-SERRANO: Nothing from me.

2 MR. SEGURA: Did the Plan Department
3 receive anything?

4 MS. BONILLA: We did not receive anything
5 in the mail.

6 MR. SEGURA: We do have one person on
7 Zoom and one person in person, I don't know if they
8 would like to speak. If you'd like to speak now, state
9 your name.

10 MS. ALMASON: (In Person) Good evening.
11 My name is Nancy Almason. I was born and raised in East
12 Chicago. I live directly across the street from 1316
13 Carroll Street. I'm 1315. And when Tony first brought
14 a couple cars over, he was -- his place is meticulous.
15 The lot is very clean. But, the only problem that we
16 had was that the cars were parked outside. And in the
17 evening time, people were walking through -- and I live
18 right across the street, and I see it was not a good
19 group of people that come after midnight looking for a
20 used car. Some of them were walking and jiggling the
21 handles and everything.

22 The next day I told Tony, keep an
23 eye on your cars, looks like people may be wanting to
24 get into them. Tony said, you're absolutely right. So
25 from then on in, he takes the cars -- he parks them
outside during the day, but as the business closes at
5:00 o'clock, all the cars are taken into his lot. And
he showed me -- his lot -- he has a very big lot and
he's in the process of cleaning it. And if everything
is passed, he can change -- you know -- what you call it
-- from wherever he was, from Tony Boy, he could change
that status to be moved to 1316 Carroll Street to have a
permit for a used car lot. He showed me where he is
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he's going to leave -- put all the cars under lock and
key so nobody will be -- you know -- checking out the
vehicles. So that was the only problem that we had, was
that the people were coming at night. But since I
mentioned it to Tony, everything has been fine.

26 So I would definitely not be opposed
27 to the registration of the old place being moved to
28 Carroll Street. That's all.

29 MR. SEGURA: Do we have any other
30 citizens that would like to speak at this time?

1 MR. NICKSIC: (Via Zoom) This is John
2 Nicksic. I would you like to speak during the public
3 portion of this. I am a life long resident of East
4 Chicago.

5 MR. MORRISROE: Could you give your
6 address?

7 MR. NICKSIC: 5629 Wegg Avenue.

8 MR. MORRISROE: Go ahead and proceed.

9 MR. NICKSIC: I have been a life long
10 resident of East Chicago. For any business that -- you
11 know -- will help out the City, I'm all for it, for the
12 business.

13 MR. SEGURA: Would anyone else like to
14 speak?

15 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

16 MR. MORRISROE: State your name and
17 address, please.

18 MR. RODRIGUEZ: My address is 5617 Wegg
19 Avenue. My name is Manny Rodriguez. I am for the
20 business. I don't have a problem with that.

21 MR. SEGURA: Okay. Thank you for your
22 comments. I call forth any questions from the Board.

23 MS. WOJAS-SERRANO: I have none.

24 MS. RAMOS: I have a question. Mr.
25 Morrisroe, did you say this area is currently zoned as
residential?

MR. MORRISROE: That's correct. It has
been -- the collision and paint shop has been there by
way of "special use" variance. The petitioner is asking
that the variance be expanded, and that he also be
allowed to have a used car lot on the same site.

So, it's not -- it was very good of
him to come, because he knew this was a different kind
of business and he wanted also to have clearance to have
this, and that's why it is before the Board of Zoning
Appeals.

1 MS. RAMOS: Okay.

2 MR. MORRISROE: This is a distinct
special use and requires a "special use" variance.

3 MS. RAMOS: Okay. Thank you.

4 MR. SEGURA: I call forth any questions
5 from staff and/or attorneys. Mr. Morrisroe, do you have
anything?

6 MR. MORRISROE: Nothing other than what I
7 have said already.

8 MR. SEGURA: Okay. I call for a motion
to close the public comments.

9 MS. RAMOS: So moved.

10 MS. WOJAS-SERRANO: Second.

11 MR. SEGURA: Roll call.

12 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
13 Opposed: None

14 MR. SEGURA: Motion carries.
15 I declare no other comments will be
heard.

16 Mr. Morrisroe, any type of
recommendations that can be made to the Common Council?

17 MR. MORRISROE: The recommendation can be
made in favor, neutral, or against.

18 MR. SEGURA: Okay. City Planner is asked
19 again to inform the BZA whether or not there are any
conditions that should be passed to the Common Council.

20 MR. MORRISROE: None.

21 MR. SEGURA: I would call for a motion on
22 the petition to approve with or without conditions.

23 MS. WOJAS-SERRANO: Second.

24 Roll Call: All in Favor: None Abstain: None
25 Opposed: Steve Segura, Lilia Ramos, and Cathy
Wojas-Serrano

1 MR. SEGURA: Petition did not pass.

2 MR. RAMOS: Is it too late to ask a quick
3 question, Mr. Morrisroe?

4 MR. MORRISROE: No, it is not.

5 MS. RAMOS: I vote no, but if it does not
6 go through, does this still go before the Council?

7 MR. MORRISROE: Yes, it will.

8 MS. RAMOS: Okay.

9 MR. MORRISROE: Because the Council has
10 the right to either adopt the BZA decision, or to see it
11 differently and to approve it.

12 MS. RAMOS: My vote still stands as no.

13 MR. SEGURA: We all voted no, so we're
14 all on the same page.

15 I would call a motion to adjourn.

16 MS. WOJAS-SERRANO: So moved.

17 MS. RAMOS: Second.

18 MR. SEGURA: Roll call.

19 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None
20 Opposed: None

21 MR. SEGURA: Motion carries. Meeting is
22 adjourned. Thank you for coming.

23 **** Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m. ****
24
25

Approval of the Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 7, 2020.

Approved and signed Wednesday, December 2, 2020


Steve Segura, President

Lilia Ramos - Zoom/ECR
Lilia Ramos, Plan Commission Representative

Cathy (W) Serrano
Cathy Wojas-Serrano, Representative

Resigned in 10/2020
Monique Kurmis, Representative

Esperanza Ceja Ramirez
Belinda Bonilla, Secretary

Esperanza Ceja Ramirez, Recording Secretary

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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 11th day of October, 2020.

Peggy S. LaLonde



Peggy S. LaLonde, CSR, RPR

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