

**METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MARION COUNTY, INDIANA
HEARING EXAMINER**

April 23, 2026

The regular meeting of the Hearing Examiner for the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County, Indiana, was scheduled for April 23, 2026, at 1:00 P.M., in the Public Assembly Room of the City-County Building, Indianapolis, Indiana, for various purposes, including the holding of a Public Hearing on various petitions listed on the Notice of Public Hearing, and for taking official action upon public business and public Notice thereof as required by IC 5-14-1.5.

Staff members present were Kathleen Blackham, Senior Planner; Robert Uhlenhake, Senior Planner; Jeffrey York, Manager; Bryce Patz, Current Planning Administrator; and Nancy G. Whitaker, Hearing Specialist.

Judy Weerts Hall, Hearing Examiner, called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M. She reminded attendees to silence electronic devices and to take any conversations to the hallway. She stated that the public hearings would be conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC) and noted that planning staff is currently limiting the number of new petitions to 10 per hearing for an indefinite period. She explained that Petitioners and Remonstrators each receive 15 minutes for sworn testimony, followed by staff recommendation, and then each side has 5 minutes for rebuttal. She stated that any party dissatisfied with a recommendation or decision has an automatic right to appeal, which must be filed with the Department of Metropolitan Development within five business days, with notice as required under the MDC Rules of Procedure. The Hearing Examiner noted that recommendations for zoning approval and modification petitions would be forwarded to the MDC for its meeting on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, with commitments due no later than May 13, 2026. She also noted that variance, plat, and vacation decisions made that day would be final unless appealed.

SPECIAL REQUESTS, CONTINUANCES, WITHDRAWALS

2026-MOD-001 | 7536 South Emerson Avenue

Perry Township, Council District #24

D-P

HSL Emerson, LLC, by Joseph D. Calderon

Modification of the site plan and Development Statement related to 2023-ZON-050 to remove age restriction of head of household (head of household being at least 55 years of age); allow multi-family units within five buildings (multi-family units limited to a single building); remove all references to Lot A; provide for a clubhouse and pool as a permitted accessory use; reduce accessory use setback along southern property line to 10 feet (accessory use setback along southern property line required 20 feet); provide for no less than 200 parking spaces (no less than 130 parking spaces allowed); provide for required bicycle parking spaces; and amend site plan in accordance with the amended Development Statement

Attorney Joe Calderon, Barnes and Thornburg LLP (11 South Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN), appeared on behalf of the Petitioner, requesting a continuance to May 28, 2026. He explained that the Petitioner received letters over the weekend requiring consultation with third parties and that this was the Petitioner's first continuance request.

A Remonstrator, Maninder Singh (5920 Tart Boulevard, Indianapolis, IN 46239) appeared in opposition to the continuance. He stated that the case had been ongoing for approximately one year, that the Petitioner had multiple prior opportunities to resolve the matter, and that the delays were causing ongoing financial harm, including a delayed closing and the church taking out mortgages against the property. He urged the Hearing Examiner to deny both the continuance and the zoning Petition itself.

Amy O'Gara (7727 Santolina Drive, Indianapolis, IN), representing the McFarland Farms Homeowners Association, also opposed the continuance, stating the Association was in agreement with the Remonstrator. She noted that Councilor Dilk (CD #24) had submitted a letter in opposition to proceeding with the hearing.

Kathleen Blackham (Staff) confirmed that the only prior continuance had been an Automatic Continuance, filed by a Registered Neighborhood Organization, and that the Petitioner had not previously requested a continuance. Staff had no objection to the continuance without new notice.

The Hearing Examiner acknowledged the Remonstrators' concerns but noted that this was the Petitioner's first request for a continuance. She encouraged both sides to work toward a resolution in the interim, observing that many of the issues raised in the letters appeared to be unrelated to the zoning case itself.

Hearing no further comments, the Hearing Examiner continued 2026-MOD-001 to the May 28, 2026 hearing.

2026-MOD-003 | 8600 Combs Road (NEW)

Franklin Township, Council District #25

I-3

Punjab Property Inc., by Patrick Rooney

Modification of Commitments related to petition 2005-ZON-160 to include Commitment Number 1, to allow for truck or heavy vehicles sales, rental, or repair (commitment allowed only manufacture, assembly of repair of machinery and machinery components in the I-3-S district); Commitment Number 2 to allow for truck or heavy vehicles sales, rental, or repair (commitment allowed only construction companies, contractors, and home remodeling companies in the I-2-S district); Commitment Number 5 to provide for one building subject to the plans and elevations dated February 10, 2026, (required certain exterior materials on mini-warehouse buildings); Commitment Number 6 to protect and preserve existing trees outside of the construction limits and install landscaping subject to the landscaping plan dated February 10, 2026, (commitment provided for landscaping and exterior building materials related to mini-warehouse development); Commitment Number 11 to provide for parking/storage of trucks and trailers subject to the site plan dated February 10, 2026, (identified location of outdoor storage and eliminated outdoor storage of commercial vehicles, semi-truck and trailers); Commitment Number 19 to provide for one building subject to the site plan dated February 10, 2026, (commitment limited building height to 35 feet and not to exceed total of 15,000 square feet); Commitment Number 26 would provide for a perimeter fence and

landscaping subject to the site plan dated February 10, 2026, (commitment identified location and materials of fencing); and Commitment Number 17 would be terminated and deleted (commitment limited semi-truck traffic to an average of a total of not more than two trips to and from the site per week).

****Automatic Continuance to May 28, 2026, filed by Registered Neighborhood Organization**

Kathleen Blackham (Staff) stated that the continuance required only the Hearing Examiner's acknowledgment.

Hearing no further comments, the Hearing Examiner acknowledged the Automatic Continuance to May 28, 2026, filed by a Registered Neighborhood Organization.

2026-ZON-002 | 456 South Emerson Avenue

Center Township, Council District #14

Singh Auto Repair LLC, by Steven Brown

Rezoning of 0.42-acre from the D-5 district to the C-4 district to provide for commercial uses.

****Petitioner request for continuance for cause to May 28, 2026, with Notice**

Robert Uhlenhake (Staff) explained that the Petitioner intends to amend the petition and add additional variances, requiring new Notice. Staff supported the continuance request.

Hearing no further comments, the Hearing Examiner continued 2026-ZON-002 to the May 28, 2026 hearing, with Notice.

2026-ZON-023 | 5436 Brookville Road (NEW)

Warren Township, Council District #14

Brew Brothers Inc, by Baldeep Baidwan

Rezoning of 1.6 acres from the C-3 district to the I-2 district to provide for light industrial uses, including warehousing and distribution

****Automatic Continuance to May 28, 2026, filed by Registered Neighborhood Organization**

Robert Uhlenhake (Staff) had no additional comments.

Hearing no further comments, the Hearing Examiner acknowledged the Automatic Continuance of 2026-ZON-023 to the May 28, 2026 hearing.

2026-ZON-024 | 5 West Epler Avenue (NEW)

Perry Township, Council District #22

Leedom & Terrell, LLC, by Jacob Bowman

Rezoning of 0.68-acre from the D-A district to the C-5 district to provide contractor uses.

****Staff request for continuance for cause to May 14, 2026**

Kathleen Blackham (Staff) explained that this was a joint continuance request from both Staff and the Petitioner's representative. She noted one remaining issue still being determined regarding how best to move forward, as well as a problem with the legal description for the Petition.

Hearing no further comments, the Hearing Examiner continued 2026-ZON-024 to the May 14, 2026 hearing.

2026-ZON-025 | 1719 Roosevelt Avenue (NEW)

Center Township, Council District #8

Diego Abraham Gomez Lara, by Jorge Oscar Gonzales Vasquez

Rezoning of 0.12-acre from the C-3 district to the D-8 district to provide for residential development.

****Staff and Petitioner request for continuance for cause to May 26, 2026**

Kathleen Blackham (Staff) confirmed this was a joint request for continuance from Staff and the Petitioner.

Hearing no further comments, the Hearing Examiner continued 2026-ZON-025 to the May 28, 2026 hearing.

2026-ZON-031 | 1750 West Morris Street (NEW)

Center Township, Council District #18

ANLU Property Investment, LLP, by Josh Smith

Rezoning of 0.13-acre from the C-4 district to the D-5 district to provide for a two-family dwelling.

Josh Smith (1073 Oliver Avenue, Indianapolis, IN), representing RG Development, appeared and requested that Petition No. 2026-ZON-031 be moved to the expedited portion of the docket. No one appeared in opposition.

Kathleen Blackham (Staff) stated that Staff had no objection to placing the petition on the expedited docket.

Hearing no further comments, the Hearing Examiner granted the request and moved 2026-ZON-031 to the Expedited portion of the docket.

2025-CZN-865 / 2025-CVR-865 | 405, 409, and 411 South Shortridge Road

Warren Township, Council District #20

C-S

SRMK Realty, LLC, by Justin Kingen

Rezoning of 8.48 acres from C-S to C-S to provide for all C-1 and I-1 uses, truck and trailer parking, auto-related service or repair, outdoor storage of contractor equipment, vehicles awaiting repair, and recreational vehicles.

Variance of development standards of the Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to provide for a 140-foot front yard setback (maximum front yard setback of 85 feet permitted), off-street parking areas within the front yard (not permitted), and a ten-foot-tall chain link fence within the side and rear yards (maximum six-foot-tall fence permitted within the side and rear yards).

****Staff request for continuance for cause to May 14, 2026, with Notice, if required**

Kathleen Blackham (Staff) stated she was hopeful this would be the final continuance on the companion petitions, noting one remaining unresolved issue regarding a 10-foot-tall chain link fence.

Hearing no further comments, the Hearing Examiner continued companion petitions 2025-CZN-865 and 2025-CVR-865 to the May 14, 2026 hearing, with Notice if required.

2026-ZON-018 / 2026-VAR-004 | 5510 Millersville Road

Washington Township, Council District #3

R. Michael Thomas, by Ted Nolting

Rezoning of 2.75 acres from the D-3 and C-4 districts to the C-3 district to provide for a veterinary hospital.

Variance of Development Standards of the Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to provide for an outdoor animal run/exercise area located 88 feet from a protected district (100-foot separation required).

Robert Uhlenhake (Staff) noted that after publication of the docket, Councilor Boots submitted a letter requesting a 30-day continuance to allow the neighborhood additional time to discuss the Petition with the Petitioner. Staff did not object to the continuance, which would be without additional notice. The Petition had been listed on the expedited docket.

Hearing no further comments, the Hearing Examiner continued Companion Petitions 2026-ZON-018 and 2026-VAR-004 to the May 28, 2026 hearing.

EXPEDITED PETITIONS

The Hearing Examiner explained that expedited Petitions are those where Staff had recommended approval and no opposition has been reported. If Remonstrators or members of the public were present with objections, testimony would be heard before a decision was made. The Hearing Specialist read all five expedited Petitions into the record and swore in all parties intending to testify.

2026-MOD-002 | 7305 Kentucky Avenue and 8728, 8732, 8736, and 8740 Tolson Drive

Decatur Township, Council District #21

C-S

Taylor Morrison of Indiana LLC and Oberlin Development, by Brian Tui

Modification of a prior 2023 CS zoning approval to convert all 52 duplex/paired patio home units (26 buildings) into single-family lots, reducing total units from 185 to a lower number of single-family homes.

The Petitioner's attorney, Brian Tuohy (9294 North Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN), explained that the 2023 approval had contemplated 133 single-family lots and 52 duplex units on approximately 58 acres, along with a small commercial component. Due to a precipitous decline in market interest in duplex homes in the area, the Petitioner sought to convert all duplex lots to single-family. He noted the Decatur Township Civic Council (DTCC) approved the change by a vote of approximately 37 to 1, and that Staff was supportive.

Kathleen Blackham (Staff) stated Staff had no further comments and confirmed that no opposition had been received.

Hearing no other comments, the Hearing Examiner recommended approval of 2026-MOD-002 to the MDC and placed the Petition on the May 20, 2026, agenda.

2026-ZON-020 / 2026-VAR-003 | 3520 Robson Street (NEW)

Center Township, Council District #13

Josh Smith, RG Development

Rezoning of a strip of five parcels from industrial to match surrounding residential neighborhood, to allow the homeowner to make improvements and additions to the existing home given no foreseeable industrial development on the site. Companion variance of development standards also requested.

The Petitioner's representative, Josh Smith (1073 Oliver Avenue, Indianapolis, IN), explained that the five parcels in a north-south strip were being rezoned from industrial to residential to match the large vacant industrial property immediately to the west and to allow the existing homeowner to make improvements and additions to the house, as no foreseeable industrial development was planned.

Robert Uhlenhake (Staff) had no additional comments.

Hearing no other comments, the Hearing Examiner recommended approval of 2026-ZON-020 to the MDC and placed the Petition on the May 20, 2026, agenda. She also approved 2026-VAR-003 and adopted the Findings of Fact.

2026-ZON-021 | 2065 Yandes Street (NEW)

Center Township, Council District #13

Ariel Construction and Holding LLC, by John Cross

Rezoning of an undeveloped lot from the I-3 district to the D-8 district.

The Petitioner's attorney, John Cross (13 North State Street, Suite 241, Greenfield, IN), stated that the adjacent lot at 2063 Yandes Street by the same Petitioner had previously been approved for D-8 zoning without appeal, and requested the same result for the subject parcel.

Bryce Patz, Current Planning Administrator, confirmed Staff was supportive of the rezone, noting the Comprehensive Plan calls for traditional neighborhood use, and the rezone from I-3 to D-8 would be more consistent with that plan. He also noted there was no remonstrance on record. Mr. Patz took a moment to congratulate assigned planner Josh Levesque on his upcoming marriage.

The Hearing Examiner also extended her best wishes to Mr. Levesque.

Hearing no other comments, the Hearing Examiner recommended approval of 2026-ZON-021 to the MDC and placed the Petition on the May 20, 2026, agenda.

2026-ZON-028 | 6555 Carrollton Avenue (NEW)

Washington Township, Council District #7

Kaya Hoga Company, by Tom Perkins

Rezoning to a multi-use district designation to allow greater flexibility for a commercial duplex building that has operated commercially since the 1980s.

The Petitioner's attorney, Tom Perkins (10401 North Meridian Street, Suite 450, Indianapolis, IN 46290), described the subject property as one of the few commercial buildings in the area, having operated commercially since the 1980s in a configuration similar to a commercial duplex. He sought the multi-use designation to provide more flexibility in leasing. He noted he had sent notice to the relevant neighborhood organization (RVA) and believed his client had also reached out, but no feedback had been received.

Robert Uhlenhake (Staff) had no additional comments.

Hearing no other comments, the Hearing Examiner recommended approval of 2026-ZON-028 to the MDC and placed the Petition on the May 20, 2026, agenda.

2026-ZON-031 | 1750 West Morris Street (NEW)

Center Township, Council District #18

RG Development, by Josh Smith

Rezoning from C4 to D5 to allow reconstruction of a fire-damaged home and to match the surrounding residential neighborhood.

After the Petition was expedited, the Petitioner's representative, Josh Smith (1073 Oliver Avenue, Indianapolis, IN), explained that the property is part of a stretch of homes on the north side of Morris Street developed as residential. A fire last fall nearly destroyed the home, but the existing C-4 zoning prevents reconstruction. He sought a rezone to D5 to match the surrounding neighborhood and allow rebuilding.

Kathleen Blackham (Staff) had no further comments.

Hearing no other comments, the Hearing Examiner recommended approval of 2026-ZON-031 to the MDC and placed the Petition on the May 20, 2026, agenda.

PETITIONS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

2026-CVR-803 / 2026-CVC-803 | 1437 – 1533 (odd) Saulcy Street, 1422 – 1528 (even) Astor Street, and 219 Koehne Street

Center Township, Council District #18

D-8 (RC)

Union Holdings III, LLC, by Michael Rabinowitch

Variance of Use and Development Standards of the Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to provide for a Large Apartment (not permitted), a building height of 50 feet (maximum 35 feet permitted), a floor area ratio of 1.88 (maximum 0.80 floor area ratio permitted) and a minimum livability space ratio of 0.07 (minimum 0.75 required).

Vacation of the first east-west alley south of Saulcy Street, ranging from eight feet and 12 feet in width, from the east right-of-way line of Koehne Street, being the southeast corner of Lot 51 of Minkner's Wilmoth Place Section 3, as recorded in Plat Book 12, Page 157 in the Office of the Recorder of Marion County, Indiana, 680 feet to the east, to the west right-of-way line of White River Parkway, West Drive,

Vacation of the first north-south alley west of White River Parkway, West Drive, being eight feet wide, from the south right-of-way line of Saulcy Street, 86 feet to the south, to the north right-of-way line of the first east-west alley South of Saulcy Street,

Vacation of the second north-south alley west of White River Parkway, West Drive, being 14 feet wide, 220 feet south, to the north right-of-way line of Astor Street, all with a waiver of the assessment of benefits.

The Petitioner's attorney, Yogi Snyder (Dinsmore, 211 North Pennsylvania Street, Indianapolis, IN), appeared on behalf of the Annex Group, a locally based multifamily developer focused on affordable housing. He described the subject property as an assemblage of approximately 38 parcels in the Stringtown neighborhood, located just west of downtown Indianapolis across the White River, already zoned D-8. The proposed development would consist of 242 affordable housing units with a 258-space parking garage and 44 additional on-street spaces. He noted the Petitioner had worked closely with the Stringtown Neighborhood Association and its president, Frank Staples, to develop the site plan and a Community Benefits Agreement. Councilor Kristin Jones was also noted as present in support. Mr. Snyder stated that Staff's positive recommendation had been obtained after the Petitioner incorporated planning staff feedback, including a reduction in building massing and density. He described the site as an assemblage of largely vacant or severely deteriorated properties, nearly all subject to notices of violation or demolition orders, and noted that the Petitioner had conducted a thorough inquiry and found none of the structures to be historically protected. Mr. Snyder described the \$70 million investment as providing much-needed affordable housing on property already zoned D-8 for multifamily use. He outlined variances required for building height, floor area ratio, and livability space ratio, all of which were necessary due to the residential building type standards under the Ordinance.

Mr. Snyder described the site plan, which reserved green space in the eastern portion of the site for tenants and the neighborhood, with interior courtyards and a parking garage. After receiving

initial Staff feedback, the Petitioner lowered the building scale on the western half of the site, which was closest to existing residential properties. He noted a certified arborist had surveyed the site and identified five heritage trees requiring removal and committed that the Petitioner would meet the Ordinance's mitigation requirements and plant at least 96 new large trees. He noted the landscape plan meets the Ordinance's Green Factor requirement. With respect to community engagement, the Petitioner met with the Stringtown Neighborhood Association on at least two occasions and attended the April 13, 2026, all-neighborhood meeting, as well as a special meeting called by the Stringtown Now group on April 14, 2026. He described the Community Benefits Agreement provisions, which include neighborhood access to outdoor amenity space; \$10,000 in the first year and \$5,000 annually thereafter for neighborhood improvements; key fob access, security cameras, and BlueLink integration with IMPD; free fitness room access for IMPD and IU Police officers; on-site food pantry; community gardens; financial training through Operation Hope; nutrition education through Purdue University Extension; and internship opportunities through Indy Youth Build.

The Remonstrator's spokesperson, Jessy Baum (334 North Elder Avenue, Indianapolis, IN), representing Stringtown Now, one of two registered neighborhood associations in Stringtown, testified in opposition. She stated that Stringtown Now did not oppose development generally but opposed development that harmed their poor and working-class neighborhood, which they envisioned as one that preserved and rehabilitated the existing community. She alleged that negotiations between the Annex Group, the Stringtown Neighborhood Association, and Councilor Jones had taken place in closed-door meetings since the prior year, excluding Stringtown Now, neighbors, property owners, church leaders, and landlords. She stated that community members were not informed of the \$10,000 Community Benefits Agreement payment until the April 13, 2026 meeting (weeks after Councilor Jones had already submitted her letter of support) and that the storage unit provision was requested by the Stringtown Neighborhood Association, which was run solely by a non-resident, rather than by neighbors themselves. Ms. Baum stated she had knocked on every door surrounding the proposed development and that not one person with whom she spoke had supported the project. She submitted a petition signed by over 30 residents, out of approximately 35 surrounding homes.

Ms. Baum argued that the proposed building violated multiple applicable standards, including Indiana Code Title 36, the Comprehensive Plan, and the City's infill housing guidelines. She noted that the project proposes 71 units per acre against a Regional Center cap of 26 and a Pattern Book recommendation of 5 to 15 units per acre. She raised environmental and health concerns, noting Stringtown's existing elevated lung cancer and COPD rates, stormwater runoff issues, and heat island effects. She argued that the heritage tree ordinance required preservation unless specific exceptions apply and that no such exception was met here, as no revised site plans demonstrating exhausted design alternatives had been submitted. She referenced crime statistics, Google reviews, and a letter from Reverend Ben Hein describing conditions at the Annex Group's nearby development, Union at 16th Street, as evidence of neglect, including roach and mice infestations, an inaccessible gym, violent incidents, and an officer-involved shooting.

Rick Fuller (1628 West New York Street, Indianapolis, IN), a Stringtown resident, stated his opposition to the project, referencing crime, drug issues, traffic congestion, and the density of the proposed development. He noted that a previous developer, Brougher, had planned 40-plus single-family homes for the area, and that many neighbors had purchased and begun restoring older homes in anticipation of that development vision. He stated that properties at 1437 and 1445 Saulcy Street were pre-1900 structures that should be renovated and given historic landmark designation rather than demolished. He requested denial of the Petition.

Bruce Keitell (1432 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis, IN), a Stringtown resident, testified that the Stringtown Neighborhood Association president, Frank Staples, had told him there was no hearing and that everything had already been approved. He stated this misinformation was deeply concerning and expressed the view that the Stringtown Neighborhood Association was dysfunctional and not representative of residents. He opposed the project on the grounds of crime, traffic, and the lack of independent studies presented to the community.

Crystal Rose (256 Koehne Street, Indianapolis, IN) testified regarding the City's heritage tree ordinance, citing Section 744503K of the Indianapolis-Marion County Unified Development Code, which defines heritage trees as those with an 18-inch diameter at breast height and specifies that removal is only permitted under enumerated exceptions—including that the tree is dead, diseased, a threat to public safety, interferes with public services or traffic, or prevents development that cannot be redesigned around it. She argued that the developer cannot self-certify these exceptions and that no revised site plans demonstrating exhausted design alternatives had been submitted. She emphasized the ecological importance of the heritage trees for stormwater management and wildlife habitat.

The Hearing Examiner then invited Councilor Kristin Jones to testify. Councilor Jones, CD #18 (714 Shepherd Street, Indianapolis, IN 46221), stated she lived on the other side of Washington Street from the proposed development and was close to the neighborhood. She firmly denied receiving any personal or campaign financial benefit from the Annex Group. She described her extensive outreach in the neighborhood, including year-round door knocking, storm drain cleanups, and monthly collaboration with the Stringtown Neighborhood Association. She stated that the fitness room idea came directly from Commander Foley of the downtown district, who had seen it succeed in other parts of the City as a way to encourage law enforcement presence. She described working for many months with the neighborhood association and the Annex Group to negotiate and refine the Community Benefits Agreement, noting the product had evolved significantly from the initial proposal. She acknowledged neighborhood tensions but expressed support for the project as it provided much-needed affordable housing and she welcomed new neighbors to Stringtown.

Kathleen Blackham (Staff) stated that, when reviewing the Petition, Staff examined the Near West Neighborhood Land Use Plan. That plan identifies the area as a mix of industrial, commercial, institutional, and single-family uses with a high number of vacant lots, and describes it as ripe for a shift in use given its proximity to Washington Street, the Indianapolis Zoo, the White River, downtown views, IUPUI, and the planned Blue Line rapid transit corridor. Staff therefore found it appropriate to support a shift to multifamily use. Ms. Blackham noted that Staff does have some concern regarding building heights on the north and south elevations and would like to see further consideration given to those areas during the design phase, which will require an additional regional center review. Staff supported the alley vacations as necessary to facilitate the development, noting that many of the alleys were unimproved. Staff supported the variance of use for the large apartment building type, the floor area ratio variance, and the livability space ratio variance. In response to questions from the Hearing Examiner, Ms. Blackham confirmed that both Stringtown Now and the Stringtown Neighborhood Association were Registered Neighborhood Organizations that received proper notice. She also confirmed that she personally had clarified for several residents that a public hearing was indeed scheduled after hearing reports that residents had been told the hearing was canceled.

During the Petitioner's rebuttal, Mr. Snyder confirmed that the Annex Group had met with Stringtown Now representatives at least twice since the prior continuance—at the April 13 all-neighborhood meeting and at a subsequent virtual meeting with three or four Stringtown Now representatives. He denied that anyone from the Annex Group told residents the hearing would not take place. He committed to working with Staff through the design phase on elevation

concerns. He pushed back on claims that the project failed to benefit the community, noting Indiana's near-last national ranking for affordable housing availability and arguing that single-family rehabilitation, while valuable, had not addressed the severe deterioration of the subject properties. He disputed the claim that crime at Union at 16th Street had worsened since the Annex Group took over management, stating that improvements have been made. Joy Skidmore (Annex Group, 8680 Fishers Plaza Drive, Fishers, IN 46038) briefly addressed the comparison between Union at 16th Street and the proposed Stringtown development, noting the two are in very different crime environments (Union at 16th was in a high crime corridor while Stringtown was not), and that the Stringtown design, with enclosed key-fob parking and centralized amenities, incorporated lessons learned from the earlier project.

During the Remonstrator rebuttal period, Cynthia Dillehay (117 Koehne Street, Indianapolis, IN), a long-time Stringtown resident whose family has lived there since the Depression, testified that all the subject properties had been rehabable before the current owner purchased them and allowed them to deteriorate. She stated opposition to the scale of the proposed project and suggested alternatives such as smaller apartment buildings, townhomes, or single-family homes like other nearby developments. She also stated that Frank Staples had told neighbors the project was a "done deal."

Karla Romero, (334 North Elder Avenue, Indianapolis, IN), a Stringtown resident (who was sworn in during the rebuttal period after initially testifying without being sworn), clarified he had not threatened Councilor Jones, as had been implied. He stated the Stringtown Neighborhood Association did not represent the residents of Stringtown and reiterated that the association's president, Frank Staples, had contacted at least ten people in the week before the hearing to tell them it had been canceled, raising procedural fairness concerns about how many residents may not have attended as a result.

Jessy Baum, in additional rebuttal, clarified that the current zoning allowed townhouses, row homes, and garden apartments in addition to single-family homes, and that single-family development had, in fact, succeeded in Stringtown. She also clarified that Stringtown Now was formed because the Stringtown Neighborhood Association was not providing information to residents.

The Hearing Examiner addressed both sides, noting that legal notices and posted signs provide residents with the contact information needed to engage Staff or the Petitioner directly, and that Staff can be contacted to confirm what was on a docket. She summarized her role as making a decision subject to appeal to the MDC, and that her decision was based on land use considerations, not on a count of those for or against. She noted she had received letters of support from Councilor Jones and another property owner in Stringtown, as well as approximately six to eight opposition letters. She found that D-8 zoning allowed a wide variety of housing types and that the neighborhood plan supported a denser development at this location, given its characteristics. She found the project's design elements (e.g., inward-facing parking, lower building mass on the western side adjacent to residential properties, and the community benefits agreement) to be meritorious. She also noted a Regional Center Petition would still be required, providing an additional opportunity for design review. She anticipated her recommendation would be appealed and encouraged those wishing to appeal to contact Kathleen Blackham for guidance. Councilor Jones offered a brief additional comment confirming she had attempted to arrange a direct meeting with Karla Romero, which Romero had cancelled.

Hearing no further comments, the Hearing Examiner approved 2026-CVR-803, subject to the site plan, and adopted the Findings of Fact. She adopted the Findings of Fact for the vacation Petitions, finding the proposed vacations to be in the public interest, and set a

Benefits Assessment Hearing for May 14, 2026. She confirmed and ratified the adoption of Declaratory Resolution 2026-CVC-803, subject to the rights of public utilities under Indiana Code 36-7-3-16.

2026-ZON-026 | 3565 South Keystone Avenue
Perry Township, Council District #22
Farnsworth Meal Recycling, LLC, by Joseph Csikos

Rezoning of 2.70 acres from the SU-1 district to the C-4 district to provide for community-regional commercial uses.

The Petitioner's attorney, Russell Brown (Clark Quinn Moses Scott & Grahn, 320 North Meridian Street, Suite 1100, Indianapolis, IN), appeared along with Donnie Matthews, principal of Farnsworth Medal Recycling, the property owner. He explained that the 2.7-acre site at 3565 South Keystone Avenue, immediately adjacent to the southbound I-65 on-ramp, had been used for religious purposes for approximately 70 years before the Petitioner acquired it roughly two years ago. The former structure was removed, and the site was prepared for redevelopment. An earlier companion Petition filed on behalf of a contract purchaser, believed to be QuikTrip Corporation, for a C-4 rezoning with a convenience store and fueling station was withdrawn after the purchase contract terminated. The current Petition is a rezoning to the C-4 district to maximize the property's marketability, as the Petitioner is actively seeking a buyer. Mr. Brown described the South Keystone corridor south of I-65 as predominantly C-3, C-4, and large SU-1 commercial uses and argued the request was consistent with the surrounding context. He noted only one inquiry had been received from the public since two rounds of Notice had been mailed, and that no specific user was yet identified for the site.

The Remonstrator's attorney, Greg Zubek (Whitham & Zubek, 10475 Centerpoint Boulevard, Indianapolis, IN), appeared on behalf of Parsvnath LLC, owner of the Shell fueling station at 3624 South Keystone Avenue, immediately across the street from the subject site, which had operated for approximately 20 years. He stated his client would not oppose a C-4 rezoning if the Petitioner committed to excluding three specific uses: auto fueling stations, auto/light vehicle washes, and auto repair shops. Absent that commitment, his client opposed the Petition. He outlined several bases for opposition. First, the Comprehensive Plan designated the area for village mixed use, a typology that, according to the City's Pattern Book, excluded automobile uses such as gas stations, auto repair, and drive-throughs. Second, the Staff Report acknowledged the C-4 request was not consistent with the village mixed use recommendation. Third, there were three fueling stations within two-tenths of a mile of the site (a Shell station across the street, a Speedway immediately to the south, and a BP at the northwest corner of Keystone and I-65), making a fourth station duplicative and not contributing to mixed use. Fourth, the Hearing Examiner's prior decisions at 4001 South Keystone applied the same analytical framework. Fifth, the remaining 55 C-4 uses (e.g., offices, drug stores, food stores, daycare, animal care, eating establishments, retail, and others) would be welcomed by his client and would genuinely contribute to the area's mix of uses. Mr. Zubek argued that the best land use for the site was not an auto fueling station, vehicle wash, or repair shop.

Kathleen Blackham (Staff) acknowledged that the C-4 request was not consistent with the village mixed use Comprehensive Plan recommendation, but stated that given the surrounding commercial context (e.g., the I-65 interchange, the prevalence of commercial uses on Keystone Avenue, and the zoning history of the site, which reflects repeated commercial rezonings over the decades), a village mixed use development was not achievable or supportable at the

location. She distinguished the site from the one in the 401 South Keystone case, noting that the other site had nearby residential uses, while everything south of the I-65 interchange at this location was commercial. Staff therefore recommended approval of the C-4 rezoning.

In rebuttal, Mr. Brown argued that the 4001 South Keystone case was materially distinguishable due to its distance from the interstate interchange. He observed that the village mixed-use typology technically applied to the Remonstrator's own C-4 parcel across the street. He also pointed to a nearby Walmart Neighborhood Market as a large-scale commercial development that postdated the Comprehensive Plan and did not conform to village mixed-use standards, further characterizing the area as a commercial corridor.

In the Remonstrator rebuttal, Mr. Zubek maintained his client's position was based not on competition but on the Comprehensive Plan's prohibition on automobile uses in the village mixed-use typology, which he cited from the Hearing Examiner's written memorandum from the 4001 South Keystone case. He requested denial of the Petition or that the three auto-related uses be excluded by commitment.

The Hearing Examiner acknowledged that the Remonstrator's argument sounded like concerns regarding competition despite repeated disclaimers to the contrary. She agreed with Staff that the interchange context makes village mixed-use unachievable at this site, unlike the 4001 South Keystone location, which was situated among residential uses. She found no land use basis for requiring the use restriction sought by the Remonstrator, noting the Comprehensive Plan was a guideline and that, given the surrounding commercial and interchange uses, C-4 zoning would be compatible with the area.

Hearing no further comments, the Hearing Examiner recommended approval of 2026-ZON-026 to the MDC and placed the Petition on the May 20, 2026 agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business before the Hearing Examiner, so the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 P.M.



Judy Weerts Hall, Hearing Examiner
Metropolitan Development Commission