

Burns Harbor Board of Zoning Appeals

Minutes of Tuesday, November 19, 2025

The Board of Zoning Appeals of the Town of Burns Harbor, Porter County, Indiana, met in its regular session on Tuesday, November 19, 2025, at the Burns Harbor Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by the Board of Zoning Appeals President, Bernie Poparad, at 6:00 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was recited.

Roll Call:

Bob Crecelius	Absent
Travis Dunlap	Present via Zoom
Jim Meeks	Present
Timothy Minier	Present
Bernie Poparad	Present

Additional Officials Present

Attorney Clay Patton, Building Commissioner Joe Lawson, and Secretary Jill Sherrill.

Also Present

Attorney Greg Babcock, representing CIT Trucks, LLC, Carl Herzog, President/Dealer Principal at CIT Trucks, LLC, Clint Yocum, Branch Manager at CIT Trucks, LLC, Mark Dutler, Senior General Manager; and Raeann Trakas, Senior Community Relations Representative at Cleveland Cliffs.

Minutes

Meeks made a motion to approve the minutes of October 28, 2025. Minier seconded the motion. Meeks-Aye, Minier- Aye, Dunlap- Aye, Crecelius-Absent, Poparad-Aye. Motion passed.

Communication, Bills, Expenditures

Nothing to report.

Report of Officers, Committee, Staff

Nothing to report.

Public Hearing

CIT Trucks, LLC- Developmental Standards Variance

Attorney Babcock stated I am here tonight along with Carl Herzog, who is the President of CIT Trucks, LLC. After the preliminary hearing, we submitted our amended findings, which you will notice two conditions that were to be addressed. The first concern that the board expressed was in terms of our new free-standing sign and the old Campland sign coming down. The other was that the sign that we show in our packet is going to be stacked. It is not going to scroll or change in any way, shape, or form. So, we are here this evening to request two Developmental Standards variances, total square footage on the whole site, and then the square footage of our freestanding sign. Attorney Babcock gave an overview of CIT Trucks, LLC, and brought President Carl Herzog up to answer any questions. Herzog stated my name is Carl Herzog, President of CIT Trucks, LLC, mailing address 305 W Northtown Road, Normal, Illinois. Our new building is very well underway, and we are projected to move in very early in 2026. Clint Yocum, branch manager, is here this evening and will be running this branch for us. We have about 28 full-time employees right now, and we are still hiring. We will have the pylon sign that will be on Interstate 94 and will

display Kenworth. We want to put that sign perpendicular to Interstate 94, so that traffic going East and West can have visibility of the sign. We are requesting that the CIT Trucks, LLC sign be mounted on the building. There will be another sign over the front doors that has KW, which again is the franchise logo. We are not going to have any kind of scrolling signs, which are not allowed by the franchise. Attorney Babcock discussed the dimensions of the signs and what they were requesting. I think the signage they are proposing gets their name there and is subtle, from what we might see in other settings. I'd ask you guys to consider this evening, to grant the amended findings, to allow both the variances, the total square footage on the site, and then the total square footage of the free-standing sign.

Poparad opened the Public Hearing at 6:11 pm.

Poparad asked for public comments in favor.

Yocum stated my name is Clint Yocum, I have been in Burns Harbor since 2009, and this has been something we have talked about for a long time with the business. I have been with CIT Trucks, LLC since 2015, and have transferred to our new Building here in Burns Harbor. We currently have four employees who live in Burns Harbor, and I just see that number growing from surrounding areas.

Poparad asked if there were any other comments in favor. There were no comments in favor.

Poparad asked if there were any comments in opposition. There were no comments on the opposition.

Meeks stated I think they covered all the points that we requested last time, and the amended paperwork is exactly what we discussed.

Dunlap stated the only thing that I have is that during the preliminary hearing, we talked about a not-to-exceed, regarding the new pylon going up versus the one coming down on the adjacent property. Attorney Babcock stated that we have a 60-day condition that once the new sign is up, they will take the old Campland sign down.

Poparad stated that we did work with CIT Trucks LLC about the lights shining across Interstate 94. Herzog stated that we looked at those lights and found that some were not working and others were pointing directly out. They are designed to be a security format where the lights shine down on the product, so we have already addressed those issues with those lights.

Poparad closed the Public Hearing at 6:16 pm.

Meeks made a motion to approve both variances for CIT Trucks LLC. Minier seconded the motion. Meeks-Aye, Minier- Aye, Dunlap- Aye, Crecelius-Absent, Poparad-Aye. Motion passed.

Preliminary Hearing

Cleveland Cliffs- Use Variance & Developmental Standards Variance

Dutler stated my name is Mark Dutler, and I am the general manager for Cleveland Cliffs. We are seeking two variances that both pertain to the container ordinance. One is for 15-3-6, an ordinance requiring inspections of storage containers on property. We are seeking a variance to avoid that inspection on the property. We are also seeking to limit the total number of containers we pay for to 200. Meeks stated that you want to pay for 200 containers but have 1,000 out there. Dutler stated that we would pay for 200 containers, we currently have 213, and that number does go up and down based on projects and the number of contractors that we have on site. Meeks asked why they wanted to weigh the inspection. Dutler stated that I think we already have plenty of

inspections that take place. We are already regulated by OSHA. OSHA comes in and does its own inspections. We do our own internal audits and have yet to have any sort of container issues in that. So, spending time to go through something that is already covered by either OSHA or our safety professionals seems unnecessary. Dunlap asked if Cleveland Cliffs has policies and procedures regarding what can be stored in the containers. Dutler stated no, but there are requirements of how we store anything, whether it's in a container or somewhere in the shop, or if it's in a warehouse. Meeks asked Building Commissioner Lawson how long inspections would take him at Cleveland Cliffs. Building Commissioner Lawson stated that it would take a little bit longer because the containers are more spread out. It would take someone escorting me through the mill to do those inspections.

Attorney Patton stated that I would point out what they have in their application, and they reference the Planning Commission meeting from August 2020, stating they would have difficulty enforcing this ordinance on unique property like Cleveland Cliffs Burns Harbor. It was stated, "enforcement of the property on the property may be difficult." I think we must go back and look at the entirety of those minutes. Dutler stated that the containers are spread out over 3,300 acres, and a lot of them are in primary areas that require full PPE. None of the containers are visible from the road. Poparad stated that the only thing I don't like is you telling us that we can't come there. If you read 15-3-2, it says, as outlined by the Indiana building code, upon representation of proper credentials, the Building Commissioner or any authorized representative can enter the premises at a reasonable time. Dutler stated that I think we are struggling with the value of doing the inspections when we have so many other things that will cover it. Minier stated that my concern is the liability for this. Say something happens out there, and the mill is sued. Then the Town of Burns Harbor is thrown in there simply because we didn't do an inspection out there. Meeks stated that we have ordinances in the Town of Burns Harbor that every business and residence must follow; Cleveland Cliffs should not be any different. Meeks made a motion to move to a Public Hearing. Minier seconded the motion. Meeks-Aye, Minier- Aye, Dunlap- Aye, Crecelius-Absent, Poparad-Aye. Motion passed.

Good of the Order and Other Business

Poparad reminded the board and audience about the December meeting being on Wednesday, December 17, 2025.

Announcements

Nothing to report.

Adjourn

Minier made a motion to adjourn at 6:32 p.m. Meeks seconded the motion. Meeks-Aye, Minier-Aye, Dunlap-Aye, Crecelius-Absent, Poparad-Aye. Motion passed.

Approved December 17, 2025

Bernie Poparad, President

Jill Sherrill, Secretary