

Burns Harbor Advisory Plan Commission

Minutes of Monday, July 6, 2026

The Advisory Plan Commission of the Town of Burns Harbor, Porter County, Indiana, met in a regular session on Monday, July 6, 2026, at the Burns Harbor Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by Advisory Plan Commission President Toni Biancardi at 6:00 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was recited.

Roll Call:

Toni Biancardi.....	Present
Bernie Poparad.....	Present
Roseann Bozak	Present
Travis Dunlap	Absent
Gordon McCormick.....	Present
Aaron Adcock	Present
Michelle Watkins.....	Absent

Additional Officials Present

Attorney: Clay Patton, Building Commissioner: Joe Lawson, Global Engineer: Jeanette Hicks, and Secretary: Jill Sherrill.

Also Present

Councilman Jack McGraw and Manuel Serrano- 200 Fairchild Dr.

Minutes

Bozak made a motion to approve the minutes of June 1, 2026. McCormick seconded the motion. Poparad-Aye, McCormick-Aye, Adcock-Aye, Bozak-Aye, Dunlap-Absent, Watkins-Absent, Biancardi-Aye. Motion passed.

Communication, Bills, Expenditures

Review: Bonds, Maintenance Guarantees, Letter of Credit

Biancardi stated that nothing has changed. I did have a council person mention to me that residents in Corlin's Landing Phase 2 are asking about the road being paved and we have the infrastructure guarantee. Does anyone on this board know at this point why they have not asked us to accept phase 2? Poparad stated I thought that it was accepted. Biancardi stated that this says infrastructure guarantee, not maintenance. Poparad stated every time that I talk to Mr. Lightfoot he says that he must do it. Biancardi asked Building Commissioner Lawson if he had spoken to Mr. Lightfoot. Building Commissioner Lawson stated no, Poparad stated that he would be in contact with him. Biancardi stated that I feel like maybe it is time for a letter from our attorney. I am happy to send a letter asking him to come to the next meeting to discuss it. Poparad made a motion to send Mr. Lightfoot a letter regarding the paving of Phase 2 in Corlin's Landing. McCormick seconded the motion. Poparad-Aye, McCormick-Aye, Adcock-Aye, Bozak-Aye, Dunlap-Absent, Watkins-Absent, Biancardi-Aye. Motion passed.

Biancardi stated that the Redevelopment Commission will be discussing amending the TIF allocation area this week. In a nutshell, there are properties in the allocation area that are reducing

the amount of money that the Town of Burns Harbor gets, and so by removing them, they will be able to collect more money. Why does that matter to us? Statutorily, a resolution will come to this board, the Redevelopment Commission, and the council, and then it goes back for a Public Hearing. We will have a draft of that resolution for you to have for our August meeting. I don't have any details currently, but the reason it comes to us is because this board manages the comprehensive plan and so affirming that it is good for our plan.

Biancardi stated that there are some grants currently available from some different organizations. If we want to potentially now or soon look at updating our comprehensive plan, we can talk about that some more. It is a very involved process, so it is certainly not something that I want to take on over the summer. I don't think we can do it that quickly. Portage is working on theirs right now with an organization, and there is some money to do that. I know we have been reviewing our plans, the larger vision dates to 2009 and then some minor changes in 2019. Bozak stated that I think this is worth a look at. Biancardi stated that we can talk more about this in August and Secretary Sherrill will send out information about what that would look like.

Report of Officers, Committee, Staff

Nothing to report.

Public Hearing

Ordinance Amending Text of Chapter 6- License Fees

Biancardi opened the Public Hearing at 6:08 pm.

Biancardi stated that this is the ordinance amending text of Chapter 6 regarding license fees, and both ordinances tonight are to clean up the language and make clearer. The addition for this one is letter B, where it calls out specifically that a contractor or subcontractor shall obtain a license, where before it wasn't necessarily as clear.

Biancardi asked for public comment in favor. There were no comments in favor.

Biancardi asked for public comment in opposition. There were no comments on the opposition.

There was no discussion from the board. Biancardi closed the Public Hearing at 6:09 pm.

McCormick made a favorable recommendation to the Town Council for the ordinance amending text of Chapter 6- License fees. Poparad seconded the motion. Poparad-Aye, McCormick-Aye, Adcock-Aye, Bozak-Aye, Dunlap-Absent, Watkins-Absent, Biancardi-Aye. Motion passed.

Ordinance Amending Text of Chapter 14- Mandatory Meeting: Site Plan Review

Biancardi opened the Public Hearing at 6:09 pm. This ordinance is also amending the text of our subdivision control ordinance, and this is specific to 14-3.2.5 which is our mandatory site plan review. This is also something that Building Commissioner Lawson and I felt needed some cleaning up when we were speaking with Linde in town about doing a project. The intent of this is that a subdivision or commercial or industrial development would come to this board to discuss the proposal. The reason being is we have our professional services here, and so we can all be together to support the plan that the person is presenting. It will save time and money to discuss those plans, and then it will give us the opportunity to do that in a public meeting. We can then direct our professional services to support the board in that review of that process. It was lacking the call out specifically of commercial or industrial development.

Biancardi asked for public comment in favor. There were no comments in favor.

Biancardi asked for public comment in opposition. There were no comments on the opposition.

There was no discussion from the board. Biancardi closed the Public Hearing at 6:11 pm.

Poparad made a favorable recommendation to the Town Council for the ordinance amending text of Chapter 14- Mandatory Meeting: Site Plan Review. McCormick seconded the motion. Poparad-Aye, McCormick-Aye, Adcock-Aye, Bozak-Aye, Dunlap-Absent, Watkins-Absent, Biancardi-Aye.
Motion passed.

Biancardi stated that Building Commissioner has been working with Ron Aherton. If you recall, a few months ago he wanted to rezone his property on Highway 20. We have all the documents now and he would like to have his Public Hearing in August. I think we would need a motion if everyone is okay with that to set it for the Public Hearing. Bozak made a motion to set the Public Hearing for Ron Aherton's rezoning on August 3, 2026. Adcock seconded the motion. Poparad-Aye, McCormick-Aye, Adcock-Aye, Bozak-Aye, Dunlap-Absent, Watkins-Absent, Biancardi-Aye.
Motion passed.

Biancardi asked Attorney Patton if Mr. Aherton can appear via Zoom. Attorney Patton stated he can do that if he wishes.

New Business

Site Plan Review: Tech Drive

Carrington stated my name is Ryan Carrington and I am with DLZ. We were contacted by the Tech Business Center Owners Association to develop plans to rehabilitate this driveway through that subdivision that has significantly deteriorated over the years. We have planned to do an extensive full depth patching in areas that are really distressed and in the rest of the area at the full length of the driveway to mill it and repave the entire thing with asphalt. We will be matching the existing width of pavement along with roadside grading to encourage the water to get off the pavement. There will also be some smaller swales that will direct the water expositor drainage to the existing structures that are already out there. There are a couple of new structures to help with connecting to the existing system. Biancardi stated that we have our professionals here to help us by reviewing your plans and making sure that we have everything that we need. Biancardi asked Carrington if a permit has been applied for. Carrington stated that I had sent over all of the plans along with the erosion control permit earlier in June. As far as a separate permit, I'm not sure what needs to happen with that. Biancardi stated it's the building permit to do the work in the Town of Burns Harbor. Building Commissioner Lawson stated that he has already submitted everything plan wise. Before I can do anything, it would need to be reviewed by Global Engineering. If there are any issues or comments that need to be corrected, it would be more efficient to have Global Engineering do the review first before obtaining the permit. Biancardi stated that you want him to wait on getting the permit until Global Engineering comes back with their review? Building Commissioner Lawson stated that is my suggestion. Hicks asked if there were any questions regarding geotechnical information. Carrington stated that there is a geotechnical report that was included in what we submitted. Hicks asked if the future intent of the drive was to stay on a private road for the development. Carrington stated that is what I understand. The plan right now is to repair the deteriorating areas, and then actually increase the thickness overall by a couple of inches to add some additional strength there. Biancardi stated that we will get those plans over to the engineers first thing tomorrow morning. From here you will work with the engineer and Building Commissioner in terms of getting everything in order and whatever else is needed.

Permit Extension- 200 Fairchild Drive

Biancardi stated that the permit expired on June 1st, and it says the estimated date of completion will be August 31, 2026. Building Commissioner Lawson stated that my concern is that won't be enough time after being inside the home and seeing the extent of work that is still incomplete and

everything on the exterior that needs to be completed as well. I feel like that is a very tight deadline. I believe the permit should be extended at least 3-6 months. Mr. Serrano stated that would be enough time to complete the house. Bozak made a motion to approve the permit 24-102 for 200 Fairchild Dr. through December 31, 2026. Poparad seconded the motion. Poparad-Aye, McCormick-Aye, Adcock-Aye, Bozak-Aye, Dunlap-Absent, Watkins-Absent, Biancardi-Aye.
Motion passed.

Old Business

Proposed Code Book Amendments

Utility Work Requirements

Biancardi stated that Building Commissioner Lawson has given this a board a list of things that he would require and include in an excavation permit. Are you suggesting that we build this into the code or is this more of a checklist that we follow? I really do like the letter and having that proof that it was sent to all neighbors, and everyone is aware of what will be happening. Building Commissioner Lawson stated that I think this is a great layout and a great way to make sure that things are getting done properly and there are communication and accountability. Biancardi asked if he thought this would apply to everyone for an excavation permit because it could be blended with the current ordinance. Building Commissioner Lawson stated that this is more specific to utility underground utility work. Biancardi stated that we might have to create something new in the town code specific to that. The only other thing that I would add along with the draft property letter is just proof that it's been given out, such as door hangers or something to show residents have been notified of the utility work. Let's work towards fitting this into the town code and come up with a proposal. Building Commissioner Lawson stated that there is a section there that mentions the town engineer for review and evaluation as to whether a permit may be issued under an exception or an emergency as soon as possible. I think that is a critical thing to add in there in the event of an emergency, so there is some kind of stipulation for that. Biancardi asked if there was more of a process that goes along with that. Building Commissioner Lawson stated I think that would be a per-case evaluation. Biancardi stated that decision would be made by you and the engineer, correct? Building Commissioner Lawson stated yes. Biancardi stated then it would come back to this board. Building Commissioner Lawson stated that if it were an emergency, they would come after the fact. So, they would be coming after the fact to discuss and go over the details.

Sidewalks

Biancardi stated that Building Commissioner Lawson provided sidewalk information for us that he is requesting to be added to Chapter 15. Building Commissioner stated it would be under Chapter 15-13-31 Sidewalks required. Biancardi asked if we would be eliminating it from Chapter 14-4-1 General Standards for sidewalks. Would we include it in both places or one place? Building Commissioner Lawson stated that you can include it in both places, but the reason why I said Chapter 15 because Chapter 14 seems like it is almost specific to subdivisions. So, if there are other areas such as commercial businesses that need sidewalks, then we somehow must come up with something that includes them. Biancardi asked Attorney Patton if they can include a refer to section instead of putting them in both sections. Attorney Patton stated yes. Poparad asked if there was a time limit when the sidewalks needed to be installed. Building Commissioner Lawson stated that there is a subsection B that says prior to acceptance of all subdivisions, all sidewalks must be installed. Biancardi stated that I think sidewalks are referenced somewhere else in the town code, so we will want to double check that. A discussion was held among board members about sidewalks and when they should be completed. Biancardi stated that the ADA is one of the requirements that must be met once it becomes the Town of Burns Harbor subdivision, because until then it could be a private development. Attorney Patton stated you might also consider a development bond that they pay. Biancardi stated that we will work on setting this one up in ordinance form to see what it would look like. I will read through the comments that were made tonight and what we would do.

Light Ordinance

Biancardi stated I read through what Building Commissioner Lawson gave us, and it was quite a bit and it's a template. Did it call out specific numbers and stuff like that? Building Commissioner Lawson stated no, it is generalized, but it is a starting point. One of the most difficult things about doing this is who does the testing, who pays for it, and the equipment needed. Biancardi asked Attorney Patton if the town can charge a person back for testing? So, if someone were to complain, could we potentially charge that person? Attorney Patton stated I don't think you can charge for it if you don't have that ordinance. Biancardi stated that if we build it into the ordinance, can we bill back for those fees. Building Commissioner Lawson stated that I stopped at the Chevy Dealership and spoke with the manager and asked if they could do either one or two things: make sure the lights are pointed down and not across the highway and adjust the brightness. The manager stated they would absolutely do that and are happy to cooperate with the Town of Burns Harbor. A discussion was held regarding car dealership lighting. Building Commissioner Lawson stated that I think this should be a whole new ordinance. I will start working on this.

Announcements

Biancardi stated that the September meeting falls on Labor Day, is anyone opposed to moving it a week later to the 14th? All board members were okay with moving the meeting to September 14, 2026. Poparad made a motion to move the meeting to September 14, 2026. McCormick seconded the motion. Poparad-Aye, McCormick-Aye, Adcock-Aye, Bozak-Aye, Dunlap-Absent, Watkins-Absent, Biancardi-Aye.

Motion passed.

Good of the Order

None

Adjournment

Bozak made a motion to adjourn at 6:51 pm. Adcock seconded the motion. Poparad-Aye, McCormick-Aye, Adcock-Aye, Bozak-Aye, Dunlap-Absent, Watkins-Absent, Biancardi-Aye.

Motion passed.

Approved August 3, 2026

Toni Biancardi, President

Jill Sherrill, Secretary