

NEW WHITELAND  
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS  
March 25, 2025  
6:30 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

President, Mike Ryle began the March meeting at 6:30 pm. Members present were Christy Ward, Bill Conner and Mike Ryle. Member Mike Combs was not in attendance. Attorney, Lee Robbins was present.

MINUTES:

Christy Ward motioned to accept the minutes to the previous meeting, as presented. Bill Conner seconded the motion. Vote was 3 affirmative.

VARIANCE 25-V-02 Mark Clark with Whit's Inn & Tracy Plaza / Billboard Sign  
Russell Brown and Joe Csikoş with Clark Quinn Law Firm are here representing Mark Clark in this variance request.

Russell Brown states that the billboards would be located by the entrance to Tracy Plaza off of US 31, right by Whit's Inn. Mr. Brown went over the site plan, stating the Town's Zoning Ordinance requires there be 1,000 feet separation between billboard signs. There is an existing billboard on the east side of US 31, on Mayes Trailer's property.

There would be two billboard signs side by side. The signs would be vertically oriented and be 27' high and 28' wide. Mr. Brown states there would be no light spillage onto the residential area. There would be a base to this sign and a 35' support pole.

For clarification, Bill Conner states that he understands the pole to be 30' and the rest would be the sign, minus 5' for the base. That would make the sign 25' high. Russell Brown replied, the sign is 38' clear to the bottom. Bill Conner also thinks the proposed billboard sign would obstruct the Circle K sign.

There was more discussion about the proposed billboard sign obstructing the Circle K sign. There was discussion about the proposed billboard sign being so

New Whiteland Board of Zoning Appeals

March 25, 2025

Page Two

Variance 25-V-02 Billboard at Whit's Inn (continued)

close to a traffic light and being a distraction. Bill Conner said he sat on US 31 and studied what it would really look like.

John Kirirah, with MNK Billboards located in Greenwood, stated there are no power lines to be concerned with. It was mentioned that they should still call 811 to be certain there is nothing buried. Mark Clark stated that he has previously called 811. Mark Clark states there has been three environmental studies done. They have been cleared by EPA. There are no gas lines to be concerned with either.

David Cole has property on Sweetbriar Avenue. He believes the proposed billboard sign would be too close to the traffic light. His fear is people running the red light. There was a traffic study done when Caseys wanted to put a gas station on the corner of Tracy and US 31. The study showed that stretch of US 31 has had the most accidents. Mr. Cole is concerned that adding one more distraction, a few feet from a traffic light, is not safe. People will be sitting there waiting for the sign to switch.

Garland Lynch resides on Warwick Road. Mr. Lynch states that he has lived in New Whiteland since 1973. Mr. Lynch agrees with Mr. Cole, that intersection is terrible. Mr. Lynch asked the question, 'How would you like a billboard sign shining in your bedroom window? Flashing in your yard?'

A woman by the name, Jackie, states that Whit's Inn entrance off of US 31, is hard to see. Jackie stated that the Christmas tree is brighter and more distracting than the billboard sign would be. She is referring to the Christmas tree the town puts on display each Christmas, located at Tracy and Ashland Avenue.

Stephanie Fuller has a mobile business and she agrees with Jackie. The Christmas tree is extremely bright. She is a business owner and needs advertising.



New Whiteland Board of Zoning Appeals

March 25, 2025

Page Three

Variance 25-V-02 Billboard at Whit's Inn (continued)

Mike Ryle asked, "Do you know how many billboards are already on US 31?" You can advertise on them. And the Christmas tree is only up for a few months and timed to go off at night.

Elaine Cole asked how is it a benefit to the homeowners in this community? It is not good for homeowners. The only people benefiting from the billboard sign are the people advertising on the sign.

Markeita Lynch states the people who live around Whit's Inn are concerned about their property value going down. That is a large part of everyone's concern. The neighbors already have to deal with the sounds coming from Whit's Inn. It is very disruptive to the neighborhood when motorcycles come and go. Markeita Lynch asked the board if you let this go through, what else is going to be changed? Mrs. Lynch commented that the protected residential area is 250', this variance would cut that down to 125'. There is an ordinance for protected areas for a reason.

Delores Roberson

9 Tilmor

Mrs. Roberson states that Whit's Inn backs up to their back yard. There is a lot of noise on the weekends. She is concerned with her property value going down. There have been tornados in the past. That billboard would be one more thing to worry about during high winds.

Brian Roberson

9 Tilmor

Brian Roberson is concerned about the traffic light. He asked the question, what is the guarantee that the lighting won't come into our house? We all see all the lit up existing billboard signs now, they are big and bright. The people who live on Tilmor Drive will be affected by this billboard sign.

New Whiteland Board of Zoning Appeals

March 25, 2025

Page Four

Variance 25-V-02 Billboard at Whit's Inn (continued)

Bill Conner asked if there will be any lights that will come out of the back? John Kirirah stated no.

Dennis Combs

1006 Warwick Road

Dennis Combs asked what the total square footage would be of all of this signage? The answer was, there are separate regulations for billboards. There is no overlap for billboards with other signs.

John Kirirah with MNK Billboards states that distractions are everywhere, it doesn't necessarily mean the billboard distracted the driver. John Kirirah stated that these signs are regulated and engineered to stand through a tornado. It was discussed that the sign could be regulated to shut off between 10:00 pm and 6:00 am. Each message stays up for eight seconds and the transition between messages is 1 second. Bill Conner stated that these are huge monitors. One would be facing Ray Skillman and the other facing Circle K. They are directional signs not up lighting signs. The back of monitors are completely black. The monitor is 25' wide and 27' tall.

Attorney, Russell Brown states that his client is willing to make three commitments which are:

1. Community Advertising
2. Agree to lighting plan 100', use 100 watt light bulbs at night
3. Dark hours from 10:00 pm to 6:00 am

Attorney, Lee Robbins asked what are the details of the free advertising for the town? John Kirirah replied that the Town's advertising would be one of eight advertisements. Each advertisement is up for eight seconds. Lee Robbins clarified that they would provide the Town free advertising for 1 of 8 signs, for the life of



the sign? The answer was yes and 10% discount for local businesses for advertisements on the proposed billboard.

New Whiteland Board of Zoning Appeals

March 25, 2025

Page Five

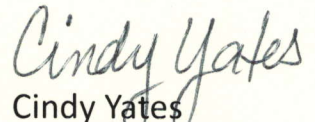
Variance 25-V-02 Billboard at Whit's Inn (continued)

Attorney, Lee Robbins closed the Public Hearing at 7:22 p.m. Lee Robbins states that according to Indiana State statute, the board is required to base their decision on the Finding of Facts submitted by petitioner. Lee Robbins read the Finding of Facts pertaining to this variance. The petitioner has offered three conditions. You may discuss this among yourselves and make a motion.

The three board members discussed the variance between the three of them. Bill Conner motioned to deny the variance request for a billboard sign at Whit's Inn and Tracy Plaza. Christy Ward seconded the motion. Vote was 3 affirmative to deny the request. Meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.

  
Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

Respectfully submitted:

  
Cindy Yates  
Recording Secretary