

**Town of Porter  
Plan Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
September 17, 2025  
6:30 p.m.  
Porter Town Hall**

A. Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

C. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum

Present: Mr. Bugajski, Mrs. Duffie, Mr. Eriksson, Ms. Burke and Mr. Albrecht-Mallinger

Absent: Mr. Burge, Mr. Craig, Mr. Mandon, and Mrs. Sufana

Also, Present Mr. Barry, Mr. Willoughby, Mrs. Spanier for Sufana

D. Quorum-There are enough present for a quorum.

E. Consideration of Minutes from August 20, 2025 meeting

Ms. Burke made a motion to approve the minutes as written, Ms. Duffie seconded.

Minutes approved 5-0.

F. Audience Participation-NONE

G. Site Plan-NONE

H. Preliminary Hearing-NONE

I. Public Hearing- Vyomesh Patel, 10324 White Hall Garden, Munster, requesting a rezone for parcel #64-03-25-252-001.000-026, located at US20 & St Rd 49 across from Visitor Center, from R1 to B3 for future hotel use and putting up a sign.

**Public Hearing opened 6:34 p.m-**Vyomesh Patel request a rezone of parcel at US20 & St Rd 49, owner of Springhouse Inn since 2018, at this time they are top rated hotel of Indiana Dunes. As part of the extension of hotel, they bought this land to build another hotel and keep in Porter. Unfortunately, construction costs increased after Covid and they have put a hold on it. The bridge by Springhouse is closed so they would like to have a sign on property to bring in more customers to Springhouse Inn.

**In Favor-**Jennifer Klug, 200 Franklin St, first of all the road of Springhouse Inn has been closed since 2023 and we will probably not reopen until 2026 at the latest. The businesses in that area have taken a hit and the town should encourage helping their

businesses. Also, regarding hotel and restaurant that area was actually considered for development a number of years ago. She thinks it is a good idea.

**In Opposition**-Chris Magara, 1220 N St Rd 49, is not opposed to economic develop it is good for the town. He has a few questions, has a drainage or hydrology study for site been done on how stormwater will affect impervious areas. How will ground water and nearby wells be affected and will the water be safe. What is the plan for sewage and wastewater capacity. He thinks the answer to these questions will be very helpful before making any decisions.

Ervin Schrock, 1190 Cardinal Ct, his property is south of where the hotel would go. One concern is daily life being hotels run all day. Drainage is an issue, privacy, cutting down trees, and security. It is a swamp; it is a concern as to where the rainwater will go. We are concerned about making smart choices. It is zoned residential for a reason.

Adrienne May, CEO of Hospice of Calumet, 1190 N St Rd 49, she doesn't have enough information about issue. She understands everyone's concerns but there is not information to make any decisions. At the moment she is against, there are a lot of unknowns.

Bruce Brackney, 1145 Cardinal Ct, he is concerned with the traffic issue in that area. This is being zoned as commercial what if they don't do a hotel, they could put in a gas station you never know. Regarding sign he doesn't have a problem with that, why couldn't they apply for a variance.

Vyomesh Patel, comments he appreciates everyone views it would be up to architect and building department. **Public hearing closed 6:52 p.m.**

Mr. Willoughby comments that notice was all in order.

Mr. Albrecht-Mallinger read memo from Mr. Mandon that states the comprehensive plan recommends that this property and additional property to the northwest be used for Office/Service, which is a much less intense use than the petitioner is requesting. Part of the problem with using this parcel for B3 use is the proximity and design of the intersection of the two highways. An additional impediment to B3 uses is the proximity of single-family homes on Cardinal Court. For these reasons he is recommending that this requested rezoning be denied.

Mr. Barry mentions the Gateway of Dunes is across the street behind Visitor Center. With regard to the reason we are here, note that the sign is now covered. There are three requirements for having an of premise sign: rezone to B3, use variance, and a permit from INDOT. Porter County is saying late summer early fall for bridge to be open in 2026. Their sole purpose right now is to get the sign. He mentions to the Patel's that the sign might not be helping at this point; people think it is closed the way it is covered. Mr. Willoughby mentions that Plan Commission considerations are under IC 36-7-4-603 AND Article XXIII, Sec 252 of Town Code, 1. Comprehensive Plan, 2. Current conditions and the character of current structures and uses in the affected zoning, 3. Most desirable and reasonable uses for which all property in the affected zoning area, 4.

Conservation of property values, 5. Whether the proposed zoning is consistent with responsible development and growth.

Mr. Eriksson made an unfavorable recommendation of petition to town council, Mr. Bugajski seconded motion. Mr. Eriksson explains why he gave an unfavorable recommendation, he feels it should stay residential. Motion passed 5-0 with a roll call vote.

J. Findings of Fact-NONE

K. Other Business/Old Business-Framework for Porter Rental Ordinance

Updating Porter Ordinances for Rental and Accessory Dwelling Units-discussing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU). Three types of internal, attached, and detached. An internal is an apartment created by converting part of an existing single-family home. An attached is an apartment created by adding floor area to a new or existing single-family home. A detached is a small home or apartment created by building a new accessory structure or converting or adding floor area to an existing accessory structure on the same lot. (see attached) In summary, ADU's can be a valuable tool for Porter to increase housing supply, support aging in place, promote multigenerational living, and generate economic benefits. Codifying ADU regulations can further enhance these benefits by ensuring consistent, well-managed ADU development.

- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) may be built by-right on single family lots in any R-1 or R-2 zone of the city, if all development standards are adhered to, except allowing for an additional building on the lot for detached ADU's. ADUs may be connected, such as an attic converted into a studio loft, or disconnected, like a garage turned into an apartment. For detached ADU's, restrictions on adding one building or dwelling unit would be waived though all other standards (e.g. setbacks) must be adhered to.
- Applicants must first file for PRE-AUTHORIZATION FOR AN ADU before requesting a building permit. The Building Department will ensure that the proposed ADU will comply with our guidelines.
- An ADU will only be permitted on a property that has an existing occupied residence.
- Only one ADU may be added to a property.
- All ADUs must have an exterior entrance separate from the main home. Separate mail addresses will not be issued for the ADU.
- Any proposed ADU that would not adhere to Porter zoning ordinance development standards must be handled as any other proposed zoning variance.
- An ADU may only be rented if either the ADU or main residence is occupied by the property owner. The owner must follow all rental ordinances.

Mr. Albrecht-Mallinger suggests the changes that should be made to the above bullet points.

Mr. Albrecht-Mallinger will write up the accepted changes for review at next meeting.

Update from Town Council-NONE

Update from Attorney-NONE

Board Comments-NONE

Public Comments-NONE

L. Adjournment-

Mr. Bugajski a motion to adjourn, Ms. Burke seconded.  
Motion passed 5-0.

Pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-2.9, this meeting was livestreamed to [youtube.com/@porterindiana](https://youtube.com/@porterindiana). A recording of the livestream will remain publicly available for a minimum of ninety (90) days following the date of the meeting. Meeting agendas, minutes, and any memoranda, may be viewed at [townofporter.in.gov](http://townofporter.in.gov)

Rob Albrecht-Mallinger, President

Tara Duffie, Vice-President

Lewis Craig, Fire Chief

Brian Bugajski, Park Director

James Eriksson

James Burge

Mary Burke

Tammie Sufana, Recording Secretary