



PETITION NO.: _____

LAWRENCE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

VARIANCE OF USE AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS
FINDINGS OF FACT

1. THE GRANT WILL NOT BE INJURIOUS TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, MORALS AND GENERAL WELFARE OF THE COMMUNITY BECAUSE

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED.

2. THE USE OR VALUE OF THE AREA ADJACENT TO THE PROPERTY INCLUDED IN THE VARIANCE WILL NOT BE AFFECTED IN A SUBSTANTIALLY ADVERSE MANNER BECAUSE

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED.

3. THE NEED FOR THE VARIANCE ARISES FROM SOME CONDITION PECULIAR TO THE PROPERTY INVOLVED AND THE CONDITION IS NOT DUE TO THE GENERAL CONDITION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD BECAUSE

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED.

4. THE STRICT APPLICATION OF THE TERMS OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE CONSTITUTES AN UNUSUAL OR UNNECESSARY HARDSHIP IF APPLIED TO THE PROPERTY FOR WHICH THE VARIANCE IS SOUGHT BECAUSE

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED.

5. THE GRANT DOES NOT INTERFERE SUBSTANTIALLY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BECAUSE

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED.

LAWRENCE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA
VARIANCE OF USE
FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The grant will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community because:

The requested variance will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare of the community because there is a demonstrated need for quality attainable housing in the City of Lawrence. This site represents an opportunity to bring new housing units online during a time of significant housing shortage, particularly for households seeking safe, accessible, and affordable housing options. The proposed development will replace currently vacant land with a productive residential use that supports neighborhood stability and contributes positively to the surrounding area.

Benjamin Townhomes will consist of approximately 30 townhome-style residential units featuring two- and three-bedroom layouts designed to provide high-quality workforce and attainable housing opportunities for residents with incomes ranging from 30% to 80% of Area Median Income. The development is intended to create long-term housing stability and pathways to homeownership through a potential lease-to-purchase model that would allow qualified residents the opportunity to purchase their homes in the future. The development will incorporate a walkable residential design with rear-loaded parking, landscaped open space, pedestrian connectivity, and modern architectural elements that complement the surrounding area.

In addition to the residential component, the development will include approximately 2,500 square feet of live-work commercial space intended to support small businesses, neighborhood-serving retail, or office uses that activate the site and contribute to the mixed-use character envisioned for the area. The live-work space will create opportunities for small business growth while providing amenities and services accessible to residents and the surrounding community.

The development team is partnering with Helping Veterans and Families of Indianapolis, whose mission is to end veteran homelessness by providing supportive housing, employment services, and stability resources that help veterans and their families achieve long-term self-sufficiency and improved quality of life.

The property will be owned and professionally managed long-term by Woda Cooper Companies, ensuring consistent oversight and high-quality operations. The development will also include professional property management and maintenance oversight to support ongoing upkeep, safety, and responsiveness to resident needs. In addition, the project will include secure residential

access, accessible parking, landscaped open areas, sidewalks, and community gathering spaces that support resident well-being and long-term neighborhood stability.

2. The use or value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner because:

The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner because the proposed development will improve a currently vacant parcel by bringing approximately 30 new townhome-style residential units to the site. Activating this underutilized property with a professionally managed residential community will contribute positively to the surrounding neighborhood and support nearby commercial activity.

The surrounding properties include healthcare facilities, a bank, and several retail and service businesses. The addition of new residents within walking distance of these services will provide additional customers and strengthen the local business environment. Increasing the nearby residential population supports surrounding commercial uses and enhances the overall stability and vitality of the area.

In addition, the proposed development will include approximately 2,500 square feet of live-work commercial space designed to accommodate small businesses, office users, or neighborhood-serving retail uses. These live-work units will further contribute to economic activity in the area by creating opportunities for local businesses, increasing foot traffic, and encouraging additional investment within the surrounding commercial corridor. The integration of residential and live-work space is consistent with the mixed-use vision for the area and will help create a more active and connected neighborhood environment.

The proposed development will provide adequate on-site parking and will be designed to integrate with existing traffic patterns, ensuring that surrounding properties can continue to operate as they currently do without disruption. In addition, the project will include professional management, secure residential access, landscaped open areas, sidewalks, and accessible design features that support long-term property maintenance and neighborhood compatibility.

3. The need for the variance arises from some conditions peculiar to the property involved and the condition is not due to the general condition of the neighborhood because:

The requested variance is needed because the property is a vacant and underutilized parcel located within an existing commercial area in the Fort Benjamin Harrison district. The surrounding area includes retail, healthcare, banking, and other service-oriented businesses, but this specific parcel has remained undeveloped despite growth and investment in the area.

The site is uniquely suited for the proposed mixed-use development because it can support both commercial activity and additional housing. The development will include approximately 30 townhome-style units and approximately 2,500 square feet of live-work commercial space, allowing the project to fit within the commercial character of the corridor while also providing needed housing opportunities.

The addition of new residents within walking distance of nearby businesses will increase foot traffic and support surrounding retail and service businesses. The live-work space will also help bring additional business activity to the area and contribute to a more active and walkable environment throughout the Fort area.

Because of the property's location within an established commercial corridor and its proximity to existing businesses and services, the need for the variance is specific to this parcel and not due to conditions affecting the surrounding neighborhood as a whole.

4. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance constitutes an unusual or unnecessary hardship if applied to the property for which the variance is sought because

The current light industrial zoning creates a hardship because the property is located within an area that functions primarily as a commercial and mixed-use corridor rather than a traditional industrial area. Although the site is zoned for light industrial use, the surrounding environment consists of retail, dining, healthcare, office, and service-oriented businesses that rely on an attractive and pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. The parcel itself has remained vacant and underutilized despite the continued growth and investment occurring around it.

Due to the size, location, and surrounding character of the property, developing the site with a light industrial use would be difficult to integrate compatibly with the adjacent businesses. Industrial uses often involve truck traffic, loading activity, outdoor operations, noise, and other characteristics that do not align with the walkable and customer-oriented nature of the Harrison Centre area. These types of uses could negatively impact nearby businesses and reduce the overall appeal of the corridor.

In contrast, the proposed mixed-use residential development provides a use that better reflects the existing development pattern within the area. The inclusion of townhome-style housing and live-work commercial space would activate a currently vacant parcel while supporting nearby businesses through additional residential density, pedestrian activity, and long-term neighborhood investment.

Strict application of the current zoning ordinance therefore limits the reasonable and compatible development of this property. The requested variance allows the site to develop in a manner that is more consistent with the surrounding area and the long-term vision for the Fort Benjamin Harrison corridor.

5. The grant does not interfere substantially with the comprehensive plan because

The requested variance does not interfere substantially with the comprehensive plan because residential development is an important component of the Village Mixed-Use vision identified for the Fort Benjamin Harrison area. The Village Mixed-Use typology is intended to encourage compact, walkable development patterns that integrate housing, small businesses, and community amenities within a pedestrian-oriented environment. The proposed development supports these goals by introducing townhome-style housing and live-work commercial space within an existing commercial corridor.

The proposed project is designed in a manner that complements the surrounding area through pedestrian-scale development, street-oriented architecture, and a residential component that supports nearby businesses and services. The addition of residential density within walking distance of restaurants, retail, healthcare, and other amenities helps create the type of live-work-play environment envisioned by the comprehensive plan.

Additionally, the property is located near the IndyGo Purple Line Bus Rapid Transit corridor along Post Road and supports the broader goals of promoting connectivity, walkability, and development patterns that reduce reliance on vehicle trips. The project activates a currently underutilized parcel while reinforcing the mixed-use character encouraged throughout the Fort Ben area.

Therefore, the requested variance supports and advances the goals of the comprehensive plan by facilitating compatible mixed-use infill development within an area planned for walkable and integrated growth.