

CITY OF LAWRENCE
Common Council
July 15, 2026
Regular Meeting

MEMBERS' PRESENT: Councilors Sherron Freeman, Zach Cramer, Tyrrell Giles, Kristie Krone, Betty Robison, Tracy Boyd, Liz Masur and Rick Wells

MEMBERS BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: None

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilor Carlos Jennings

ALSO, BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: Shawn McMickle, Mayor Whitfield and Rob McCarthy

ALSO PRESENT: Clerk Adkisson, Zach Myers and Kaylin Cook of McCarter & English, LLP

STAFF PRESENT: Jami Weirich, Renea Rafala and Greg Goodnight

STAFF BY MICROSOFT TEAMS: Terri Falker and Shawn Fugate

Council President Zach Cramer called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

Council members and attendees stood for the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence in honor of retired Lawrence Police Jess Kennedy, who recently passed away.

The Council President announced that **eight (8) council members were present**, establishing a quorum.

The meeting was declared properly noticed in accordance with the **Indiana Open Door Law**. Copies of the agenda and citizen comment sign-in sheets were made available at Six council members were present in person.

COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS & SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS OR RESOLUTIONS:

Council President

- Announced that the Council has completed an initial draft of a comprehensive update to the City's **Code of Ethics**.
- The proposed ordinance is expected to be formally introduced at the next Council meeting.
- Prior to introduction, the draft will be shared with the Mayor's Office and Corporation Counsel for review and collaborative feedback.
- Stated the goal is to create a modern, transparent, and effective ethics code through cooperation among all parties.

Councilor Robinson

- Expressed appreciation to the **Department of Public Works (DPW)** and the Streets Department for responding promptly to a pothole repair request.

Councilor Wells

- Asked for clarification regarding the Board of Works' recent approval of a lobbyist contract.
- Requested information regarding:
 - The identity of the lobbyist.
 - The amount being paid.
- Expressed concern that contract amounts approved by the Board of Works are not publicly disclosed during meetings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF RESCHEDULE MEETING OF 07-06-2026

A motion was made by **Councilor Krone** and seconded by **Councilor Boyd** to approve the minutes of the regular first of the month meeting, July 6, 2026.

- **Vote:** Approved unanimously by voice vote
- **Result:** Motion carried.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE:

Finance Administration Committee

Chairperson of this committee, Vice President Tyrrell Giles reported:

- The committee met earlier in the day.
- No quorum was present; therefore, no official action was taken.
- The committee held an informational discussion with the City Controller regarding the upcoming budget schedule.
- The committee anticipates continued meetings throughout the budget season.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Proposal No. 1, 2026

Ordinance: Amending Title 1, Article 1, Chapter 2, Section 12 of the Municipal Code regarding Common Council approval of expenditures and professional service contracts.

- The proposal remains before the **Committee of the Whole** for further consideration and recommendation.
- The matter will return to the Council at a future meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Rezoning Petition 26-LZ-04 - Property: 10853 East 52nd Street

Public Hearing Opened

The Council President announced that the public hearing had been properly noticed in accordance with the Indiana Open Door Law.

Public Hearing Rules

The Council approved the following hearing procedures:

- Petitioner presentation: **10 minutes**
- Public comments in favor: **10 minutes total**
- Public comments in opposition: **10 minutes total**
- Petitioner rebuttal: **5 minutes**
- Public response: **5 minutes total**

Motion: Councilor Giles

Second: Councilor Krone

Result: Approved unanimously by voice vote

All individuals wishing to testify were sworn in.

Petitioner Presentation

Brian Tuohy, Attorney representing **LAR Homes of Indiana, LLC**

Mr. Tuohy presented the rezoning request for approximately **29.6 acres** to be rezoned to **D-4 Residential** to allow development of a single-family residential subdivision.

Key Points Presented

- Property is surrounded by:
 - Lawrence Transportation Center to the north.
 - Silver Stream subdivision to the west and south.
 - Agricultural/residential property and a cell tower to the east.
- The proposal is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan designation of **Suburban Neighborhood**.
- Proposed development includes:
 - 61 single-family lots.
 - Approximately two homes per acre.
 - Connections (stub roads) to neighboring developments.
 - A detention pond.
 - Approximately 6.5 acres of preserved natural area.
 - Approximately 2,100 feet of walking trails.
 - Sidewalks throughout the development.
- Homes are anticipated to range:
 - Approximately 1,500–2,400 square feet.
 - Estimated prices from the high \$200,000s to the mid-\$300,000s.
- Staff has recommended approval subject to conditions.
- Seventy-three (73) notices were mailed to surrounding property owners.
- *No public opposition had been received prior to the hearing.*

Public Comment

- **In Favor**
No speakers.
- **In Opposition**
No speakers.
- **Online Comments**
No online comments were received.

Council Questions

Councilor Wells

Questions included:

- Total acreage of the development.
- Size of the detention pond.
- Density calculations.
- Home square footage.
- Whether homes would be custom-built or speculative inventory.

- Whether homes would include basements.
- Safety concerns regarding the detention pond.

Applicant Responses

Representatives stated:

- Property totals approximately **29.6 acres**.
- Detention pond is approximately **1.07 acres**.
- Density is approximately **2.1 homes per acre**.
- Homes will range from approximately **1,500 to 2,400 square feet**.
- Development will include several floor plans with multiple elevations.
- Most homes will be built as inventory homes with upgraded standard features, though buyers may have limited customization options.
- Homes will be constructed on slab foundations (no basements).
- The developer will comply with all City engineering requirements regarding detention pond design and safety.

Councilor Wells encouraged installation of fencing or another protective barrier around the detention pond due to child safety concerns.

Councilor Robinson

Questions addressed:

- Potential barriers or fencing around the detention pond.
- Long-term maintenance of detention ponds and algae management.
- Existing utility constraints.
- Floodplain impacts.

Applicant responses included:

- The development team will comply with City engineering standards.
 - Utility planning is ongoing in coordination with Lawrence Utilities.
 - Sewer improvements may require additional infrastructure.
 - The project avoids development within the floodplain and preserves the wooded area adjacent to Indian Creek.
-

Councilor Giles

Questions included:

- Development timeline following rezoning approval.
- Utility infrastructure requirements.
- Responsibility for sewer improvements and lift station costs.

Applicant responses included:

- Primary plat approval could be sought as early as September.
- Construction planning could begin later this year, subject to utility coordination.
- The developer acknowledged responsibility for utility improvements necessary to serve the subdivision, including lift station infrastructure if required.

Councilor Giles discussed the balance between providing larger residential lots and addressing the City's housing shortage. While acknowledging that the proposed lot sizes were desirable, he expressed concern that lower-density development on limited available land could reduce opportunities to increase the City's housing supply and tax base.

Councilor Giles inquired about:

- Whether the home models presented represented the complete range of homes proposed for the subdivision.
- Whether additional home models could be introduced in the future.
- The long-term flexibility permitted under D-4 zoning.
- The possibility of incorporating duplexes, which are permitted under certain D-4 zoning circumstances.
- Ensuring that the development provides value both to the developer and to the City by helping address housing needs.

Applicant Response:

Representatives of LAR Homes stated:

- The proposed lots would be a minimum of approximately **7,200 square feet** and approximately **120–125 feet deep**.
- D-4 zoning permits duplexes on certain corner lots; however, the current development plan does **not** include duplexes.
- If the Council desired to preserve that option, the developer indicated a willingness to consider it.
- The subdivision currently includes **three primary home floor plans**, with multiple exterior elevations available for each.
- Buyers may select minor exterior or interior variations, but the overall floor plan options would remain limited to the three primary models.
- The site layout was specifically designed to comply with D-4 zoning standards regarding lot dimensions and density.

Councilor Giles also requested confirmation that all homes would include garages.

The applicant confirmed **on the record** that:

- Every home will include a **two-car attached garage**.
- Each home will also provide a driveway accommodating two additional vehicles.

Councilor Giles concluded his questions after expressing appreciation for the applicant's responses.

Councilor Krone

Councilor Krone thanked the petitioner for the presentation and noted her connection to Lawrence North High School.

Councilor Krone referenced previous questions regarding the detention pond and stated that, although she had no personal experience with homeowners' associations or detention ponds, she appreciated the inclusion of walking trails within the proposed neighborhood.

She asked the applicant to explain:

- Best practices for ensuring the safety of detention ponds.
- How detention ponds are typically designed and maintained to reduce potential safety risks for residents.

Councilor Krone asked about best practices for ensuring the safety of detention ponds within residential developments, including whether safety measures involve grading, vegetation, natural barriers, or other engineering features.

Applicant Response:

The applicant stated that detention pond safety is addressed through compliance with applicable engineering standards and Public Works regulations, including:

- Appropriate grading and slopes.
- Required setbacks and clearances from the top of the bank.
- Vegetative and natural safety features were appropriate.
- Compliance with all drainage, engineering, and public safety requirements.

Regarding homeowners' association (HOA) responsibilities, the applicant explained:

- The subdivision will establish an HOA.
- LAR Homes employs an HOA management team that assists in establishing and managing the association until the community reaches approximately **80–90% occupancy**.
- The HOA will assume responsibility for maintenance of common areas, including detention facilities.
- Maintenance will include vegetation management, algae control, and routine upkeep in accordance with applicable engineering and environmental standards.

Councilor Krone thanked the applicant for the information.

Council President

The Council President asked whether the property could be developed without constructing a detention pond.

The applicant responded that a detention pond is required to comply with stormwater management regulations by retaining runoff on-site and releasing it at approved rates.

The Council President also asked whether the homes were intended for owner occupancy or rental.

The applicant stated that the homes are intended to be **sold to individual homeowners** and that LAR Homes does not intend to retain properties as rental units.

Councilor Wells

Councilor Wells asked whether the subdivision would operate as a homeowners' association or a cooperative, citing another nearby neighborhood where the city does not maintain the streets due to its organizational structure.

Applicant Response:

The applicant stated:

- The subdivision will have a homeowners' association.
- Streets are being designed as **public streets**.
- The city will be responsible for maintenance of public infrastructure, including street maintenance and snow removal.
- The HOA will be responsible for maintenance of common areas, including the detention pond, through contracted maintenance services.

Councilor Wells also raised concerns regarding traffic impacts associated with the nearby Lawrence Transportation Center and school bus operations. He asked whether a traffic study had been conducted.

The applicant responded that:

- Traffic study is **not required** for the development of this size.
- The subdivision has been designed with multiple access points to help distribute traffic.
- The developer will continue working with Planning, Engineering, and Public Works staff to ensure appropriate traffic circulation and site design.

Councilor Wells noted that he had hoped nearby residents would have provided input regarding existing traffic conditions during the public comment portion of the hearing.

Following discussion, the Council President indicated that any additional public comments would occur after Council questions and the staff presentation.

Councilor Robinson

Councilor Robinson sought clarification regarding the detention pond, asking whether public accessibility was required if the pond exists solely for stormwater management.

Applicant Response:

The applicant explained that:

- Public access is **not specifically required**.
- Access is necessary for maintenance personnel and equipment.
- Engineering standards require maintenance easements and access routes.
- The walking trail surrounding the pond is proposed as a neighborhood amenity consistent with City zoning requirements.
- Alternative designs for resident access could be considered while still maintaining necessary maintenance access.

Councilor Robinson thanked the applicant for the clarification.

Councilor Wells

Councilor Wells asked about the anticipated depth of the detention pond.

The applicant estimated that the pond would generally range from **approximately four to six feet deep** at its deepest point, with final dimensions determined through engineering design.

Councilor Wells expressed continued concern regarding child safety, noting that a pond of that depth could present a drowning hazard. He suggested that a locked gate or other protective barrier should be considered around the detention pond.

The applicant agreed to work with City engineering staff to explore appropriate safety measures and potential barriers as part of the development review process.

Staff Report

Renea Rafala, Director of Public Works

Ms. Rafala presented the staff report regarding Rezoning Petition 26-LZ-04.

Key points included:

- The applicant has been informed of the City's ongoing **EPA compliance order** related to the sanitary sewer system.
- The proposed development acknowledges existing sanitary sewer constraints and will be required to comply with applicable utility requirements.
- The site contains floodplain areas; however, the proposed development avoids encroachment into the floodplain.
- Staff determined that the proposal complies with **D-4 zoning requirements**.
- The proposed development is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- The subdivision would provide a logical continuation of the existing **Silver Stream** neighborhood and is compatible with surrounding land uses, home values, and neighborhood character.
- Staff recommends approval of the rezoning request, subject to the conditions outlined in the staff report.

Councilor Wells

Councilor Wells again raised concerns regarding fencing or barriers around detention ponds.

Ms. Rafala responded that:

- Neither the City of Lawrence nor the adopted **City of Indianapolis Stormwater Ordinance** currently requires fencing around detention ponds.
- While fencing is not prohibited, it is also not required under existing regulations.
- Following the recent tragic drowning incident involving a young child, there has not yet been sufficient time for regulatory changes to occur.
- Existing developments have utilized a variety of protective measures, including low retaining walls or barriers.

- Additional safety features may be considered during the engineering and development review process.

Ms. Rafala emphasized that the current hearing concerns **rezoning** only, while detailed design elements—including detention pond configuration and safety improvements—would be addressed during subsequent engineering, plating, and development review stages.

Councilor Giles

Councilor Giles commented that while he personally would support additional safety measures around detention ponds, he had not observed fencing around similar facilities in other developments. He noted that fencing can create maintenance issues by collecting litter and vegetation and suggested that any future policy changes should be carefully studied rather than implemented on a project-by-project basis.

Councilor Giles also raised broader concerns regarding the impact of continued residential development on wildlife habitat, noting the reduction of natural areas over time. He asked whether the City considers these impacts during the development process and inquired whether adjacent property beyond the preserved wetland was anticipated for future development.

Director Rafala responded that development of farmland into residential neighborhoods inevitably affects wildlife habitat as growth continues. She was not aware of any plans involving the adjacent family-owned property and indicated that it was her understanding the owners intended to retain that land.

Councilor Robinson

Councilor Robinson agreed that the city should undertake a broader discussion regarding detention pond safety and preventive measures in light of recent tragedies.

She also asked whether the city had conducted a housing needs study.

Director Rafala responded that:

- The City established a **Housing Ready Task Force** under Mayor Deb Whitfield.
- Members included Councilor Giles, Councilor Robinson, Councilor Liz Masur, and City staff.
- The Task Force produced recommendations addressing housing needs throughout the community.
- The proposed subdivision aligns with those recommendations by providing additional housing opportunities.
- The next rezoning petition on the agenda also supports the City's housing strategy through affordable housing development.
- The Housing Ready Task Force report has been presented to both the Common Council and the Board of Works and is available on the City's website.

Director Rafala further suggested that future developments could incorporate **pollinator-friendly landscaping** and other native plantings rather than traditional turf grass to provide environmental benefits, reduce flooding, support wildlife, and potentially serve as natural buffers around detention ponds.

Council members expressed interest in exploring these alternative approaches during future development review processes.

Councilor Wells

Councilor Wells asked whether engineering requirements could be modified so detention ponds would be shallower, potentially reducing drowning hazards.

Director Rafala explained that:

- Pond depth is determined by engineering calculations required to provide adequate stormwater detention capacity.
- Any modifications must continue to meet state and local engineering standards.
- Pond size and depth are evaluated during the engineering review process rather than during rezoning.

Councilor Wells suggested that larger ponds with reduced depth—or slight reductions in housing density—might improve safety. Director Rafala noted that these considerations would be evaluated during detailed development planning but could not be determined at the rezoning stage.

Council members agreed that detention pond safety warranted additional discussion in future policy conversations.

The Council President asked whether there were any additional questions for staff. Hearing none, he thanked Director Rafala for her presentation.

Additional Public Comment

The Council President provided a final opportunity for members of the public to respond to the City's comments regarding the petition.

- **In Favor**
No speakers.
- **In Opposition**
No speakers.
- **Online Comments**
No online comments were received.

Mr. & Mrs. Crickmore - 10640 East 52nd Street, Lawrence, IN

Residents living directly across from the proposed development spoke in support of continued growth while expressing concerns regarding traffic safety.

Primary concerns included:

- Increasing traffic volumes along East 52nd Street resulting from continued residential development.
- Difficulty safely crossing East 52nd Street to access their mailbox, which is located on the opposite side of the roadway.
- Existing vehicle speeds are estimated at approximately 40 mph or greater.
- Concern that an additional 61 homes would further increase traffic congestion.
- Potential deterioration of roadway conditions due to additional residential, construction, and bus traffic.

The residents suggested possible solutions, including:

- Construction of a mailbox pull-off area.
- Relocation of mailboxes to the north side of East 52nd Street.
- Installation of a dual-access mailbox system to eliminate the need to cross the roadway.

The residents stated that bus traffic from the nearby transportation center has generally not created significant problems, noting that many buses utilize 56th Street. They complimented City staff for previous improvements associated with the bus facility, including landscaping berms and tree planting that helped buffer the surrounding neighborhood.

Regarding detention ponds, the residents agreed that additional safety measures should be considered, particularly to address concerns involving children and winter conditions when ponds freeze.

The residents also voiced support for incorporating native landscaping and pollinator-friendly plantings into future development.

During Council questions, the residents explained that:

- They have lived at the property for more than **10 years**.
- Only two or three residences along that section of East 52nd Street have mailboxes located on the south side of the roadway, requiring them to cross the street to retrieve mail.
- The situation has become increasingly hazardous as traffic volumes have increased over time.

Council members thanked the residents for their comments.

Anton Ramos - Property Owner Adjacent to the Proposed Development

Mr. Anton Ramos identified himself as the owner of agricultural property immediately adjacent to the proposed rezoning area.

Mr. Ramos stated that he supports the City's continued growth but had several questions regarding the proposed rezoning, including:

- How changing the neighboring property from **DA (Agricultural)** zoning to **D-4 Residential** might affect the maintenance and future use of his adjacent agricultural property.
- Potential impacts of the proposed development on wildlife habitat, noting that he frequently enjoys hunting, camping, and other outdoor recreational activities on his property following his retirement from military and civilian service.

Mr. Ramos expressed concern about how the proposed rezoning from **DA (Agricultural)** to **D-4 Residential** might affect his adjacent agricultural property. Specifically, he asked whether the rezoning would:

- Change the zoning classification of his property.
- Affect his property taxes.
- Impact his ability to continue using the property for recreational activities such as hunting, camping, and enjoying wildlife.

Staff Response

Council members and staff clarified that:

- The proposed rezoning applies **only** to the subject property at **10853 East 52nd Street**.
- Mr. Ramos' adjacent property would **remain zoned DA (Agricultural)**.
- His zoning designation and corresponding property tax treatment would remain unchanged.

Mr. Ramos thanked the Council and staff for the clarification.

Petitioner Rebuttal

Attorney **Brian Tuohy**, representing **LAR Homes of Indiana, LLC**, responded to comments received during the public hearing.

Key responses included:

- Confirmed that the adjacent agricultural property's zoning would remain unchanged.
- Addressed concerns raised by neighboring residents regarding mailbox safety, stating that the developer will be coordinating with the **United States Postal Service** during subdivision planning and would support relocating the neighboring residents' mailbox to the north side of East 52nd Street, if approved by the Postal Service.
- Stated that the developer intends to work cooperatively with affected residents throughout the mailbox planning process.
- Reiterated that the final design of the detention pond has not yet been engineered and remains subject to detailed engineering review.
- Explained that approximately **six acres** along the eastern portion of the property will remain undeveloped, providing flexibility during final engineering.
- Confirmed that detention ponds are required by current stormwater regulations for developments of this nature.

- Stated that if the city adopts future requirements for fencing or additional safety measures around detention ponds, the developer will comply with those requirements.

Mr. Tuohy thanked the Council for its consideration of the petition.

Close of Public Hearing

The Council President declared the public hearing closed.

Council Action

Motion: Approve Rezoning Petition **26-LZ-04** for **10853 East 52nd Street**.

Motion by: Councilor Krone

Second by: Councilor Giles

Vote: Approved unanimously, **8-0**, by voice vote.

Action: Rezoning Petition **26-LZ-04** was approved.

The Council thanked the petitioner for the presentation.

Rezoning Petition 26-LZ-05

9535 Pendleton Pike

The Council President introduced **Rezoning Petition 26-LZ-05** for property located at **9535 Pendleton Pike**.

The City Clerk confirmed that the petition had been properly noticed in accordance with applicable requirements.

The public hearing was opened.

Public Hearing Procedures

The Council approved the same public hearing procedures previously adopted for the earlier rezoning petition.

Motion: Councilor Boyd

Second: Councilor Robinson

Vote: Approved by voice vote.

All individuals intending to testify were sworn in prior to providing testimony.

Petitioner Presentation

Simon Loewenstein - Spire Development

Mr. Simon Loewenstein introduced himself as a representative of **Spire Development**, a Columbus, Ohio-based developer specializing in workforce and senior housing developments throughout seven states, including Indiana.

Mr. Loewenstein presented the request to rezone approximately **1.2 acres** at **9535 Pendleton Pike** from **C-4 Commercial** to **D-9 Residential** to permit development of **Pendleton Commons**, an affordable multifamily workforce housing community.

Project Overview

The petitioner explained that:

- The development would consist of **48 affordable rental apartments** within a four-story, elevator-served, L-shaped building.
- Units would include one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments serving households earning between **30% and 80% of Area Median Income (AMI)**.
- The project would be financed through the **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)** program administered by the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority.
- The development is **not** Section 8 housing, a homeless shelter, or a halfway house.
- The project is intended to provide affordable housing for moderate-income working households and essential workers.

Site and Building Features

The proposed development includes:

- Four-story residential building with frontage along Pendleton Pike.
- Juliet balconies to enhance building aesthetics and resident access to outdoor space.
- Interior courtyard featuring:
 - Gazebo
 - Picnic and grilling area
 - Green space
 - Pollinator garden
 - Decorative water feature
- Native landscaping throughout the site.
- LEED Silver energy-efficiency design standards.
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Resident amenities including:
 - Community room
 - Supportive services office
 - Fitness center
 - Laundry facilities
 - On-site leasing office

Compatibility with City Planning

The petitioner stated that the proposal supports the City's vision for redevelopment of the Pendleton Pike commercial corridor by:

- Providing additional affordable housing.
- Increasing residential density within an established commercial corridor.
- Supporting nearby businesses through increased pedestrian activity.
- Locating residents within walking distance of grocery stores, restaurants, and other daily services.
- Complementing nearby land uses, including existing multifamily housing, hotel development, and commercial properties.

Mr. Loewenstein emphasized that:

- The concept plan remains preliminary.
- Final engineering, site plan approval, and development review would occur following any zoning approval.
- Spire Development intends to remain the long-term owner and manager of the property and is committed to working with City staff throughout the remainder of the development process.

The petitioner concluded by requesting the Council's support for the rezoning petition so the project could proceed to the next phase of review.

- The petitioner concluded the presentation by emphasizing that:
 - The proposal is a conceptual plan and not a final site plan.
 - The project will still require site plan approval, engineering review, and other regulatory approvals.
 - The development team believes the site is appropriate for affordable workforce housing and is requesting approval to continue refining the project with City staff.

Public Comment

- **In Favor**
No speakers.
- **In Opposition**
No speakers.
- **Online Comments**
No online comments were received.

Council Questions and Discussion

Council members asked several questions regarding the proposal.

Site Location

The petitioner clarified that the property:

- Is located on the south side of Pendleton Pike.
- Is adjacent to the existing four-story hotel.

- Includes approximately **1.2 acres**, extending beyond the current parking lot toward 52nd Street.

Building Size and Density

Council members expressed concern regarding whether:

- A four-story building, parking, and green space could reasonably fit on a 1.2-acre parcel.

The petitioner responded that:

- The proposed development complies with D-9 zoning requirements.
- The project consists of **48 residential units**.
- Similar developments have successfully been completed on comparable or smaller sites.
- The design includes parking, landscaping, and usable open space.

Unit Mix

The petitioner stated the project would include:

- One-bedroom units (approximately 600 sq. ft.)
- Two-bedroom units (approximately 750 sq. ft.)
- Three-bedroom units (approximately 950 sq. ft.)

Workforce Housing Definition

Council requested clarification regarding "workforce housing."

The petitioner explained:

- The apartments are intended for households earning below Area Median Income (AMI).
- Residents include teachers, healthcare workers, city employees, and other essential workers.
- Income limits establish **maximum household incomes**, not minimums.
- Rent is structured so residents generally spend no more than approximately 30% of household income on housing.

Financing

The petitioner clarified:

- The project is financed through the **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)** program.
- Tax credits are federal and allocated through the Indiana housing finance agency.
- No financial assistance or bonding from the City is being requested.

Previous Development Experience

Council asked about comparable developments.

The petitioner stated:

- A similar development in Grove City, Ohio (AeroLeaf Apartments) reflects the proposed concept.

- Construction on the firm's first Indiana project in Lawrenceburg is beginning.
- No completed developments currently exist in Marion County.

Parking

Council discussed whether 48 parking spaces would adequately serve 48 apartments.

The petitioner responded:

- The project includes a **1:1 parking ratio (48 spaces)**.
- Affordable housing developments generally experience lower vehicle ownership than market-rate housing.
- Parking ratios are supported by transportation engineering data.
- Overflow parking solutions could be explored if necessary.
- Additional parking opportunities may exist through adjacent property or nearby agreements if needed.

Household Occupancy

Council asked whether three-bedroom units could house unrelated adults.

The petitioner explained:

- Occupancy depends on household income qualifications.
- Units are generally leased to families or couples with children.
- Multiple adults may occupy a unit if they qualify under program rules.

Stormwater Management

Council asked whether the nearby detention pond would serve the development.

The petitioner responded:

- The current plan is to connect to the existing regional detention system.
- If that is not feasible, underground stormwater detention would be installed.
- Additional fencing could be added adjacent to the pond if needed.

Property Management

The petitioner stated:

- A professional property management company would manage the development.
- The ownership team would remain actively involved in oversight.

Building Height

The petitioner confirmed the intent is to:

- Match the height of the adjacent four-story hotel to create a consistent streetscape.

Staff Report

Renee Rafala, Director of Public Works, presented the staff report.

Key points included:

- Staff worked closely with the developer to align the proposal with the City's Housing Ready Task Force recommendations.
- The site is currently zoned commercial but is considered appropriate for residential development.
- The location supports walkability and is near:
 - Purple Line transit
 - Existing residential neighborhoods
 - Retail and grocery services
 - Employment opportunities

Staff noted the development includes:

- 48 residential units
- 48 parking spaces
- Playground
- Bicycle parking
- Gazebo
- Green space
- Sidewalk connections
- Monument signage
- Existing curb cuts (no additional driveway access proposed)

The proposed unit mix includes:

- 16 one-bedroom units
- 26 two-bedroom units
- 6 three-bedroom units

Staff also highlighted planned amenities, including:

- Exercise room
- Mail room
- Management office
- Maintenance office
- Support services office
- Community gathering space
- Trash enclosures
- Site lighting

Staff stated that affordable housing should include quality amenities comparable to market-rate developments.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

Council Discussion with Staff

Council asked about:

- The existing billboard on the property.
- Drainage and the regional detention pond.
- Building height along Pendleton Pike.

Staff responded:

- The billboard would be addressed during development.
- Drainage calculations would be completed during engineering review.
- Four-story buildings already exist nearby, including the adjacent hotel.
- Four stories remain consistent with corridor development goals.

Council members commented that:

- Affordable housing could provide stable housing opportunities for residents currently living in extended-stay hotels.
 - The proposal aligns with the City's long-term housing vision.
-

Petitioner Closing Comments

The petitioner thanked Council and staff and added:

- The existing billboard lease would likely be bought out and removed.
 - Affordable housing addresses a documented need, noting a significant percentage of Lawrence renters are cost-burdened according to HUD data.
 - The development is intended to provide quality housing for working families.
-

Public Hearing

The Chair provided one final opportunity for public comment.

- **In Favor**
No speakers.
- **In Opposition**
No speakers.
- **Online Comments**
No online comments were received.

The public hearing was closed.

Motion

A motion was made to approve **Rezoning Petition 26-LZ-05 (9535 Pendleton Pike)**.

- **Motion:** Councilor Giles
- **Second:** Councilor Boyd
- **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously by voice vote

Action: Rezoning Petition **26-LZ-05** was approved.

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS:

Jami Weirich, Director of City Events

Jami provided updates including:

- The Fourth of July celebration was successful despite ending early because of weather.
- Fireworks were completed successfully.
- The annual backpack giveaway will be held Sunday.
- Volunteers are needed:
 - Friday at 10:00 a.m. to pack backpacks.
 - Sunday from 12:00–2:00 p.m. at the Community Center.

Council Wells also requested follow-up regarding a previous Board of Works matter.

Greg Goodnight, Chief of Staff

The Chief of Staff clarified that:

- The agreement with Craig DeVault Law Firm is a **renewal**, not a new lobbying contract.
 - The annual amount remains **\$36,000 (\$3,000 per month)**, unchanged from the prior year.
-

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Daniel Rapp - 5718 Wallingwood Drive, Lawrence, IN

Mr. Rapp addressed the Council regarding the City's financial reporting and budget transparency.

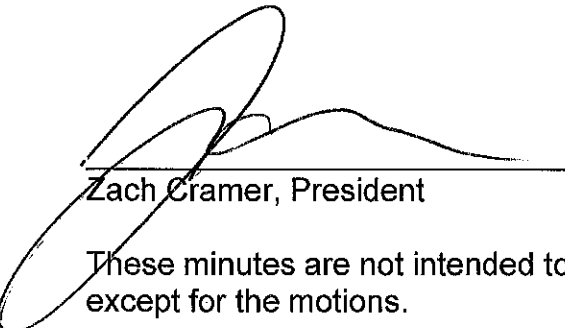
He expressed concern that:

- Monthly financial statements have not been posted beyond April.
- May and June financial reports were unavailable.
- Council should have current financial information before considering the 2027 budget.
- Similar issues occurred during the 2024 and 2025 budget cycles involving late appropriations and financial reporting.

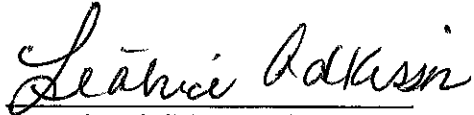
Mr. Rapp requested that:

- The June financial statements be posted before the next Common Council meeting.
- Financial reporting be kept current to improve transparency and budget oversight.

ADJOURNMENT: President Cramer called for adjournment. There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m., by President Cramer.



Zach Cramer, President



Leatrice Adkisson, Clerk

These minutes are not intended to be verbatim. They are a summary of discussions held, except for the motions.

1

2

3

4

5