March 30, 2026
Regular Meeting of the
Marshall County Board of Zoning Appeals
112 W. Jefferson St. Room 203
Plymouth, IN 46563

MINUTES

President, Trent Bennett, called the Marshall County Board of Zoning Appeals meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 30, 2026, in Room 203 of the Marshall County Building. Present were Commission Members Caleb Coffel, Don Nunemaker, Larry Houin, Tim Pletcher and Trent Bennett. Also, present was Nicholas Witwer, Plan Director and Lori Lowry Plan Commission Staff and interested parties.

Certificate of Appointment

Caleb Coffel was appointed to the position of member of the Marshall County Board of Zoning Appeals by the Marshall County Commissioners to complete the unexpired term of Jeff Gustafson with said term ending December 31, 2026.

Minutes

The minutes of the January 13 and February 10 meetings were presented and reviewed. Mr. Nunemaker made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Houin. Motion carried by acclamation.

The findings of facts were presented, reviewed and approved.

The first item of business was 26-BZA-01 MCCLAIN, Regina - A request for Special Use to allow a home-workshop in a 16'x48' shed as a beauty shop for cutting hair and hosting small parties for makeovers; located at: 7002 Plymouth Laporte Tr., Plymouth, Zoned A-1. Ms. Regina McClain of 7002 Plymouth Laporte Tr Plymouth was present to represent her request. Mr. Witwer presented the findings of facts.

The property itself has open area around the shed location, ample parking for clients and party guests. The property is also wooded and surrounded by woods, tree lines, and open space. The closest residence is over 500' from the shed location. Plymouth LaPorte trail is a collector street, but traffic impact should be minimal.

RECOMMENDATION:
Based upon the findings, staff recommends approval of the request.

The applicant stated that this request was the first step in the process of converting this building into a beauty shop. Other approvals will follow once this is approved. A small sign possibly like a "sandwich collapsible sign" is desired possibly by the mailbox. No new driveway is planned.

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Mr. Nunemaker made a motion to open for public hearing, seconded by Mr. Pletcher. Motion carried by acclamation. There being nobody to speak for or against Mr. Pletcher moved to close, seconded by Mr. Nunemaker. Motion carried by acclamation.

Mr. Nunemaker made a motion to approve 26-BZA-01 MCCLAIN, Regina - A request for Special Use to allow a home-workshop in a 16'x48' shed as a beauty shop for cutting hair and hosting small parties for makeovers; located at: 7002 Plymouth Laporte Tr., Plymouth, Zoned A-1 and amended the motion to include a 16 sq ft sign and hours up to and including 7pm, seconded by Mr. Houin. Motion carried with a voice vote 5-0.

The second item of business was 26-BZA-02 WHITE, Timothy- A request for a Special Use to allow a Home-Based Business with a 100'x200' tow storage lot for Tim's Towing on the property; located at: 17351 7th Rd., Plymouth, West Twsp., Zoned A-1. Mr. Timothy White of 17351 7th Rd. Plymouth was present to represent his request. Mr. Witwer presented the findings of facts.

The site is large with mostly open space. There is some sort of internal road loop or track pre-existing on the property. The Lawrence Pontius County Drain runs across the property from the Southeast corner to the Northwest corner of the property creating an imposition to building on site. There is a residence and other buildings in the Northeast corner of the property as well as a pond surrounded by wooded area. The closest neighboring house is over 600' from the storage lot.

RECOMMENDATION:
Based on the findings, Staff recommends approval of the special use with the following conditions: No portion of the storage lot located within the drainage easement, or any portion of the storage lot within the drainage easement is approved by the drainage board, no portion of the storage lot is to be located over the drain tile itself.

The applicant showed the board a hand drawn site plan showing an estimate measurement of the tile.

When asked by the board Mr. White stated that he does have to drive over the existing tile to get to the fenced yard area. The site is used for temporary storage until they pick up which is usually 3-5 days. This site is not used as a junk yard. This site has been up and running since August of 2025.

The plan director mapped out the area with the dimensions given by the applicant, and it looks like a corner of the yard is within the 75’ easement of the ditch. The drainage board requires permission to have any portion of your lot in their easement. To get on the drainage board agenda you go to the county surveyor’s office. There is also an option of moving the fence.

Mr. Pletcher made a motion to open for public hearing, seconded by Mr. Nunemaker. Motion carried.

1. Allen Samuelson Owns property on the north and east side of the applicant. Has no problem with the request. The tile is a 12” tile.

2. Jeff Gustafson Sent an email. Mr. White had an opportunity to buy his grandfather's property. It's a small affordable local business and recommends this request be approved.

Mr. Houin made a motion to close the hearing, seconded by Mr. Nunemaker. Motion carried by acclamation.

Mr. Pletcher made a motion to approve 26-BZA-02 WHITE, Timothy- A request for Special Use to allow a Home-Based Business with a 100'x200' tow storage lot for Tim's Towing on the property; located at: 17351 7th Rd., Plymouth, West Twsp., Zoned A-1, seconded by Mr. Houin. Motion carried with a voice vote 5-0.

The third item of business 26-BZA-03 MILLER, Norman & Barbara - A request for an existing home workshop of manufacturing hay elevators/belt conveyors that will include a barn addition that will exceed the required 4,000 sq ft; located at: 1620 9B Road, Bourbon, IN Bourbon Twsp., Zoned A-1. Mr. Norman Miller of 1620 9B Rd. Bourbon and Joas Bontrager from B&B Roofing were present to represent their request. Mr. Witwer presented the findings of facts.

The property is agricultural in nature and contains several ag buildings and a residence as well as the existing workshop. The property owner also owns the surrounding 22 acres, isolating the sight from neighboring properties. Most of the acreage owned by the applicant is tillable ground, there is an existing chicken barn on the larger parcel. The closest residence to the workshop is over 1,600' from the workshop.

RECOMMENDATION:
Based on the information provided, staff recommends approval of the conditions proposed by the TRC of the easement recorded for the connected drive and for drainage approved for runoff after the expansion.

The plan director has had discussions with the surveyor on the drainage. For the most part the water runs south to the depression in the front. The water will need to be slowed down on the property before it's released. There is a personal tile that runs from the farm to the west across his property and then out back to the ditch.

The business is powered by 80% solar and the remaining is by generator.

With the addition the building will be 9,200 sq ft which is greater than the allowed 4,000 sq ft for a home workshop. The business has two employees that are family members. There are no plans to increase. The existing building will be used for storage and the new building will be used for production. The design for the driveway will be to come in the parcel with the chicken barn and circle across the parcel and come on the existing driveway where the business is located.

The truck traffic wouldn't increase if little to none. There are currently 4 semi's a week and 4 pick up truck trailers.

Mr. Nunemaker made a motion to open for public hearing, seconded by Mr. Houin. There being nobody to speak for or against Mr. Nunemaker moved and Mr. Houin seconded the motion to close the hearing. Motion carried.
To prevent a future problem the board wants to see ingress/egress easement recorded and the parcels combined.

When asked about if the building would require a construction design release the plan director replied that he probably would, but would defer to the building commissioner.

Mr. Houin made a motion to approve 26-BZA-03 MILLER, Norman & Barbara - A request for an existing home workshop of manufacturing hay elevators/belt conveyors that will include a barn addition that will exceed the required 4,000 sq ft; located at: 1620 9B Road, Bourbon, IN Bourbon Twsp., Zoned A-1 with the condition that the applicant create a recorded ingress easement or combine the parcels, seconded by Mr. Pletcher. Motion carried with a voice vote 5-0.

The fourth item of business was 26-BZA-04 STULL, June - A request by Vernon Chmielewski for a one-time outdoor boat & pontoon part show combined with birthday party; located at: 7811 Redwood Rd. Plymouth West Twsp., Zoned C-2. Mr. Vernon Chiemelowski of 517 E Lakeshore Dr Culver was present to represent his request. Mr. Witwer presented the findings of facts.

The site is currently used for multiple types of sales and storage. The site contains multiple areas of abandoned property and debris. Using the site successfully for an event of this type will require clean up and organization of the site. The site does not provide much space to include both event area and parking, and the access drive to the property is located close to US 30 on Redwood Rd.

RECOMMENDATION:
Based on the information Provided, staff recommends approval of the request with TRC condition of restricting traffic egress onto US 30 to right turn only.

Due to booking complications the original date has been changed to the first weekend of May. The plan will be to have artisans as well. The Health Department has made recommendations regarding what kind of foods can be served. There will be no alcohol at this event. There will be no live music, but will have amplified music that is appropriate for the area.

The property is in the process of being cleaned up and reorganized to allow more parking on site.

Mr. Pletcher made a motion to open for public hearing, seconded by Mr. Nunemaker. Motion carried by acclamation. There being nobody to speak for or against Mr. Nunemaker moved and Mr. Houin seconded the motion to close the public hearing. Motion carried.

Mr. Chiemelowski plans to have a team leader that will help organize the flow of traffic . The plan for the event is to leave south out of the entrance.

Mr. Coffel made a motion to approve 26-BZA-04 STULL, June - A request by Vernon Chmielewski for a one-time outdoor boat & pontoon part show combined with birthday party; located at: 7811 Redwood Rd. Plymouth West Twsp., Zoned C-2 with the following conditions:

1. Hours 8am – 10pm
2. Egress out of the event to go to the south
3. Event dates May 1, 2, and 3

Second by Mr. Houin, motion carried with a voice vote 5-0.

When asked if this event would need permission every time, President Bennett stated that it would need permission until the event shapes itself.

The fifth item of business was 26-BZA-05 SZCZECHOWSKI, Deborah - A request for a Variance of Developmental Standard to allow a reduction in front yard setback from the required 30' to 15' from the right of way to allow a modular home; located at: 16018 Cook Lake Trl, Plymouth, IN West Twsp., Zoned L-1. Mr. Randy & Deborah Szczechowski 1203 White Oak Dr South Bend were present to represent their request. Mr. Witwer presented the findings of facts.

The lots within this subdivision are very short on depth to build. Several of the homes around this property are built within the setbacks required. This is also partly due to a steep decline in elevation across the site from about 788' to 770' midway front to back on the property.

RECOMMENDATION:
Based on the information provided, staff recommends approval of the request.

This property used to have a house on it until there was a gas explosion. Due to the layout the proposal is requiring the applicant to combine the properties into one through a replat. Another reason for the need for the variance is for the location of the aerobic septic system.

Mr. Pletcher made a motion to open for public hearing, seconded by Mr. Nunemaker. Motion carried. There being nobody to speak for or against Mr. Nunemaker moved and Mr. Houin seconded the motion to close the public hearing. Motion carried.

Mr. Nunemaker made a motion to approve 26-BZA-05 SZCZECHOWSKI, Deborah - A request for a Variance of Developmental Standard to allow a reduction in front yard setback from the required 30' to 15' from the right of way to allow a modular home; located at: 16018 Cook Lake Trl, Plymouth, IN West Twsp., Zoned L-1, second by Mr. Houin. Motion carried with a voice vote 5-0.

The sixth item of business was 26-BZA-06 AYERS, David - A request for a Variance of Developmental Standard to allow a reduction in front yard setback from the required 50' to 30 to allow a 28'x36' garage that will align with the existing house; located at: 9955 Gumwood Road Bourbon, IN Zoned A-1. Mr. David Ayers of 9955 Gumwood Rd. Bourbon was present to represent his request. Mr. Witwer presented the findings of facts.

The existing house is within the required 50' setback, the garage addition aligned with the house would have inconsequential impact on the adjacent properties.

RECOMMENDATION:
Based on the information provided, staff recommends approval of the request.

Mr. Ayers would like to be able to have a garage to keep things inside. Aesthetically, he would like to be in line with the house setback which required this variance. All other setbacks will be met. The existing shed will also be resided to match.

Mr. Nunemaker made a motion to open for public hearing, seconded by Mr. Coffel. Motion carried by acclamation. There being nobody to speak for or against Mr. Pletcher moved and Mr. Nunemaker seconded the motion to close the public hearing.

Mr. Pletcher made a motion to approve 26-BZA-06 AYERS, David - A request for a Variance of Developmental Standard to allow a reduction in front yard setback from the required 50' to 30 to allow a 28'x36' garage that will align with the existing house; located at: 9955 Gumwood Road Bourbon, IN Zoned A-1, seconded by Mr. Nunemaker. Motion carried with a voice vote 5-0.

With no further business to come before the board, Mr. Nunemaker moved to adjourn the meeting with a seconded by Mr. Houin. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Secretary