May 12, 2026
Regular Meeting of the
Marshall County Board of Zoning Appeals
112 W. Jefferson St. Room 203
Plymouth, IN 46563

President, Trent Bennett, called the Marshall County Board of Zoning Appeals meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, in Room 203 of the Marshall County Building. Present were Commission Members Caleb Coffel, Larry Houin, Don Nunemaker, Tim Pletcher and Trent Bennett. Also, present was Nicholas Witwer, Plan Director and Lori Lowry Plan Commission Staff and interested parties.

MINUTES/FINDINGS

The minutes of the April 14, 2026, meeting were presented and reviewed. Mr. Nunemaker made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Coffel. Motion carried by acclamation.

The findings of facts were presented and reviewed. Mr. Pletcher made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Coffel. Motion carried by acclamation.

PUBLIC HEARING

The first item of business was 26-BZA-12 BORKHOLDER, Dale - A request for a Special Use to allow a home workshop of woodworking; located at: 643 4th Rd., Bremen, IN German Twsp., Zoned A-1. Mr. Dale Borkholder of 643 4th Rd. Bremen was present to represent his request. Mr. Witwer presented the findings of fact.

The 37-acre site is certainly large enough to accommodate the proposed improvements with no encroachment of setbacks. The site drains naturally to a wetland located on the property. The site is surrounded by properties with many outbuildings for agriculture and home-based business and workshop related activities. There are 2 homes within 400' of the proposed building.

RECOMMENDATION:
Based on the information provided, staff & TRC recommend approval of the request.

The current 34'x40' building houses the portable sawmill. The plan for the proposed building would be to house the sawmill and the existing would be used for the finish work of building timber mats. There will be additional gravel work done around the site. The timber being brought in will increase quite a bit. The estimated delivery per week is one to two trucks. The material could come in on either straight truck or by semi. The timber will be stored off the gravel area, and the finished product will be stored on the gravel.

Currently the business is part time, but would like to go full time with this approval. The business hours will be 5am – 1-2 pm. The source of power will be a small generator for lighting only. The saw and drill are ran off of gas.

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

1. Marvin Houin Plymouth Goshen Tr. Is opposed to the project. The roads are not made for this type of traffic. This area is agricultural, not industrial.

Mr. Coffel moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Nunemaker. Motion carried by acclamation.

In response to the condition of the road Mr. Borkholder stated that his portion of the road was chip and seal for quite a while. A couple of years ago it was ground down to gravel.

Mr. Coffel made a motion to approve 26-BZA-12 BORKHOLDER, Dale - A request for a Special Use to allow a home workshop of woodworking; located at: 643 4th Rd., Bremen, IN German Twsp., Zoned A-1, with the following condition: If the outside generator needs to be increased in size a structure will need to be built to house it as well as the sound will need to be muffled, seconded by Mr. Nunemaker. Motion carried with a voice vote 5-0.

The second item of business was 26-BZA-13 BONTRAGER, Jerry & Leona - A request for a Variance of Developmental Standard to allow a parcel split that doesn't meet the 1:3 width to depth ratio; located at: 3A Rd. Bremen (50-43-05-000-002-001-005), German Twsp., Zoned A-1. Mr. Jerry Bontrager of 10185 W. 1350 N. Nappanee was present to represent his request. Mr. Witwer presented the findings of fact.

The parcel is around 40 acres in size, typical square farm lot as is common throughout the County. The property contains a woodland in the interior that creates a natural boundary line for splitting. The site is majority farm field.

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

The intention of splitting the property was to not divide the woods. One brother will own the piece with the woods and ground to build a house. The remaining ground will be retained by the applicant Jerry Bontrager and will be kept agricultural. The applicant also owns an adjacent property at the rear corner of this property that is landlocked. The neighboring property owner and the applicant have verbal agreements to pass over each other's ground.

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

1. Bill Heyde 7215 Plymouth Goshen Tr. Questioned whether this request will give the applicant a legal easement across his property.
2. Marvin Houin 7563 Plymouth Goshen Tr This property was sold and purchased as farmland. Now they want to change the imprint of this farmland. Splitting it into multiple parcels to build residential housing. Believes this is going to change the area.

Rules are made for a reason they should abide by them. If they want to split the ground the rules should be followed.

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

The applicant was asked if he would be willing to meet the requirements by increasing the width to approximately 60' additional feet so he wouldn't need the variance. Mr. Bontrager and his brother would like to keep the woods intact and kept as a whole.

Mr. Nunemaker made a motion to deny 26-BZA-13 BONTRAGER, Jerry & Leona - A request for a Variance of Developmental Standard to allow a parcel split that doesn't meet the 1:3 width to depth ratio; located at: 3A Rd. Bremen (50-43-05-000-002-001-005), German Twsp., Zoned A-1, seconded by Mr. Houin. Motion carried with a vote to deny 4-1 with Mr. Bennett voting against.

Other Business

There was a brief discussion at a earlier meeting to possibly bring back a special use that wasn't following procedure. The owner brought his request into compliance; therefore, there isn't a need to bring it back before the board.

President Bennett asked if we have access to Ltap's Paser rating of local roads? He believes it would be helpful and will allow them to make more informed decisions while looking at the roads condition prior to making a ruling.

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