



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Members of the Columbus Board of Zoning Appeals

**FROM:** Kyra Behrman

**DATE:** April 23, 2025

**RE:** CCU-2025-009 – Find Trails Farm

The Planning Staff received the following materials from the applicant on April 21, 2025, which was after the revised submittal deadline. The staff report was completed before these materials were received, which is the reason for the preliminary staff decision for continuance.

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**From:** [Jenni Beesley](#)  
**To:** [Behrman, Kyra](#)  
**Subject:** External Message: Re: Additional Information  
**Date:** Monday, April 21, 2025 12:37:59 PM  
**Attachments:** [Farm Master Plan.pdf](#)

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**\*\*\* ATTENTION \*\*\* This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.**

Warning: Replies to this message will go to [jenni@findtrails.com](mailto:jenni@findtrails.com). If you are unsure this is correct please contact the helpdesk.

Dear Planning Committee,

Thank you for your time and consideration as we continue to move forward with our vision for Find Trails Farm. I've provided some additional context around our planned use of the property.

To clarify the use of the property, the camping part of this farm is to provide supplemental income to help us bolster financially the market garden/farming. Due to the nature of the type of farming we are pursuing, this requires us to "rest" our fields in order to develop the soil from the mechanical cultivation that has been in use for the past century. This means unstable income for us in the short term.

Because our entrance road is currently a single lane, we do not plan to allow RV or trailer camping at this time. However, we would like to maintain the flexibility to explore that option in the future. For now, our focus will be on tent camping, gradually expanding in a way that honors the peaceful, natural character of our 111-acre farm.

In our first year, we plan to offer a limited number of campsites, including a few small structures that campers can sleep in for added comfort. The layout of our land naturally supports privacy and low-density campsite development. Of our 111 acres, approximately 70 are open, farmable fields, while the remaining 41 acres are wooded. These wooded areas are visually segmented into five distinct sections, each capable of supporting three to four well-spaced, private campsites. This layout would ultimately allow for up to 20 secluded campsites, though we are starting very modestly with 6 to 9 sites in the first year.

Phase 1 is to install three primitive tent campsites within the wooded section on the east side of our northwest field and three campsites in the wooded section on the west side of the northeast field. Additionally, we hope to offer a guest house on wheels in this northeast field area for guests who prefer not to sleep outdoors. Utility installation is beginning in this northeast four-acre field, and we plan to construct a full-service restroom with showers for camper use.

This four acre open field is also the first site of our vegetable market garden. Our first year plan includes four 50' x 100' vegetable garden beds. In conjunction with that effort, we plan to build a barn for farm equipment storage, a produce wash station and eventually, a commercial kitchen for food processing. We hope that this kitchen may one day serve other

market farmers in the area through a shared-use model.

For campsites located farther from the restroom facility, we will provide composting toilets nearby while allowing campers access to the full-service restroom and showers if desired. Over time, as we develop roads and extend utility services further onto the property, we will introduce more luxury “glamping”-style structures and reduce the number of primitive tent sites. At that stage, we will also be able to provide electric and plumbing access to additional sites.

In short, our goal is to develop the land in a thoughtful, gradual, and sustainable way—embracing the natural contours and beauty of the property to create a peaceful, restorative environment. By offering well-spaced campsites immersed in nature, we aim to provide guests with a low-impact yet deeply enriching experience. Visitors will have the opportunity to unplug from the fast pace of modern life, breathe fresh air, walk quiet trails, and witness firsthand how food is grown through our working market garden. We hope time spent here fosters mental clarity, physical wellness, and a renewed appreciation for the rhythms of nature and the value of sustainable farming. For many, it will be a chance to reconnect—with the earth, with loved ones, and with themselves.

Please see attached image for an overview of our master plan and let me know if you need any additional information or clarification.

Warm regards,

**Jennifer Beesley**

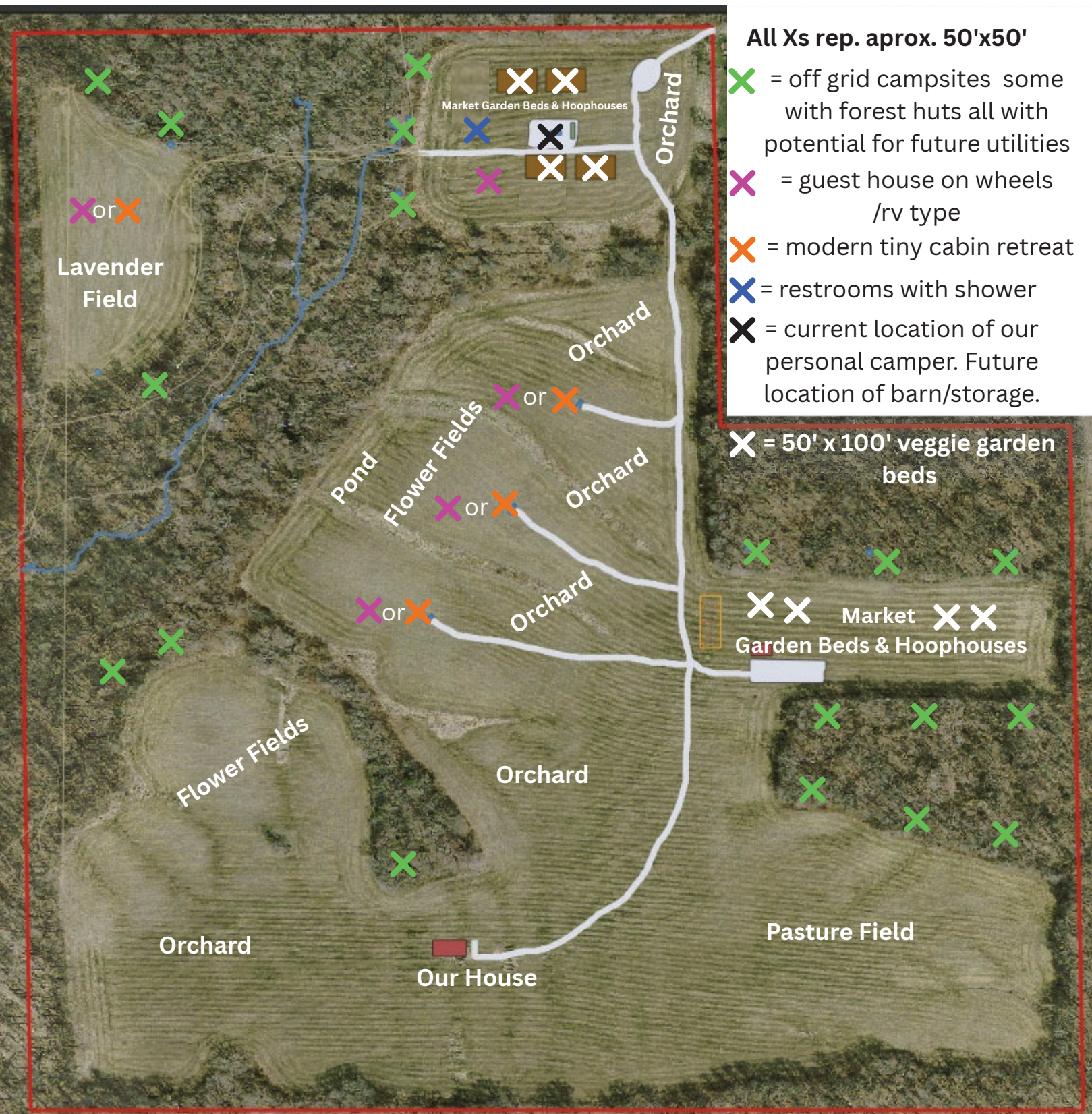
Find Trails Farm

[findtrails.com](http://findtrails.com)

317-847-4777

[jenni@findtrails.com](mailto:jenni@findtrails.com)





All Xs rep. aprox. 50'x50'

✕ = off grid campsites some with forest huts all with potential for future utilities

✕ = guest house on wheels /rv type

✕ = modern tiny cabin retreat

✕ = restrooms with shower

✕ = current location of our personal camper. Future location of barn/storage.

✕ = 50' x 100' veggie garden beds

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**CITY OF COLUMBUS  
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS  
(April 29, 2025 Meeting)**

**STAFF REPORT**

**Docket No. / Project Title:** CCU-2025-009 (Find Trails Farm)  
**Staff:** Kyra Behrman  
  
**Applicant:** West 500 S, LLC / Find Trails Farm  
**Property Size:** 111.68 Acres  
**Zoning:** AP (Agriculture: Preferred)  
**Location:** 5001 West 500 South, in Wayne Township

**Background Summary:**

The applicant has indicated that the proposed conditional use will allow a campground on the 111-acre site. The applicant will be transitioning the site from traditional crops to a sustainable farmer's market garden for fruits and vegetables. The applicant is proposing a "camping retreat" for guests to camp and reconnect with nature in this environment. No concept plan or information was provided regarding the number of camp sites, the type of camping (tents, RVs, etc.), or time period for camping.

**Key Issue Summary:**

The following key issue(s) should be resolved through the consideration of this application: Is 500 South adequate to handle the traffic generated by a campground?

**Preliminary Staff Recommendation:**

Continuance; to provide the applicant additional time to provide details on the number and location of campsites, waste management, the period of time the site will be used for camping, and the type of camping being proposed.

**Zoning District Intent:**

The intent of the AP (Agriculture: Preferred) zoning district is as follows: to provide an area suitable for agriculture and agriculture-related uses. This district is further intended to preserve the viability of agricultural operations, and limit non-agricultural development in areas with minimal, incompatible infrastructure.

Current Property Information:	
Land Use:	Agriculture
Site Features:	Agricultural crops, woods, stream
Flood Hazards:	No flood hazards exist on this site

<b>Street/Road Frontage:</b>	500 South (Local, Residential, Rural)
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<b>Surrounding Zoning and Land Use:</b>		
	<b>Zoning:</b>	<b>Land Use:</b>
<b>North:</b>	AP (Agriculture: Preferred)	Agricultural crops Single family residential
<b>South:</b>	AP (Agriculture: Preferred)	Agricultural crops
<b>East:</b>	AP (Agriculture: Preferred)	Agricultural crops Single family residential
<b>West:</b>	AP (Agriculture: Preferred)	Agricultural crops Single family residential

<b>Interdepartmental Review:</b>	
<b>City Engineering:</b>	We have concerns over trailers and large RV's turning at CR 500 S and CR 300 W. CR 300 W is a very narrow road that poses a safety hazard if larger vehicles are trying to turn on to it. There may be insufficient space for turning vehicles, resulting in potential damage to utilities, signs, and property adjacent to the roadway.
<b>Fire Inspector:</b>	Generally, acceptable as submitted. However, as always, attention to a driveway should be considered. A 12 foot minimum (driveway) width can support vehicle traffic and 13 foot 6 inch height clearance (is needed). Campers would likely need this level of infrastructure, camping trailers or RV vehicles, other than primitive camping. Any electrical improvements for the public facilities would require appropriate permitting/inspections/Bartholomew County Electrical Licensing.
<b>County Highway Dept.:</b>	The road is in good condition with a relatively recent overlay. My concerns are the width and the corner. The road width is only 14'. It will be difficult for 2 cars to pass, let alone a camper. Also the corner with 300W does not have adequate turning radius for a camper. It will be difficult to make the turn without tearing up the roadsides, or putting the camper in a ditch.
<b>County Code Enforcement:</b>	No response
<b>County Health Department:</b>	No response.



### Planning Consideration(s):

The following general site considerations, planning concepts, and other facts should be considered in the review of this application:

1. The subject site contains 111 acres and is at the terminus of 500 South.
2. Approximately 70 acres of the subject site have been used for traditional farming of corn and soybeans. The applicant will be transitioning from traditional crops to a 'farmer's market' type garden growing fruits and vegetables. A farmer's market is also a use permitted through conditional use approval.
3. The applicant is proposing a "camping retreat" for guests to camp, experience a farm environment and reconnect with nature.
4. The applicant intends the camping to be "low-density without extensive infrastructure changes or large-scale development." The applicant has not submitted a concept plan to demonstrate where the campsites would be, the number to be expected or how they would be accessed.
5. 500 South is only 11 feet wide with ditches on each side, and electric poles approximately 3 feet from the edge of pavement on the south side. Meeting any oncoming traffic pulling a camper or driving an RV could present traffic safety concerns. Sixteen other properties have frontage on 500 South, with eleven homes currently having driveways from 500 South.
6. A campground and RV park are allowed as conditional uses in the AP (Agriculture: Preferred) zoning district. The site as it exists might be compatible as a campground with the neighboring single-family residential uses. Due to the existing woods, potential camping sites could be naturally buffered from adjoining properties.
7. Woodside Industrial Park is located to the east of the intersection of 500 South and 300 West.

### Comprehensive Plan Consideration(s):

The Comprehensive Plan designates the future land use of properties in this area as Agriculture and Estate / Cluster Residential.

The Comprehensive Plan includes this property in the Woodside / Walesboro character area. The following planning principles for that character area apply to this application:

1. Prohibit septic systems for all non-farm development
2. Preserve expanses of open space throughout the area as new development takes place.

The following Comprehensive Plan goal(s) and/or policy(ies) apply to this application:

1. **POLICY C-2-2:** Encourage existing and new public recreational facilities to function as multigenerational community centers, and provide programming to meet the needs of special populations. *The community should offer recreational opportunities for all age groups and abilities. In addition, there should be opportunities for intergenerational activities which bring older people and children together for the benefit of both groups. Recreational programs also should be available for special populations, such as the physically or mentally challenged.*
2. **POLICY J-10-1:** Create a positive business climate characterized by flexibility. *The needs of businesses are continuously changing, and the city needs to have sufficient flexibility in its regulatory system to respond to these changes and to encourage and nurture new businesses.*
3. **POLICY J-4-3:** Designate the land bounded by CR 350 S, CR 400 W, CR 700 S, and SR 11 as an economic growth area. *While it will be many years before this entire area is occupied by industrial development, it is important to set aside an area to accommodate the growth and to discourage incompatible land uses which in turn will discourage desired industrial growth.*
4. **POLICY J-4-6:** Within the designated economic growth area, prevent residential subdivisions which would consume land needed for future industrial development. *See Policy J-4-3.*
5. **POLICY J-4-7:** Within the designated economic growth area, encourage only that commercial development which will support the industrial activity; prevent commercial development of a scale which would consume land needed for future industrial development. *See Policy J-4-3.*

### Provisional Findings of Fact/Decision Criteria:

Section 12.4(D) of the Zoning Ordinance permits the Board of Zoning Appeals to allow conditional uses that meet the criteria listed below. The Board may impose reasonable conditions as part of an approval.

**1. The proposal will not be injurious to the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community.**

*Provisional Findings: A low-density campground might not be an intensive use for this general area, and not be injurious to the general public. The applicant states that measures will be implemented to address fire safety, emergency preparedness, waste management, traffic and parking, noise control and environmental impact mitigation. However, not knowing how many camp sites are expected, the type of camping to be offered, the time-frame for camping, the method of waste disposal, or the potential traffic expected on the county road, creates concerns about public safety. The road is narrow and passing oncoming traffic with a trailer or an RV could create unsafe situations. The City Engineer has expressed concerns about the 300 West intersection and large vehicles turning from 500 South. This criterion has not been met.*

**2. The development of the property will be consistent with the intent of the development standards established by the Zoning Ordinance for similar uses.**

*Provisional Findings: A proposed campground could meet the development standards for the AP (Agriculture: Preferred) district. The site is large enough to accommodate low density camping, parking for the use and meet setback requirements. However, without additional information, this criterion has not been met.*

**3. Granting the conditional use will not be contrary to the general purposes served by the Zoning Ordinance, and will not permanently injure other property or uses in the same zoning district and vicinity.**

*Provisional Findings: The AP (Agriculture: Preferred) zoning district allows by a conditional use a campground / RV Park. The subject site is 111 acres with existing woods, open space and a stream. The existing woods and vegetation would buffer noise that might be created. The applicant states that guidelines will be instituted about noise, trash, fire safety, parking. However, without a concept plan addressing the number of campsites and kind of camping that will be expected, this could impact neighboring properties. Some type of camping could align with the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning District, but without a concept plan, this criterion has not been met.*

**4. The proposed use will be consistent with the character of the zoning district in which it is located and the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.**

*Provisional Findings: The general area contains larger parcels of farm ground to the north, south and west, with some smaller parcels for single-family dwellings on 500 South. Industrial development is to the east (Woodside Industrial Park) separated by 300 West. The Comprehensive Plan has designated a specified area as an economic growth area. While it will be many years before this entire area is occupied by industrial development, a campground use would be more compatible than residential development. However, without additional information, this criterion has not been met.*

**Board of Zoning Appeals Options:**

In reviewing a request for conditional use the Board may (1) approve the petition as proposed, (2) approve the petition with conditions, (3) continue the petition to a future meeting of the Board, or (4) deny the petition (with or without prejudice). Failure to achieve a quorum or lack of a positive vote on a motion results in an automatic continuance to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

**City of Columbus - Bartholomew County Planning Department**  
**Conditional Use Application**

Submit applications and materials by e-mail to [planning@columbus.in.gov](mailto:planning@columbus.in.gov). If questions, please call: 812.376.2550.  
Submittal instructions available at <https://www.columbus.in.gov/planning/applications-forms/>.

**To be Completed by the Planning Department**

Pre-submittal Meeting on (date): 3/6/25 by (initials): KB & MB  
Application Received on (date): 3/25/25 by (initials): JAM  
Jurisdiction: ☒ Columbus ☐ Bartholomew County ☐ Joint District Procedure: ☐ Board of Zoning Appeals ☐ Hearing Officer  
Case Reference No.: CCU-2025-009 Zoning District: AP  
Property Owner Name (from GIS): Judy W Thomas

**To be Completed by the Applicant**

**STOP!** All applicants must meet with a Planning Department staff member before completing this application. Please contact the Department at 812.376.2550 at least 1 week prior to the Board of Zoning Appeals application deadline to schedule a meeting.

**Representative Information (if other than the applicant):**

Complete this section if a contractor, surveyor, attorney, or other person will act on behalf of the applicant and all correspondence regarding the application should be directed to them (if not, please indicate "none" for the Representative Person's Name below).

Representative Person's Name: Jennifer Beesley

Representative's Company Name: Find Trails llc

Mailing Address: 10350 Power Dr Carmel, IN 46033  
(number) (street) (city) (state) (zip)

Phone No.: (317) 847-4777 E-mail Address: jenni@findtrails.com

All correspondence will be by e-mail unless another method has been agreed upon by the Planning Department.

**Applicant Information:**

Please identify the property owner, business, institution, or other entity that is making the request. Do NOT list here a contractor, surveyor, attorney, or other representative (see Representative Information section above).

Applicant Name: Judy Thomas on behalf of West 500 S llc - Find Trails Farm

Applicant Type: ☐ Individual(s) ☐ Partnership ☐ Corporation ☒ LLC ☐ Estate ☐ Trust ☐ Other

Applicant Contact Person Name: Jennifer Beesley

Please include a contact person name if the applicant is a land development company, institution, business, or other type of entity.

Mailing Address: 11028 E Lakeshore Dr Carmel, IN 46033  
(number) (street) (city) (state) (zip)

Phone No.: 317-697-6348 E-mail Address: judy@findtrails.com

All correspondence will be by e-mail unless another method has been agreed upon by the Planning Department.

**Conditional Use Requested:**

I am requesting a conditional use per Section 3.5/B of the Zoning Ordinance to allow the property to be used for the following:

## Property / Location Information:

Property Address (if an address has been assigned): 5001 West 500 S Columbus  
(number) (street) (city)

or Parcel Number(s): 03-85-21-000-001.300-020

or General Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
(a street corner, subdivision lot number(s), etc.)

## Conditional Use Criteria:

The Columbus & Bartholomew County Zoning Ordinance establishes specific criteria that each must be met in order for a conditional use to be approved. Describe how the conditional use requested meets each of the following criteria.

1. **The approval of the conditional use will not be injurious to the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community.** For example: What harm could come from approving the conditional use? Would it create any public safety issues? Why or why not?

See attached document

2. **The development of the property will be consistent with the intent of the development standards established by the Zoning Ordinance for similar uses.** For example: Will the conditional use be able to meet minimum building setbacks, parking standards, and other requirements? If not, are variances being sought to address those items?

See attached document

3. **Granting the conditional use will not be contrary to the general purposes served by the Zoning Ordinance, and will not permanently injure other property or uses in the same zoning district and vicinity.** For example: The property is zoned \_\_\_\_\_. Are there risks that the conditional use will cause harm to the neighbors' ability to use and enjoy their property? Is there reason to believe that the conditional use will cause harm to neighboring property values?

See attached document

4. **The conditional use will be consistent with the character of the zoning district in which it is located and the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.** Will the conditional use change the character of the area? Will it involve a building, operation, or features that are significantly different than what is common to the zoning district? If the property is located in the jurisdiction of the City of Columbus visit <https://www.columbus.in.gov/planning/comprehensive-plans/>. If the property is in the jurisdiction of Bartholomew County visit <https://www.columbus.in.gov/planning/comprehensive-plans/comprehensive-county-plans/>. Include statements or concepts that support the request.

See attached document

## Representative or Applicant Signature / Acknowledgement:

If a representative has been designated on page 1, that representative must sign below. If no representative is designated, the applicant, as indicated on page 1, must sign below. Acceptable signatures include traditional "wet" by hand signatures, electronically verified signatures, or digital signatures using a script font or signature stamp.

The undersigned acknowledges that the information included in and with this application is completely true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Jennifer Beesley  
(Representative or Applicant Signature)

Jennifer Beesley  
(Representative or Applicant Printed Name)

3-23-25  
(Date)

Owner Find Trails LLC  
(Title / Position, if Applicable)

## Property Owner Signature(s):

Applications submitted without all property owner(s) or their legally authorized representative(s) signatures will **NOT** be processed. Acceptable signatures include traditional "wet" by hand signatures, electronically verified signatures, or digital signatures using a script font or signature stamp. The property owner does **NOT** include a tenant or contract buyer.

The Planning Department is **NOT** responsible for verifying the authenticity of signatures, confirming the signer's authority, or for any misrepresentation by those signing.

Those who have signed below acknowledge that the information included in and with this application is completely true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief. The undersigned authorize(s) the filing of this application and allows the Planning Department staff to enter this property to analyze this request. Further, the undersigned understand that a public notice sign may be placed and remain on the property until the processing of the request is complete.

For Property Owned by an Individual or Individuals:

If the property is titled/owned individually or jointly held by multiple individuals (such as a married couple, tenants-in-common, or jointly with rights of survivorship, for example), each living individual must sign below. Those signing below due to power of attorney for an owner must attach documentation of that power of attorney.

Judy Thomas  
(Property Owner #1 Signature)

Judy Thomas  
(Printed Name)

3/23/2025  
(Date)

(Property Owner #2 Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Date)

(Property Owner #3 Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Date)

(Property Owner #4 Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Date)

For Property Owned by a Partnership, Corporation, LLC, Estate, Trust, or other Entity:

If the property is titled/owned by a trust, corporation, estate, institution, business, or other entity, an appropriate representative of that entity must sign below and indicate his/her title, position, role, or other legally authorized capacity in which they are signing on behalf of that entity.

Description of Signer's Ownership Role or Representation:

Trustee and manager

X Judy Thomas  
(Signature)

Judy Thomas  
(Printed Name)

3/23/2025  
(Date)

Find Trails Farm, nestled at 5001 West 500 South in Columbus, is a scenic 111-acre property with rich agricultural history—70 of those acres have been traditionally farmed for more than a century. Today, we're reimagining that legacy by transitioning from conventional corn and soybean crops to a diverse, sustainable market garden filled with fresh fruits and vegetables. We are seeking a special use permit to create a peaceful camping retreat, where guests can unplug, reconnect with nature, and enjoy the bounty of our working farm.

The following is our response to the conditional use criteria questions found on the conditional use application...

1. The approval of this conditional use will not be injurious to public health, safety, or general welfare. In fact, it will enhance the community by offering a controlled, well-maintained outdoor recreation space.

To ensure safety, we will implement the following measures:

- **Fire Safety:** Designated fire pits with clear usage guidelines and fire extinguishers available at key locations. We will maintain compliance with all local burn restrictions and fire safety codes.
- **Emergency Preparedness:** The farm has cell service and will have WiFi, ensuring campers can use their phones in case of an emergency. Additionally, we will have a guest messaging system to provide alerts for pending storms or other urgent situations. We will also coordinate with local first responders to ensure a swift and effective response to any potential emergencies.
- **Waste Management:** Guests will be reminded of their personal responsibility to manage their trash and informed of proper trash disposal stations to prevent pollution and wildlife disturbances.
- **Traffic and Parking:** Even with 111 acres, we plan to have a minimal amount of camping sites. There will be adequate parking for all. The farm is at the dead end of West 500 South which is a one lane road. This will not cause a public health or safety issue but it would be nice if this road was wider.
- **Noise Control:** There will be a quiet hour policy in place to prevent disturbances to neighboring properties. All sites will be located a large distance from any residential dwelling. That said, our goal is to attract campers looking for solitude with nature. Our goal is for the guests to enjoy only the sounds of nature.
- **Environmental Impact Mitigation:** Our farming plan focuses on enhancing soil quality to cultivate high-quality produce while also improving wildlife habitats. There will be a trail system for our camping guests to enjoy through the woods and prairie land. These trails will enhance our sustainable land management practices to prevent soil erosion and support the restoration of natural ecosystems.
- The camping activities will be conducted in a manner that prioritizes the well-being of guests, neighbors, and the environment.

Given these precautions, there are no foreseeable public safety issues.



2. The proposed development of Find Trails camping retreat will be **consistent with the intent of the development standards established by the Zoning Ordinance** for similar uses, with a focus on maintaining the integrity of the land and its resources.

- **Preserving Productive Farmland:** We understand & highly respect the importance of farmland preservation in Bartholomew County. Our project is designed with minimal disruption to the farm and our market garden operation. The camping areas will not cause a loss of productive farmland. The development will be designed to avoid soil degradation, maintain soil health, and use sustainable practices that do not interfere with ongoing agricultural activities.
- **Directing Growth to Suitable Areas:** The location of our development aligns with the county's policy of directing growth to areas suitable for development. Our site is intended to be a low-density, nature-focused retreat, designed to blend harmoniously with the surrounding environment without extensive infrastructure changes or large-scale development. We aim to enhance the area by focusing on eco-friendly and wildlife friendly practices, with careful consideration of the land's natural and historic value as well as the animals who live there.
- **Protecting Community Resources and the Environment:** In line with county priorities, our plan focuses on environmental stewardship. The site will incorporate best practices in drainage, water management, and habitat preservation. We have consulted with state and federal agencies on practices that we can employ to manage the land. We will preserve natural habitats, manage waste responsibly, and ensure minimal impact on surface and groundwater resources. Our commitment to sustainable land management reflects the county's goals of protecting sensitive areas and improving community resources.

Overall, our development aligns with the goals of the Agricultural Preferred district, which promotes land use practices that respect the heritage of Bartholomew County while accommodating thoughtful, sustainable growth.

3. Granting the conditional use for a camping retreat will not be contrary to the general purposes served by the Agricultural Preferred (AP) Zoning Ordinance and will not permanently injure other properties or uses in the same zoning district or vicinity.

Alignment with Agricultural Preferred Zoning Intent:

- While the AP district prioritizes agricultural operations, it also allows for compatible conditional uses, including camping and RV parks, as listed in the zoning ordinance.
- Our proposed camping retreat is low-impact and nature-focused, ensuring it does not interfere with existing agricultural activities. The design will

integrate with the land, preserving its rural and scenic character while offering a responsible use that aligns with the district's intent to protect agricultural and non-agricultural property values.

- No large-scale infrastructure developments are planned that would permanently alter the land or disrupt agricultural operations.
- The project will implement erosion control, land management, and sustainable landscaping practices that enhance, rather than degrade, the surrounding environment.

#### Compatibility with Surrounding Properties & Uses:

- The camping retreat will be strategically designed to maintain privacy and buffer zones to minimize any potential impact on neighboring properties.
- The project aims to include minimal lighting in an effort to keep the rural night sky and agricultural environment.
- Well-maintained camping areas in rural settings often enhance property values by offering a controlled, nature-based recreational option, rather than allowing uncontrolled or unregulated land uses.
- The project will be professionally managed with clear operational guidelines to ensure it remains an asset to the community rather than a nuisance.

Given these factors, the proposed conditional use aligns with the intent of the Agricultural Preferred zoning district and will not cause permanent injury to other properties or uses in the area. Instead, it offers a responsible, low-impact way to utilize the land without compromising agricultural operations or property values.

**The proposed conditional use will be consistent with the character of the Agricultural Preferred (AP) zoning district and the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan while maintaining the rural and agricultural integrity of the area.**

#### Preserving the Character of the Area

- The design, scale, and function of the camping retreat will be in harmony with the existing rural and agricultural surroundings.
- Structures will be low-impact and minimal, with a focus on natural aesthetics that blend into the environment rather than introducing urban or commercial-style development.
- The project will include generous buffer zones between camping areas, featuring native vegetation, fields of prairie grasses and wildflowers, beautiful forest and a trail system
- We will actively work to eliminate invasive species —primarily multiflora rose, found throughout the forest on the farm.

- The use of the land for camping aligns with rural recreational opportunities that are often found in agricultural districts.
- Trails, picnic areas, restroom facilities and gathering spaces will be designed to flow with the nature of the land.
- All site planning is guided by the principle of preserving the farm's visual, environmental, and agricultural character, ensuring that the natural landscape remains undisturbed and authentic.

### Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan prioritizes farmland preservation, responsible growth, and environmental stewardship.

- This project aligns with these principles by enabling us (agricultural landowners) to sustain our farmland while utilizing the land in a low-density, eco-friendly manner.
- It also provides city dwellers with an opportunity to experience rural life, fostering a deeper appreciation for agriculture and increasing public awareness of where their food comes from.
- The proposed use does not introduce industrial or high-density development, nor does it require major infrastructure changes that would alter the district's rural nature.
- Nearby properties will continue to function as farmland or rural homesteads, with no disruption to their operations.
- Traffic impact will be minimal and seasonal, preventing any long-term congestion or infrastructure strain.

The conditional use aligns with the existing character of the Agricultural Preferred zoning district and the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. The structures, operations, and features of the camping retreat will complement the market garden and farming operations. Thus ensuring that the farm remains productive, environmentally responsible, and compatible with surrounding properties.