MINUTES
BARTHOLOMEW COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
FEBRUARY 23, 2026
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
123 WASHINGTON STREET
COLUMBUS, INDIANA

Members in Person: David Flohr, Rodney Finke, Mike Speaker, Arnold Haskell, Eric Scheidt

Members Absent: None

Staff in Person: Melissa, Begley, Angela Ross, Deputy County Attorney Jim Shoaf, Kyra Behrman

David Flohr opened the meeting with a brief explanation of the board and its responsibilities. Proof of adequate public notice for all cases on the agenda was confirmed.

Jim Shoaf, County Deputy Attorney, administered an oath to all in attendance who would be speaking.

ELECTION OF 2026 OFFICERS

Arnold Haskell moved that David Flohr continue as President of the Board of Zoning and Appeals. Michael Speaker seconded. The motion passes with a voice vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Eric Scheidt nominated Mike Speaker to be Vice Chair. Arnold Haskell seconded the motion. The motion passes with a voice vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

Rodney Finke nominated Eric Scheidt to continue as Secretary. Arnold Haskell seconded the motion. The motion passes with a voice vote of 5 in favor 0 opposed.

OLD BUSINESS REQUIRING BOARD ACTION
None

NEW BUSINESS REQUIRING BOARD ACTION

BZA-25-1: Exclusive Cabins- A request by Exclusive Cabins for a development standards variance from Zoning Ordinance Section 3.5(C) and Section 6.7 (A)(2)(c) to allow a primary structure to be 560 square feet, 390 square feet less than the minimum 950 square foot dwelling size for manufactured homes in the AG (Agricultural: General) zoning district. The property is located at 14000 West Mount Healthy Road, in Jackson Township.

Melissa Begley presented for the Planning Department. Melissa gave a brief description of the proposal.

Josh Helvie from 7640 Bishops Green Zionsville, Indiana represented the applicant.
Josh stated he has done five large upscale new construction projects in Sevierville, Tennessee and identified this property for family vacation getaways stating he thinks “it will work really well.” Josh stated he spoke with Tim Grim, a neighbor who owns 60 acres and he is supportive. Josh explained the design is based on the topography, the cistern, and describes it as being a “very luxury” cabin.

Arnold Haskell asked if the cistern is still functional or could it be remediated?

It is explained to Arnold the location of the cistern is the only real flat spot on the property and that a month ago, the options for the cistern were to fill and void it or remove the entire system; However, details of what the system was connected to were unknown. It is stated that the cistern is probably still active to the area.

Arnold Haskell asked about the square footage of other homes in the area.

Melissa Begley stated she does not, but would assume it is no smaller than the ordinance allows currently of 950 Sq ft.

David Flohr opened the meeting to public comment.

David Flohr closed the meeting to public comment.

Arnold Haskell asked about the Ordinance, which states the square footage, can only be a min of 950sq ft.

Melissa Begley stated she does not know where the ordinance standard originated from but it may have been intended to discourage mobile homes.

Arnold Haskell stated the proposed structure is a little over 50%, specifically 58%, of the required 950 square feet and questioned if the building could be increased to be 3ft further in 1 directions and 6ft wider in width to meet 90% of the ordinance requirement.

Josh stated that professionals have indicated that a larger foundation is not feasible and received estimates of $150,000 just for the foundation for a 1500 square foot home.

Arnold Haskell stated he believes the foundation is being determined more by the prefab home and cost of foundation than the actual ability to make the building bigger. He expressed concern that the board will be setting a precedence to allow tiny homes if this building is allowed.

Michael Speaker stated that each case is looked at individually and doesn't set a precedent but future cases may reference previous decisions.

Arnold Haskell disagreed with eliminating the 950 standard, citing the BZA's role and states he is okay with a reduction to 860 square feet (over 90% of the standard) but not a smaller reduction.

Josh stated he was initially caught off guard, basing the design requirements in Brown County explaining he designed an alternative 700 square foot design, but faces challenges finding professionals to confirm its feasibility due to foundation issues.

Arnold Haskell suggested giving the applicant more time to explore a design closer to 800 square feet.

David Flohr pointed out that the applicant applied for a variance based on 560 square feet and it is unfair to ask him to commit to a larger size during the meeting.

Eric Scheidt clarified that denying the current proposal does not prevent the applicant from returning with a different proposal.

Motion: Eric Scheidt made a motion to approve the request stating that all criteria have been met as outlined in the staff report. Mike Speaker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a voice vote of 3 in favor and 2 opposed.

BZA -25-5: Silgas Realty- A request by Silgas Realty for a development standards variance from Zoning Ordinance Section 7.2(Part 4)(A)(1) to waive the requirement to pave a parking lot. The property is located at 2725 North State Road 9, in Clifty Township.

Kyra Behrman presented for the Planning Department. Kyra gives a brief description of the applicant request.

Jim Ogilvy at P.O Box 264 Taylorsville, Indiana represented the applicant.

Arnold Haskell asked if Kyra knows why the ordinance was put in place to not allow gravel as a parking lot and confirms with her the gravel was added after the ordinance change but was never corrected.

Kyra replied it was put in place to prevent dust and debris on public roads.

Arnold asked if there are any residential houses nearby.

Kyra replied it is predominantly farm property in the area, with a few smaller residential lots.

Jim Ogilvy stated the trucking company is dissolving and selling the trucks, so there will be no semi traffic.

Jim gave the board a description of what the building and lot is currently being used for. He stated there is equipment storage in one of the buildings, golf cart sales on the east side with minimal car traffic (mainly in the summer).

David Flohr opened the meeting to public comment.

David Flohr closed the meeting to public comment.

It was determined that if no one is parking on the lot and they are not using it as a parking lot then there is no violation.

The board discussed what allowing the gravel to remain would mean for the future if the business were to be sold to someone who would use it as a parking lot.

Motion: Eric Scheidt made a motion to approve the request. Eric Scheidt stated the following with regard to the findings: The staff report provisional findings one and two have been met. The third criterion is met because there are previous variances and many neighboring properties that have gravel drives. Rodney Finke seconded the motion. The motion passed with a voice vote of 3 in favor and 2 opposed.

BZA-25-8: GFVT II- A request by GFVT II, LLC for a development standards variance from zoning Ordinance Section 6.1(E)(3) to allow the expansion of an accessory structure (a guest building) in a front yard. The property is located at 11490 West Maple Drive, in Ohio Township.

Melissa Begley presented for the Planning Department. Melissa gives a brief description of the applicant's request.

Tan Tran of 11490 West Maple Dr represented the applicant.

David Flohr opened the meeting to public comment.

David Flohr closed the meeting to public comment.

Motion: Mike Speaker made a motion to approve the request stating that all criteria have been met as outlined in the staff report. Rodney Finke seconded the motion. The motion passed with a voice vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the December 15, 2025 meeting.

Motion: Arnold Haskell made a motion to approve the minutes. Eric Scheidt seconded the motion. The motion passed with a voice vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

FINDING OF FACT
Arnold made a motion to approve the findings of fact on BCU 2025 003 Eric seconded; the motion was passed with a voice vote of 4 in favor 0 opposed.

Eric Scheidt, made a motion to approve the findings in fact for BCU 2025 006, Arnold Haskell seconded. The motion was passed with a voice vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

Rodney Finke made a motion to approve conditional use final BCU 2025007, Eric Scheidt seconded. The motion passed with a voice vote of 4 in favor and 0 opposed.

DISCUSSION

None

HEARING OFFICER REPORT
None

ADJOURNMENT: 8:04pm

Motion: Arnold Haskell made a motion to adjourn. Eric Scheidt seconded the motion. The motion passed with a voice vote of 5 in favor and 0 opposed.

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David Flohr, Chairperson

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Eric Scheidt, Secretary