

**BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS DIVISION III**

**October 21, 2025**

**Case Number:** 2025-DV3-032 (Amended)

**Property Address:** 455 Rawles Court (approximate address)

**Location:** Warren Township, Council District #20

**Petitioner:** Watson Properties LLC, by David Gilman

**Current Zoning:** I-2

**Request:** Variance of development standards of the Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to provide for a building addition and parking lot expansion resulting in a building height of 29 feet (maximum 22 feet permitted), a 40-foot front transitional yard (100 feet required), 30 vehicle parking spaces (minimum 49 spaces required), and zero bicycle parking spaces (three required).

**Current Land Use:** Industrial

**Staff Recommendations:** Staff recommends **approval** of the variances related to height and parking and **denial** of the 40-foot setback request.

**Staff Reviewer:** Michael Weigel, Senior Planner

**PETITION HISTORY**

This is the first public hearing for this petition.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends **approval** of the height and parking variances and **denial** of the setback variance.

**PETITION OVERVIEW**

- 455 Rawles Court is currently developed with an industrial structure that was built in 2007 and expanded to its current size of 32,400 square feet by an eastern building addition in 2016 that did not require a variance. The current use appears to be a manufacturing facility related to the sheet metal contractor Coated Metals Group. Surrounding land uses include a gymnastics facility to the west, other light industrial uses to the north, residences to the south and a parcel to the east that is zoned for industrial use but that appears to contain a residential structure.
- Approval of this petition would allow for a second building addition onto the site with a size of 16,680 square feet (the 2016 addition was 9,900 square feet). It would also result in the partial removal of existing parking and landscaping, but with new parking facilities to the southwest of the site. The building and parking additions would be 40 feet from the southern property line.

- Three different Variances of Development Standards would be required to allow for the building addition as shown on plans: (a) the proposed front setback would be 40 feet when the context area and residential zoning district to the south would require a front setback of 100 feet; (b) a building height of 29 feet when industrial development along (or within) a required transitional setback would allow a maximum height of 22 feet; and (c) levels of vehicle and bicycle parking below the minimum required for the proposed use and square footage (1 parking space per 1000 square feet of manufacturing use and 3 bicycle spaces required).
- The original legal notice mailed for this variance also listed variances related to deficient site landscaping and the requirement for the addition of 5 linear feet of sidewalk per 100 feet of building addition (which would require sidewalk along the entirety of the Rawles Avenue frontage to the south of the site). The applicant indicated in writing that they would amend plans to comply with these requests, which were subsequently removed from the variance request. Amended site and landscape plans (absent a Green Factor checklist) were received on October 14<sup>th</sup> and are reflected within the Exhibits below.
- This property is zoned I-2 (Light Industrial) to allow for industries that present minimal risk and typically do not create objectionable characteristics (such as dirt, noise, glare, heat, odor, etc.) that extend beyond the lot lines; this district is often a buffer between protected districts and heavier industrial areas. Similarly, the Comprehensive Plan recommends it to the Light Industrial working typology to allow for industrial production, distribution, and repair uses conducted within enclosed structures and places it within an Industrial Reserve overlay given its proximity to compatible uses. However, the Comprehensive Plan also indicates that light industrial uses would not be recommended land use types when adjacent to a living or mixed-use typology.
- Findings provided by the applicant indicate that the development would maintain a row of mature trees, that the presence of underground utilities and windows on the second floor of the existing structure would preclude a building addition to the southwest, and that several of the homes within the residential zoning areas to the south have large setbacks from Rawles Avenue. Staff would note that property to the east of the subject site appears to be improved with a residential structure that is much closer than properties to the south, and that the site would still support an extension of the building to the south by 80 feet without the need for a front setback variance.
- The proposed industrial manufacturing use would not be likely to be an intense generator of traffic from either personal vehicles or trucks, and the requested height variance would be minor in nature and would match the existing height and architectural design of the existing facility. Therefore, staff would be able to recommend approval of those requested variances.
- However, staff feels that a request for a 60-foot deviation from setback requirements (in addition to the height and parking minimum variances requested) would lead to overdevelopment of the site beyond the size contemplated by the Ordinance. However, given the separation between the subject site and residential areas to the south, staff *would* be supportive of a front setback of 70 feet at the site for the building and parking areas (which would still allow for 150 feet of building expansion while preserving more green spaces and better approximating the requirement).

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Existing Zoning	I-2		
Existing Land Use	Industrial		
Comprehensive Plan	Light Industrial		
Surrounding Context	<b><u>Zoning</u></b>	<b>Surrounding Context</b>	
	North:	I-2	North: Industrial
	South:	D-1	South: Residential
	East:	I-4	East: Residential / Undeveloped
	West:	C-S	West: Commercial
Thoroughfare Plan			
Rawles Avenue	Primary Collector	83-foot existing right-of-way and 80-foot proposed right-of-way	
Rawles Court	Local Street	70-foot existing right-of-way and 50-foot proposed right-of-way	
Context Area	Metro		
Floodway / Floodway Fringe	No		
Overlay	Yes		
Wellfield Protection Area	No		
Site Plan	08/13/2025		
Site Plan (Amended)	10/14/2025		
Elevations	10/14/2025		
Elevations (Amended)	N/A		
Landscape Plan	10/14/2025		
Findings of Fact	08/13/2025		
Findings of Fact (Amended)	N/A		

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ANALYSIS

### Comprehensive Plan

- Marion County Land Use Plan Pattern Book

### Pattern Book / Land Use Plan

- The Pattern Book recommends this site to the Light Industrial working typology to allow for industrial production, distribution, and repair uses conducted within enclosed structures and unlikely to create emissions of light, odor, noise, or vibrations. These typologies are often within industrial parks, and truck traffic should be separated from local or residential traffic. Light industrial land uses are contemplated but removed as recommended land uses when adjacent to living typologies.

- The property is also within an Industrial Reserve overlay intended for area that are prime for industrial development due to factors such as large parcel size, proximity to compatible uses, and/or interstate access.

#### **Red Line / Blue Line / Purple Line TOD Strategic Plan**

- Not Applicable to the Site.

#### **Neighborhood / Area Specific Plan**

- Not Applicable to the Site.

#### **Infill Housing Guidelines**

- Not Applicable to the Site.

#### **Indy Moves**

(Thoroughfare Plan, Pedestrian Plan, Bicycle Master Plan, Greenways Master Plan)

- Not Applicable to the Site.

## ZONING HISTORY

### ZONING HISTORY – SITE

**95-Z-109**, rezoning of 40.0 acres from the I-2-S zoning designation to the D-P zoning designation for 120 single-family residential lots, **withdrawn**.

### ZONING HISTORY – VICINITY

**2020DV1002 ; 405 Rawles Court (north of site)**, Variance of development standards of the Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to provide for industrial development, with a 15-foot west yard and 10-foot south side yard, a five-foot east side yard and a 10-foot rear yard and to provide for outdoor storage of 148% of the gross floor area of the primary building (30-foot side and rear yards required, maximum 25% of gross floor area permitted), **approved**.

**2008DV1066 ; 405 Rawles Court (north of site)**, VARIANCE OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS of the Industrial Zoning Ordinance to provide for a 24,000-square foot building with four loading spaces in front of the established front building line (not permitted), with maneuvering for truck loading and unloading within the right-of-way of Rawles Court (not permitted), and with an outdoor storage area of 1,740 square feet or 28 percent of the building within the I-2-S portion of the property (maximum 1,569.75-square feet or 25 percent of the building area permitted in the I-2-S district), **approved**.

**2007DV3014 ; 9351 Rawles Avenue (southeast of site)**, variance of use and development standards of the Dwelling Districts Zoning Ordinance to legally establish (a) the operation of a guttering contractor with the outdoor storage of four commercial vehicles; (b) a 40-foot tall, 5.786 square foot detached garage; (c) with a seven-foot east side yard setback; (d) being in front of the established front building line set the primary structure; (e) resulting in an accessory building area of 5.785 square feet or 371 percent of the main floor area of the primary dwelling; (f) resulting in an accessory use area of 6.086 square feet or 195.3 percent of the total living area of the primary dwelling; and (g) an approximately 10,000-square foot gravel parking lot and vehicular turn-around in the front yard, **approved**.

**2004DV1022 ; 402 Rawles Court (northwest of site)**, variance of development standards of the Industrial Zoning Ordinance to provide for a 24,960-square foot outdoor storage area equal to 100-percent of the total gross floor area of all enclosed structures and buildings (maximum 25-percent of the total gross floor area of all enclosed buildings and structures permitted for an outdoor storage area, **approved**.

**2003ZON006 ; 9340 Rawles Avenue (west of site)**, rezone from I-2-S to C-S to provide for a gymnastics facility, **approved**.

**2000ZON166 ; 9150 Rawles Avenue (west of site)**, rezoning of 20 acres, being in the I-2-S District to the SU-9 District classification, to provide for a multi-purpose education support complex, containing a transportation center and maintenance facility, a building maintenance shop, warehousing, a laundry facility, meeting rooms and office space, **approved**.



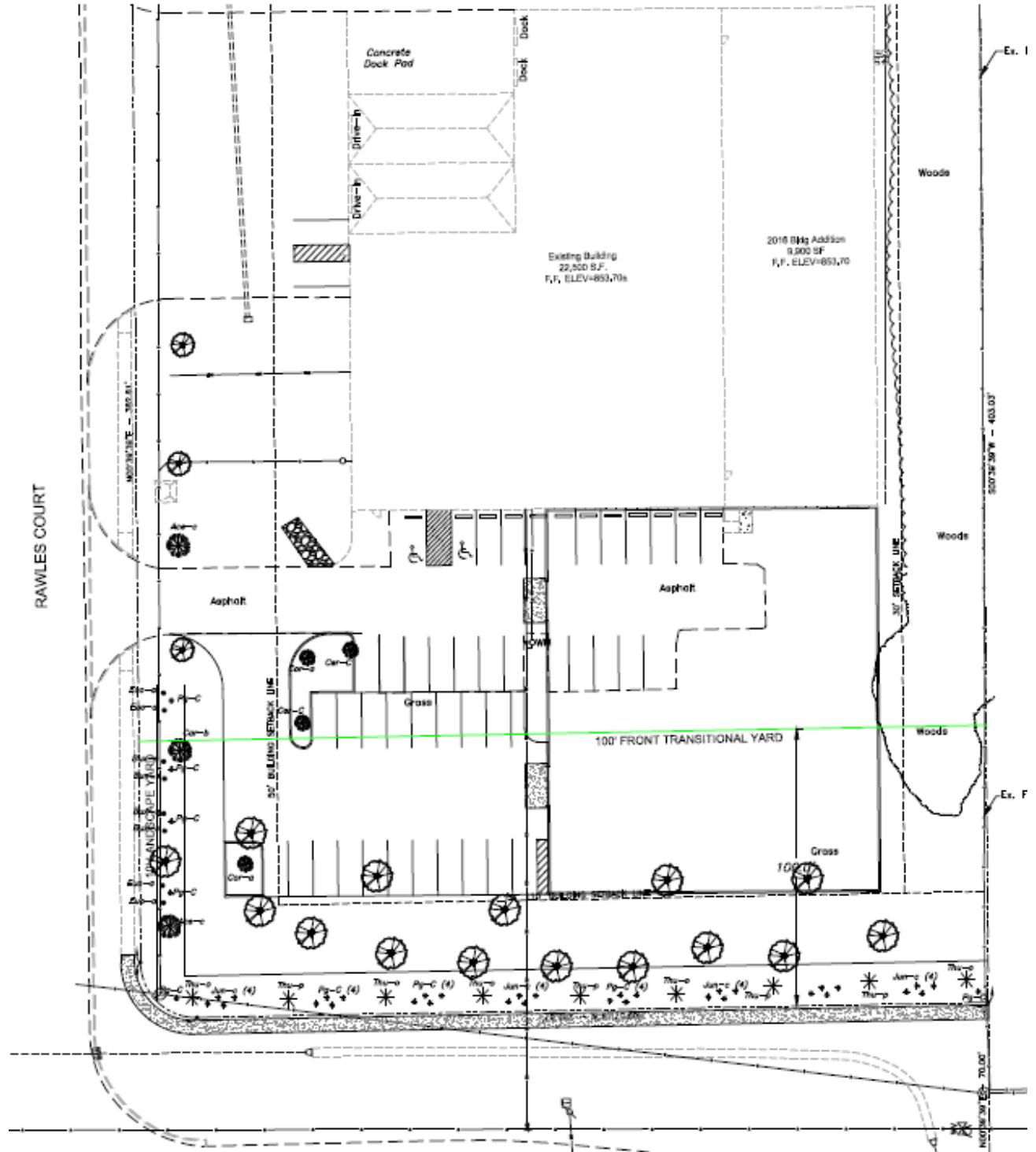
EXHIBITS

2025DV3032 ; Aerial Map



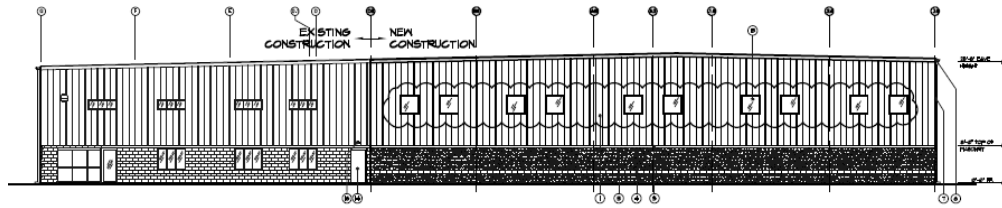
Site plan for the proposed addition to the existing building at 100 Rawles Ave. The plan shows a new 16,680 SF warehouse addition, a 22,000 SF existing building, and a 2016 81kg addition. It includes parking spaces, a 100-year storm detention pond, and various utility lines and easements. The site is bounded by Rawles Court to the west and Rawles Ave to the south. The plan also shows existing structures, including a concrete dock pad and a dock, and various utility lines and easements. The site is zoned DA. The plan includes a north arrow and a scale bar.

**2025DV3032 ; Landscape Plan**

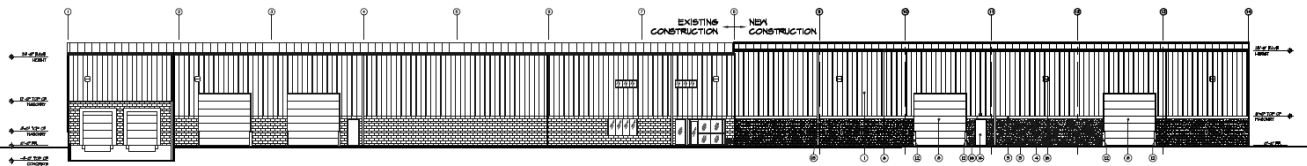




**2025DV3032 ; Southern + Western Elevations**



**2 South Elevation**  
 SCALE = 1/16" = 1'-0"



**3 West Elevation**  
 SCALE = 1/16" = 1'-0"

**2025DV3032 ; Findings of Fact**

1. The grant will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community because:

The reduced front transitional yard will maintain a row of mature trees to screen the building expansion and parking area and additional evergreen trees will be planted to mitigate any visual impact on the general public.

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2. The use or value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner because:

The residential uses directly across from the subject site have front yard setbacks hundreds of feet from the roadway and will not be affected in a negative manner. Additional residential homes cannot be constructed on these lots without a grant of a variance and subdivision plat.

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3. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property because:

The subject site has underground utilities and 2nd story office windows that prevent the expansion along the required 100-ft setback line.

The interior assembly line for the manufacturing of the facility's end product requires the expansion to be in the area as proposed so as not to disrupt the entire building layout.

The expansion is needed to keep the business operating at the current location in Warren Township for the long-term.

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**2025DV3032 ; Photographs**



Photo 1: Subject Site Viewed from Southwest



Photo 2: Subject Site Viewed from South (without existing tree buffer)



**2025DV3032 ; Photographs (continued)**



Photo 3: Subject Site Viewed from West



Photo 4: Subject Site Viewed from South (with existing tree buffer)



**2025DV3032 ; Photographs (continued)**



Photo 5: Adjacent Property to South + Existing Sidewalk on Rawles Court



Photo 6: Rawles Avenue Frontage (no sidewalk)

**2025DV3032 ; Photographs (continued)**



Photo 7: Existing Tree Buffer + Project Area Viewed from Southwest



Photo 8: Adjacent Property + Buffer to East of Subject Site



**2025DV3032 ; Photographs (continued)**



Photo 9: Adjacent Property to Southeast



Photo 10: Adjacent Property to West