

STAFF REPORT

Department of Metropolitan Development Division of Planning Current Planning Section

Case Number: 2022-CZN-869 / 2022-CVR-869
Address: 1631 and 1851 West Thompson Road (*Approximate Addresses*)
Location: Perry Township, Council District #20
Petitioner: Truck County of Indiana, Inc., by Timothy E. Ochs
Request: Rezoning of 21.85 acres from the I-4 (FF) district to the C-7 (FF) district.

Variance of development standards of the Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to provide for a Green Factor score of 0.1730 (Green Factor of 0.22 or higher required), with four free-standing signs (maximum two permitted per frontage) along Thompson Road, with 184 feet and 187 feet of separation between signs (minimum 300 feet required), with two pole signs being 60 feet tall (maximum 20-foot tall pole signs permitted, maximum one pole sign permitted per street frontage).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff **recommends approval** of the rezoning request.

Staff **recommends denial** of the variance of development standards requests.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The following issues were considered in formulating the recommendation:

LAND USE ISSUES

- ◇ This 21.85-acre site, zoned I-4 (FF), is developed with a truck and trailer dealership. It is surrounded by heavy commercial uses to the north, across West Thompson Road, zoned C-S; industrial uses to the south, zoned I-3 and I-4 (FF); undeveloped land, SR 37 right-of-way and industrial uses to the east, zoned I-3 (FF) and I-4, respectively; and industrial uses to the west, zoned I-3 (FF).
- ◇ This site has been the subject of five rezoning petitions beginning in 1983 involving commercial and industrial uses. See Zoning History

(Continued)

REZONING

- ◇ This request would rezone the site from I-4 (FF) District to the C-7 (FF) classification to provide for multi-family development uses. “The C-7 District is designed to provide specific areas for commercial uses which have unusually incompatible features relative to other commercial uses, such as major outdoor storage or display of sizeable merchandise and the outdoor parking and storage of trucks, materials or equipment essential to the operation of these uses. Many of these uses generally are not visited by customers, but rather involve service operations from headquarters with some on-site fabrication of parts. The nature of operation or appearance are more compatible with industrial than retail commercial activities. Because of the character and intensity of these uses, this district should be appropriately located on major commercial arterial thoroughfares and near interstate freeways, but not in close association with those commercial activities involving shopping goods, professional services, restaurants, food merchandising, and the like. Due to the intensity of uses, location of this district should never be adjacent to protected districts.”
- ◇ The Comprehensive Plan recommends Heavy Commercial typology. “The Heavy Commercial typology provides for consumer-oriented general commercial and office uses that tend to exhibit characteristics that are not compatible with less intensive land uses. They are often dominated by exterior operations, sales, and display of goods. Examples include vehicle sales and commercial lumber yards.”
- ◇ The Comprehensive Plan consists of two components that include the Pattern Book and the land use map. The Pattern Book provides a land use classification system that guides the orderly development of the county and protects the character of neighborhoods while also being flexible and adaptable to allow neighborhoods to grow and change over time.
- ◇ The Pattern Book serves as a policy guide as development occurs. Below are the relevant policies related to this request:

Heavy Commercial Uses

- Should be located along an arterial or collector streets

Removed Uses in Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA)

- Heavy Commercial Uses
- Surface Parking
- Structured Parking
- Wind or Solar Farms

(Continued)

STAFF REPORT 2022-CZN-869 / 2022-CVR-869 (Continued)

Overlays

- ◇ This site is also located within an overlay, specifically the Environmentally Sensitive Areas (the 100-year floodplain of White River). “Overlays are used in places where the land uses that are allowed in a typology need to be adjusted. They may be needed because an area is environmentally sensitive, near an airport, or because a certain type of development should be promoted. Overlays can add uses, remove uses, or modify the conditions that are applied to uses in a typology.”
- ◇ The Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ES) Overlay is intended for areas containing high quality woodlands, wetlands, or other natural resources that should be protected. The purpose of this overlay is to prevent or mitigate potential damage to these resources caused by development. This overlay is also appropriate for areas that present an opportunity to create a new environmental asset. This overlay is not intended for the preservation of open space.

Planning Analysis

- ◇ As proposed the rezoning to the C-7 district would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan recommendation of heavy commercial. The Pattern Book, however, indicates that this use should be located on an arterial or collector street and recommends this use be removed when located within an environmentally sensitive area.
- ◇ The uses on this site have existed in some form since 1983 and before the current Zoning Ordinance and the Pattern Book recommendations. Consequently, the lack of being located along an arterial or collector street would be a minor deviation from the Ordinance. Furthermore, it is less than 600 feet from SR 37 to the east, which is classified as a primary arterial street.
- ◇ The Pattern Book also recommends that heavy commercial uses be removed as a recommended land use within an environmentally sensitive area. The environmentally sensitive area on this site is small area located at the northeast corner of the site and east of a retention pond, resulting in minor impact of this use upon the environmental sensitive area overlay.

VARIANCES OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

- ◇ This request would provide for a Green Factor score of 0.1730 when the Ordinance requires a Green Factor of 0.22 or higher. Because no landscape plan was submitted, it is difficult to determine whether additional landscaping could be installed that would, in fact, contribute to the overall existing landscaping. During the site visit staff observed areas along the frontage that could be supplemented with additional landscaping, thereby increasing the Green Factor. Consequently, staff does not support this variance.

(Continued)

STAFF REPORT 2022-CZN-869 / 2022-CVR-869 (Continued)

- ◇ This request would provide for four free-standing signs when the Ordinance allows for a maximum of two signs along a frontage. Additionally, the four proposed signs would not comply with the required minimum separation of 300 feet. If approved the signs would only have a separation of 184 and 187 feet, which would result in proliferation of signs that the Ordinance attempts to control. Doubling the number of permitted signs within a short distance can cause confusion and negatively impact permitted existing signs on surrounding properties.
- ◇ This request would also provide for two 60-foot-tall pole signs that exceed the permitted height of 20 feet and doubles the number of signs that are permitted along a street frontage.
- ◇ Freestanding signs in limited numbers can significantly assist the motoring public identify destinations. However, unnecessarily tall signs without necessary separation tend to distract, confuse and disorient motorists while losing the effectiveness of commercial messages in a harsh sea of poles, colors, logos and words.

GENERAL INFORMATION

EXISTING ZONING AND LAND USE

I-4	Truck and trailer dealership
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SURROUNDING ZONING AND LAND USE

North -	C-S	Heavy commercial uses
South -	I-3 / I-4 (FF)	Industrial uses
East -	I-4	Undeveloped land / SR 37 right-of-way / industrial uses
West -	I-3	Industrial uses

COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

The Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Indianapolis and Marion County (2018) recommends heavy commercial typology.

THOROUGHFARE PLAN

This portion of West Thompson Road is designated in the Marion County Thoroughfare Plan as a local street with an existing 130 / 80-foot right-of-way and a proposed 50-foot right-of-way.

CONTEXT AREA

This site is located within the metro context area.

OVERLAY

This site is located within an environmentally sensitive area (100-year floodplain of Fall Creek)

(Continued)

STAFF REPORT 2022-CZN-869 / 2022-CVR-869 (Continued)

SITE PLAN	File-dated October 27, 2022
SIGN ELEVATIONS	File-dated October 27, 2022
FINDINGS OF FACT	File-dated October 27, 2022

ZONING HISTORY

94-Z-45; 1631 West Thompson Road, requested rezoning of 22.97 acres, being in the I-4-S District, to the C-7 classification to provide for commercial development and uses, **approved**.

89-Z-150; 1851 West Thompson Road, requested rezoning of 19.4 acres, being in the I-4 S/FF District to the C-7 classification to provide for truck and tractor sales and service including parts sales and body repair, **approved**.

84-AP-190; 1851 West Thompson Road, requested modification of commitments approval to permit the relocation of a landscape strip, **approved**.

84-Z-197 1851 West Thompson Road, requested rezoning of 21.9 acres, being in the SU-23 (GSB) Districts, to the I-4 S classification to provide for the expansion of a motor truck terminal, **approved**.

83-Z-241; 1751 West Thompson Road, requested rezoning of 20 acres, being in the I-3-S District, to the I-4 S classification to provide for a motor truck terminal, **approved**.

VICINITY

2022-ZON-045; 1600 West Thompson Road (east of site), requested rezoning of 3.22 acres from the C-4 (FF) district to the I-3 (FF) district to provide for semi-truck/trailer parking, **approved**.

2014-ZON-074; 1600 West Thompson Road (east of site), requested rezoning of 3.22 acres from the I-3-S district to the C-4 district, **approved**.

2009-ZON-057; 5204, 5206, and 5216 South Harding Street (east of site), requested rezoning of 5.33 acres, being in the C-S (W-5) District, to the C-S (W-5) classification to provide for wholesale and retail landscape supply operations and two single-family dwellings, or C-3 uses and/or a hotel, **approved**.

2007-ZON-851 / 2007-APP-851; 5202, 5206, and 5216 South Harding Street (east of site), requested rezoning of 5.33 acres from C-S to C-S to provide for an extended stay hotel and C-3 uses, **approved**.

2007-ZON-051; 5191 Harding Lane (east of site), requested rezoning of 0.933 acre from I-2-S to C-7 to provide for high-intensity commercial uses, **approved**.

(Continued)

STAFF REPORT 2022-CZN-869 / 2022-CVR-869 (Continued)

2005-ZON-060; 1720 West Thompson Road (west of site), requested rezoning of 21.43 acres from the C-S (FF) district to the C-S (FF) district to permit truck sales in addition to existing uses, **approved.**

98-Z-225; 4950 Harding Lane (east of site), requested rezoning of 2.5 acres from C-4 to C-7, **approved.**

98-Z-23; 1421 West Thompson Road (east of site), requested a rezoning of 20.50 acres from I-2-S to C-7, **approved.**

96-Z-231; 5160 South Harding Street (east of site), requested a rezoning of 3.22 acres from I-2-S(FF) to C-7(FF), **approved.**

94-HOV-17; 1720 West Thompson Road (west of site), requested a Variance of Development Standards of the Sign Regulations to provide for three illuminated awning signs, with sign copy displaying entrance and services offered, **approved.**

94-V3-1; 1151 West Thompson Road (east of site), requests a variance of development standards to permit the construction of a warehouse/office with 50.2 feet of public street frontage, **approved.**

93-Z-121; 1421 West Thompson Road (east of site), requests rezoning of 20 acres, being in the I-2-S/FF Districts, to the I-3-S/FF classifications to provide for the construction of a truck terminal, **approved.**

93-V3-21; 4835 Harding Court (east of site), requested a variance of development standards of the Sign Regulations to permit the placement of a 258 square foot pole sign with a total height of 75 feet, **approved.**

92-SE3-5; 1720 West Thompson Road (west of site), requested a Special Exception of the Commercial Zoning Ordinance to provide for more than four arcade machines, **approved.**

92-V1-23; 1245 Harding Court (east of site), requested a variance of development standards of the Sign Regulations to permit the placement of an advertising sign with a total height of 47 feet, **approved.**

90-Z-151; 1420 West Thompson Road (east of site), requested rezoning of 1.0 acre, being in the C-7/FP Districts, to the SU-9/FP classification to provide for the construction of a fire station, **approved.**

90-Z-12; 5202 South Harding Street (east of site), requested rezoning of 5.315 acres from I-2-U to C-S to provide for mixed-use commercial development including the following uses: hotel/motel, office complex, fast-food services, convenience store, restaurant/bar, package liquor store, commercial retail sales, storage building with outdoor storage, truck plaza, gasoline service station, manufactured home sales, bank, general contractors, family entertainment center, movie theater, medical office, drug store, and day care, **approved.**

(Continued)

STAFF REPORT 2022-CZN-869 / 2022-CVR-869 (Continued)

89-UV1-30; 5202 South Harding Street (east of site), requested a variance of use of the Industrial Zoning Ordinance to provide for an addition to an existing building and the construction of five additional buildings for model homes and a sales office, **approved**.

89-Z-128; 1720 West Thompson Road (west of site), requested rezoning of 21.43 acres from the I-3-S (FF) district to the C-S (FF) district to provide for a truck transportation center, **approved**.

89-Z-75; 5003 South Harding Street (east of site), requested rezoning of 5.73 acres, being in the I-2-S District, to the C-4 classification to provide for commercial uses, **approved**.

86-Z-216; 1131 West Thompson Road (east of site), requested rezoning of 7.3 acres, being in the I-2-S/FP Districts, to the I-4-S/FP classifications to provide for a steel fabrication business, **approved**.

86-CV-33; 1131 West Thompson Road (east of site), requested a variance of development standards to permit a steel fabrication business, without required street frontage, **approved**.

86-Z-164; 1421 West Thompson Road (east of site), requested rezoning of 20.68 acres, being in the SU-19 District, to the I-2-S classification to provide for industrial uses, **approved**.

73-Z-37, 1541 West Thompson Road (east of site), requested rezoning of 5.41 acres from the I-3-S district to the C-4 classification, **approved**.

kb



1631 and 1851 West Thompson Road

0 0.03 0.06 0.12 0.18 0.24 Miles

Petition Number _____

**METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HEARING EXAMINER
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS, Division _____
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA**

PETITION FOR VARIANCE OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

FINDINGS OF FACT

III(a)

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

The sites are already nearly entirely covered with buildings or concrete, so no existing trees will be removed or any significant green area destroyed. The decreased Green Space does not cause a safety issue, and the presence of so many trucks and trailers creates an environment where pedestrians are not desirable in close proximity to the areas where they are stored on site.

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:

There are no residential uses within 2,000 feet of the properties, and SR 37, I-69 and I-465 are or will shortly be between the properties and any use other than heavy commercial or industrial uses, which will not be impacted by the reduction in the Green Factor.

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

Other than employee vehicles, the site is heavily and nearly exclusively used for trucks, many of which are 72 feet long and require extensive turning radius. The existing site is not large enough to allow internal planting areas that would have satisfied the Green Factor because they would have interfered with the necessary parking areas and the turning radii needed for many of the trucks and trailers.

DECISION

IT IS THEREFORE the decision of this body that this VARIANCE petition is APPROVED.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20 ____

Petition Number _____

**METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HEARING EXAMINER
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS, Division _____
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA**

PETITION FOR VARIANCE OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

FINDINGS OF FACT

I(a)

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

The addition of one free standing sign to a property that has approximately 655 feet of frontage will not impact detrimentally impact the public. Given the location of all three signs, none of the signs will cause any sight obstructions to drivers. Moreover, there are no residential uses within 2,000 feet of the signs, and SR 37, I-69 and I-465 are between the signs and any use other than heavy commercial or industrial uses. The signs will not contain any offensive information or material.

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:

There are no residential uses within 2,000 feet of the signs, and SR 37, I-69 and I-465 are between the signs and any use other than heavy commercial or industrial uses, which will not be impacted by the presence of the signs. The signs make no noise, odor, dust or vibration.

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

This is an existing truck parts and repair operation that was intentionally located off of State Road 37, close to I-465. The construction of I-69 over a half mile to the west and the relegation of SR 37 to a local street causes new signage that is visible from the Interstates to be necessary. The two monument signs are necessary because they provide directions to truck drivers entering the site at each access point. These monument signs, however, are not adequate to advertise the business to anyone other than a truck that has already decided to visit the business, which means a third sign is needed.

DECISION

IT IS THEREFORE the decision of this body that this VARIANCE petition is APPROVED.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20 _____

Petition Number _____

**METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HEARING EXAMINER
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS, Division _____
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA**

PETITION FOR VARIANCE OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

FINDINGS OF FACT

I(b)

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

The two signs located within 187 feet of each other are very different signs. One will be visible only when on Thompson Road and the other when a drive is located further away, which means they will not cause a conflict to drivers. Moreover, none of the signs will cause any sight obstructions to drivers. The signs will not contain any offensive information or material.

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:

There are no residential uses within 2,000 feet of the signs, and SR 37, I-69 and I-465 are between the signs and any use other than heavy commercial or industrial uses, which will not be impacted by the presence of the signs. The signs make no noise, odor, dust or vibration.

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

This is an existing truck parts and repair operation that was intentionally located off of State Road 37, close to I-465. The construction of I-69 over a half mile to the west and the relegation of SR 37 to a local street causes new signage that is visible from the Interstates to be necessary. The two monument signs are necessary because they provide directions to truck drivers entering the site at each access point. These monument signs, however, are not adequate to advertise the business to anyone other than a truck that has already decided to visit the business, which means a third sign is needed. The monument signs must be at the entrances, given their content, and the pole sign has been moved as far away from the closest monument sign as possible.

DECISION

IT IS THEREFORE the decision of this body that this VARIANCE petition is APPROVED.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20 ____

Petition Number _____

**METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HEARING EXAMINER
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS, Division _____
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA**

PETITION FOR VARIANCE OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

FINDINGS OF FACT

I(c)

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

The increased height of the sign does not impact the public's health, safety, welfare or convenience. The signs will not cause any sight obstructions to drivers, nor will it contain any offensive information or material.

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:

There are no residential uses within 2,000 feet of the sign, and SR 37, I-69 and I-465 are between the signs and any use other than heavy commercial or industrial uses, which will not be impacted by the presence of the signs. The signs make no noise, odor, dust or vibration.

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

This is an existing truck parts and repair operation that was intentionally located off of State Road 37, close to I-465. The construction of I-69 over a half mile to the west and the relegation of SR 37 to a local street causes new signage that is visible from the Interstates to be necessary. A sign that complied with the existing height limitation would not be visible from the nearby interstates. The target audience of the business are those persons who use the interstates, especially those that unexpectedly require parts or service to repair of truck.

DECISION

IT IS THEREFORE the decision of this body that this VARIANCE petition is APPROVED.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20 ____

Petition Number _____

**METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
HEARING EXAMINER
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS, Division _____
OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA**

PETITION FOR VARIANCE OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

FINDINGS OF FACT

11(a)

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

The increased height of the sign does not impact the public's health, safety, welfare or convenience. The signs will not cause any sight obstructions to drivers, nor will it contain any offensive information or material.

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:

There are no residential uses within 2,000 feet of the sign, and SR 37, I-69 and I-465 are between the signs and any use other than heavy commercial or industrial uses, which will not be impacted by the presence of the signs. The signs make no noise, odor, dust or vibration.

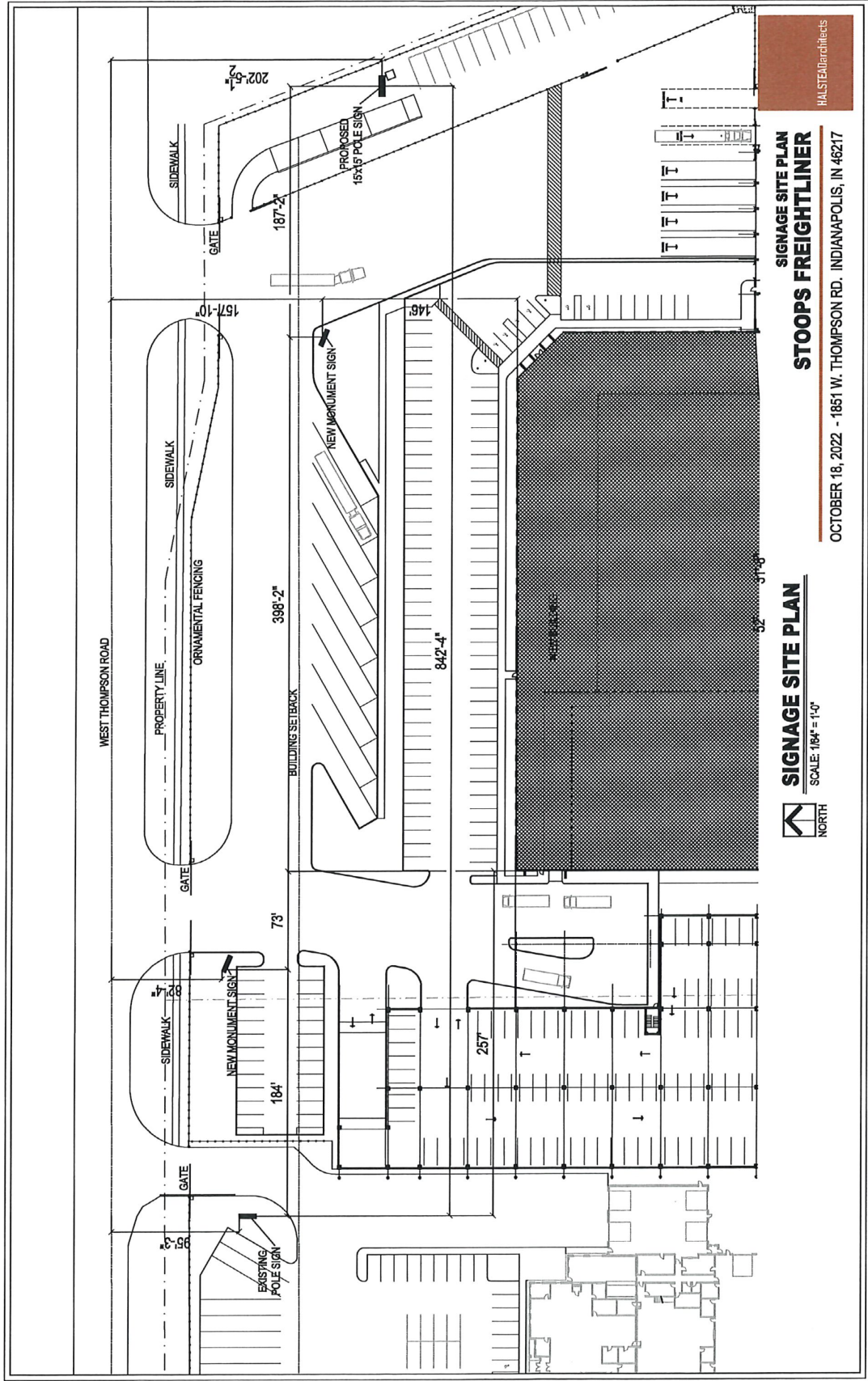
3. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property because:

This is an existing truck parts and repair operation that was intentionally located off of State Road 37, close to I-465. The construction of I-69 over a half mile to the west and the relegation of SR 37 to a local street causes new signage that is visible from the Interstates to be necessary. A sign that complied with the existing height limitation would not be visible from the nearby interstates, and online advertisement is not adequate as the sole means of exposure.

DECISION

IT IS THEREFORE the decision of this body that this VARIANCE petition is APPROVED.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 20 ____



HALSTEAD architects

SIGNAGE SITE PLAN
STOOPS FREIGHTLINER

OCTOBER 18, 2022 - 1851 W. THOMPSON RD. INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46217

SIGNAGE SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"
NORTH

[illegible]

OCTOBER 3, 2022 - 1851 M

[illegible]

60' Pole Sign

LStoops
LAW OFFICES
ATTORNEYS AT LAW





Location: Stoops - Indianapolis
Address: 1851 W. Thompson Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46217
Project: Exterior Signage - Trailers Pole Sign

Revision: 1 Date: 06.24.2022

DIMENSIONS
Sign Face: 20' x 8' Sign Face Sq. Ft.: 160
Overall Height: 60'

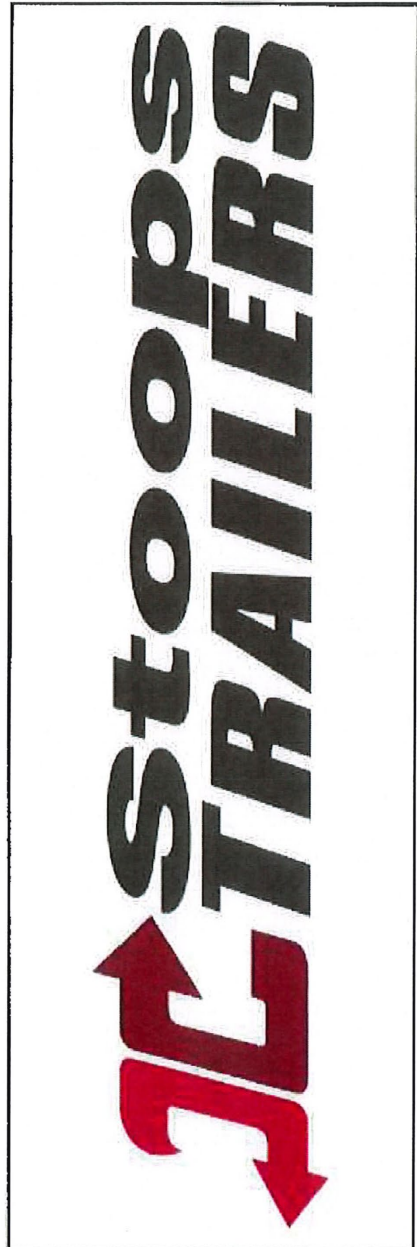
SIGN DESCRIPTION

Colors Used:




	PMS 186 C
	PMS 202 C
	Black
	White

- 2 Flex Faces
- Internally Illuminated LED
- Double Sided

SCALED DRAWING OF SIGN FACE



Location: <u>Stoops - Indianapolis</u>	Revision: <u>3</u>	Date: <u>10.10.2022</u>
Address: <u>1625 W. Thompson Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46217</u>	DIMENSIONS	
Project: <u>Exterior Signage - Freightliner Pole Sign</u>	Sign Face: <u>15' w x 15' h</u>	Sign Face Sq. Ft.: <u>225</u>
	Overall Height: <u>60'</u>	

SIGN DESCRIPTION	
Colors Used:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 2 Flex Faces▪ Internally Illuminated LED▪ Double Sided
 PMS 485 C	
 Black	
 White	



SCALED DRAWING OF
SIGN FACE





Location: Stoops - Indianapolis
Address: 1625 W. Thompson Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46217
Project: Exterior Signage - Monument Sign

Revision: 4 Date: 10.17.2022

DIMENSIONS
Sign Face: 6' w x 6' h Sign Face Sq. Ft.: 36
Overall Height: 8' with base

SIGN DESCRIPTION

Colors Used:

	PMS 186 C
	PMS 202 C
	Black
	PMS 9043 C

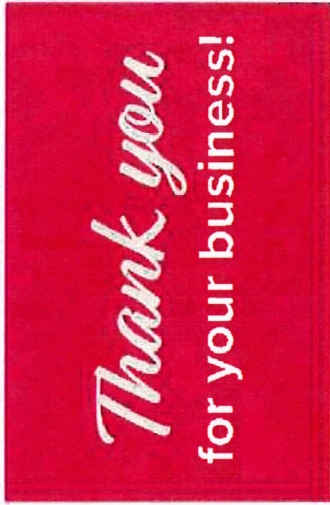
- 2 Flex Faces
- Internally Illuminated LED
- Double Sided

SCALED DRAWING OF SIGN FACE

FRONT



BACK







Location: Stoops - Indianapolis
Address: 1625 W. Thompson Rd., Indianapolis, IN 46217
Project: Exterior Signage - Monument Sign

Revision: 3 Date: 10.10.2022

DIMENSIONS
Sign Face: 6' w x 6' h Sign Face Sq. Ft.: 36
Overall Height: 8' with base

SIGN DESCRIPTION

Colors Used:

	PMS 186 C
	PMS 202 C
	Black
	PMS 9043 C

- 2 Flex Faces
- Internally Illuminated LED
- Double Sided

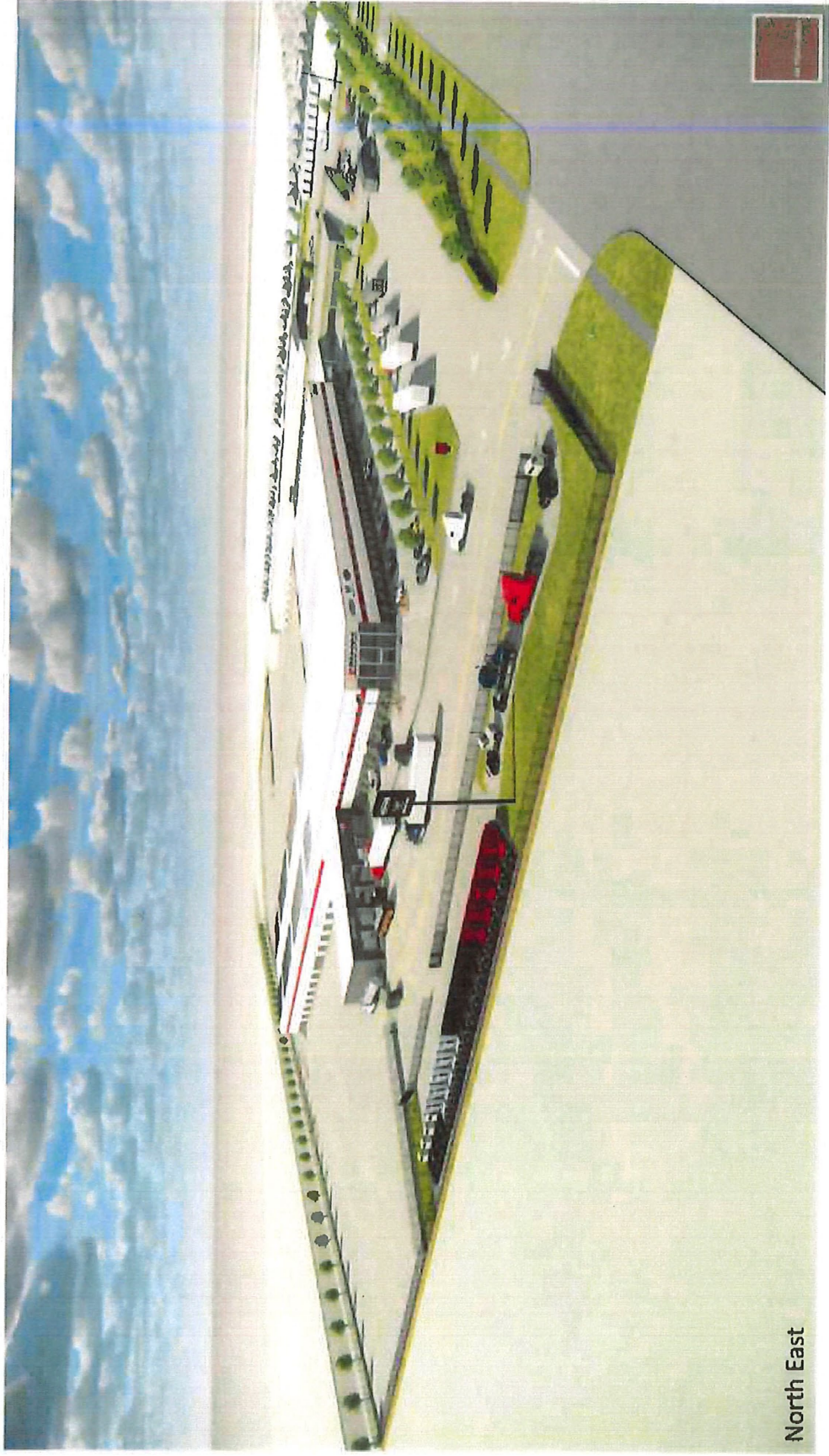
SCALED DRAWING OF SIGN FACE

FRONT



BACK





North East



View looking west along West Thompson Road



View looking west along West Thompson Road



View looking east on West Thompson Road



View looking east along West Thompson Road



View of site looking south



View from site looking southeast



View of site looking southwest



View of site looking south



View of site looking southeast



View from site looking northeast across West Thompson Road



View from site looking northwest across West Thompson Road



View from site looking north across West Thompson Road