



BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS DIVISION III

January 20, 2026

Case Number: 2025-UV3-035
Address: 10211 Hidden Meadow Lane (approximate address)
Location: Warren Township, Council District #20
Zoning: D-A (TOD)
Petitioner: Sally & Justin Groff
Request: Variance of use of the Consolidated Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance to provide for the operation of a landscape contractor, subject to the filed plan of operation (not permitted).

Current Land Use: Single Family Dwelling

Staff Reviewer: Robert Uhlenhake, Senior Planner

PETITION HISTORY

This petition was previously automatically continued by a registered neighborhood organization from the November 25, 2025, hearing, to the December 16, 2025, hearing.

This petition was then automatically continued by the petitioner from the December 16, 2025, hearing to the January 20, 2026, hearing.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **denial** of this petition.

PETITION OVERVIEW

- ◊ The request would provide for the operation of a landscaping contractor, subject to the plan of operation which includes the storage of eight commercial vehicles and three commercial trailers within the front yard.
- ◊ The purpose of the D-A district is to provide for a variety of agricultural enterprises, with a secondary intent for the development of large estate or rural single-family dwellings. Because no agricultural enterprise exists on the subject site, development of the site would be considered a large estate or rural single-family dwelling.
- ◊ The Comprehensive Plan recommends suburban neighborhood uses for the subject site which recommends single-family housing, interspersed with attached and multifamily housing where appropriate. This suburban neighborhood recommendation also supports a variety of neighborhood-serving businesses, institutions, and amenities. This does not include the proposed use with is a regional commercial use.

- ◊ The proposed use would be permitted in the C-5, General Commercial Zoning District. The C-5 district is designed to provide areas for those retail sales and service functions whose operations are typically characterized by automobiles, outdoor display, or sales of merchandise; by major repair of motor vehicles; by outdoor commercial amusement and recreational activities; or by activities or operations conducted in buildings or structures not completely enclosed. The types of uses found in this district tend to be outdoor functions, brightly lit, noisy, etc. Therefore, to provide a location where such uses can operate in harmony with the vicinity, the C-5 district should be located on select heavy commercial thoroughfares and should avoid locating adjacent to protected districts.
- ◊ Given the increase in intensity between the existing zoning and the proposed use, including the number of commercial vehicles as outdoor storage, approval of this request would over-develop the site and facilitate the intrusion of heavy commercial uses into an established residential rural neighborhood. The request would encourage additional encroachment, in a manner violating the development norms and residential aesthetics of the street, and squarely deviating from the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.
- ◊ The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance does not constitute a practical difficulty for the property, since the site is zoned D-A and could be used by any number of uses permitted, by right, in the D-A zoning classification. Any practical difficulty is self-imposed by the desire to use the site for operation of a construction contractor, including the on-site storage of 11 commercial vehicles associated with the use.
- ◊ The subject site is similar in size to other nearby properties that share the same private lane and are able to follow the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance without the need for variances. Therefore, the Comprehensive Plan recommendation should not be disregarded, nor of the clearly residential nature of the surrounding area. For these reasons, staff recommends its denial.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Existing Zoning	D-A																	
Existing Land Use	Single Family Dwelling																	
Comprehensive Plan	Suburban Neighborhood																	
Overlay	No																	
Surrounding Context	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Zoning</th> <th>Surrounding Context</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>North:</td> <td>D-A</td> <td>Linear Park – Pennsy Trail</td> </tr> <tr> <td>South:</td> <td>D-A / SU-3</td> <td>Single-Family Dwelling / Golf Practice Range</td> </tr> <tr> <td>East:</td> <td>D-A</td> <td>Single-Family Dwelling</td> </tr> <tr> <td>West:</td> <td>D-A</td> <td>Single-Family Dwelling</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Zoning	Surrounding Context	North:	D-A	Linear Park – Pennsy Trail	South:	D-A / SU-3	Single-Family Dwelling / Golf Practice Range	East:	D-A	Single-Family Dwelling	West:	D-A	Single-Family Dwelling
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Thoroughfare Plan	Hidden Meadow Lane	Private Street	Not indicated in the Thoroughfare Plan.															

Context Area	Metro
Floodway / Floodway Fringe	N/A
Wellfield Protection Area	No
Elevations	N/A
Landscape Plan	N/A
Plan of Operation	October 6, 2025
Site Plan	March 19, 2024
Commitments	Proposed
Findings of Fact	March 19, 2024

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ANALYSIS

Comprehensive Plan

- The Comprehensive Plan recommends Suburban Neighborhood uses.

Pattern Book / Land Use Plan

- The Marion County Land Use Plan Pattern Book recommends the Suburban typology for this site. This typology is predominantly made up of single-family housing but is interspersed with attached and multifamily housing where appropriate. This typology should be supported by a variety of neighborhood-serving businesses, institutions, and amenities. Natural Corridors and natural features such as stream corridors, wetlands, and woodlands should be treated as focal points or organizing systems for development. Streets should be well-connected, and amenities should be treated as landmarks that enhance navigability of the development. This typology generally has a residential density of 1 to 5 dwelling units per acre, but a higher density is recommended if the development is within a quarter mile of a frequent transit line, greenway, or park.

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

94-Z-53; 271 South Mitthoefer Road (south of site), requested the Rezoning of 12 acres from the D-A District to the SU-3 classification to provide for a golf practice range, **approved**.

89-UV2-36; 131 South Mitthoefer Road / 10211 Hidden Meadow Lane (includes subject site), requested a Variance of Use and Development Standards to provide for the construction of two additional single-family dwellings and a building for agricultural and personal storage on a lot with 50 feet of street frontage, **granted**.

83-V1-61; 131 South Mitthoefer Road (west of site), requested a Variance of Development Standards to provide for a single-family dwelling on 4.619 acres, **granted**.

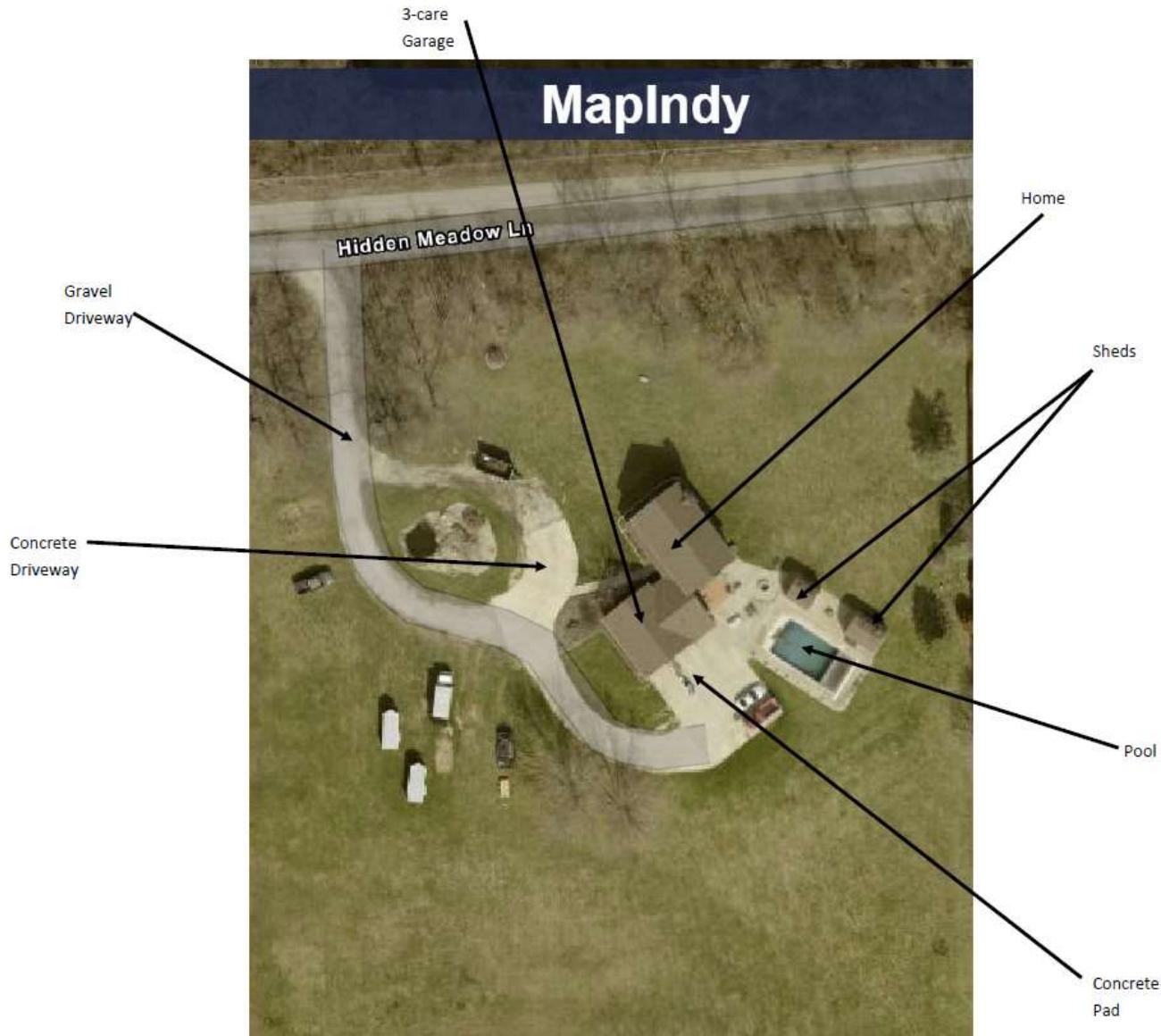
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EXHIBITS

Location Map



Site Plan





Plan Of Operation – file dated October 6, 2025

Plan of Operation – Just-IN-Time Lawn Care

Location: 10211 Hidden Meadow Lane, Indianapolis, IN 46229

Business Description:

Just-IN-Time Lawn Care is a small lawn and landscape maintenance company that provides mowing, trimming, landscape upkeep, and seasonal maintenance services for residential and commercial clients throughout the greater Indianapolis area. The proposed variance would allow administrative operations and limited storage of business vehicles and trailers at the above address.

Facilities:

- Small administrative office for scheduling, billing, and record-keeping.
- Secure parking for business vehicles and trailers.
- Future plan: construction of a storage structure for trailers and equipment (no materials stored on-site).
- No bulk storage of mulch, topsoil, rock, or other landscaping materials will take place on the property.

Employees:

- Approximately 20 employees.
- Work is performed off-site at client locations; employees typically report in the morning and depart with crews.

Vehicles & Trailers:

- 8 company vehicles.
- 3 trailers for lawn and landscape equipment.
- Vehicles are standard pickup trucks and work trailers, with no heavy industrial equipment stored on-site.

Security Provisions:

- Vehicles and trailers secured on-site during non-business hours.
- Planned storage structure will provide secure housing for trailers and equipment.
- Security lighting on property perimeter as needed, with consideration for neighborhood impact.

Hazardous or Explosive Materials:

- None will be stored on-site.
- Routine lawn and landscape equipment (mowers, trimmers, blowers) powered by small amounts of standard gasoline/oil mix only.

Hours of Operation:

- Monday through Friday: 7:30 AM – 6:00 PM
- Saturday: 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM (as needed during peak season)
- No routine operations on Sundays, except emergency services if required by contract.

Community Impact:

- Business operations will be primarily off-site, minimizing noise and traffic at the property.
- No public assembly, customer foot traffic, or retail activity on-site.
- Commitment to maintaining the property in a clean, professional, and residentially compatible condition.

Findings of Fact (Findings 1 and 2 not provided at time of publication)

- 3) The need for the variance arises from some condition peculiar to the property involved because:
 - **Unique operational requirements:** The business requires limited space for parking a small fleet of vehicles and trailers (8 vehicles and 3 trailers) and secure storage of equipment. This type of use does not fit neatly into traditional residential or commercial zoning categories.
 - **Location suitability:** The property at 10211 Hidden Meadow Lane offers adequate lot size and layout to accommodate equipment parking and administrative functions without altering the residential character or impacting neighbors. Not all residential properties could provide this balance.
 - **Community-serving role:** Unlike typical residential properties, this site provides an opportunity to house a local service-based business that directly supports the neighborhood by maintaining lawns, landscapes, and overall curb appeal in the surrounding area.
 - **No material storage requirement:** The business does not stockpile bulk mulch, soil, or rock on-site, eliminating many of the concerns that would normally make a property unsuitable for light commercial use. This makes the site uniquely capable of supporting this variance.
 - **Disproportionate restriction without variance:** Applying strict residential-only standards to this particular property would unnecessarily restrict its ability to serve as both a home base for a community business and as a maintained residential property, despite its capacity to accommodate both safely and effectively.

- 4) The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance constitutes an unusual and unnecessary hardship if applied to the property for which the variance is sought because:
 - **Unique property use:** Just-IN-Time Lawn Care is a service-based business that performs nearly all of its operations off-site at client properties. The property in question would only serve as an administrative office and secure storage area, which is a low-impact use not contemplated under the strict residential zoning classification.
 - **Lack of practical alternatives:** Without the variance, the company would be forced to secure a separate commercial property at significant additional cost, despite the fact that the proposed use creates little to no disturbance to the surrounding neighborhood. This creates a financial and operational hardship not in line with the minimal impact the business will have at this location.
 - **Efficient land use:** The property can reasonably accommodate small-scale business functions without altering its residential character or creating adverse impacts. Requiring full compliance with commercial zoning standards would be disproportionate to the actual level of activity on-site.

- **Community benefit:** Allowing the variance enables the company to remain based in the community it serves, creating local jobs, supporting area homeowners and businesses, and maintaining the property in good condition — all of which are in the public interest.

5) The grant does not interfere substantially with the comprehensive plan because:

- **Consistency with land-use goals:** The comprehensive plan is intended to balance growth, preserve neighborhood character, and support small businesses. Just-IN-Time Lawn Care's limited on-site operations align with these goals by maintaining a residential appearance while supporting local economic activity.
- **Minimal community impact:** The proposed variance does not introduce high-traffic commercial activity, material storage yards, or industrial uses. Instead, it allows for a small-scale, service-oriented business that is compatible with the surrounding residential environment.
- **Supports local employment:** By permitting administrative and storage functions at this location, the variance helps sustain jobs for approximately 20 employees and supports the delivery of essential lawn and landscape services to residents and businesses in the area.
- **Preservation of property values:** The property will continue to be maintained to a high standard, with no adverse effects on nearby property values or the visual character of the neighborhood.
- **Efficient use of resources:** Granting this variance avoids unnecessary relocation to more costly commercial space when the property can reasonably and responsibly accommodate the business, reflecting a practical and efficient approach consistent with community planning principles.

Photographs



Subject site single family dwelling with commercial trailer, looking southeast



Additional photo of commercial trailer on site.



Multiple Commercial Contractor trucks and trailers on site, parking in the front yard grass, looking west.



Additional photo of multiple Commercial Contractor trucks and trailers on site, parking in the front yard grass, looking south.



Gravel driveway entrance to subject site, looking south.



Primary access to subject site, Hidden Meadow Lane, a twelve-foot wide private street, adjacent to the Pennsy Trail, looking east.