# Memorandum

**DATE:** September 15, 2021

**TO:** Village of Poplar Grove Planning and Zoning Commission

**FROM:** Gina DelRose, Community Development Planner

**SUBJECT:** Staff advisory memo for case: 2021-05; Poplar Grove United Methodist Church, 105 East Grove Street (SU)

**REQUEST AND LOCATION:**
The applicant and the property owner, Poplar Grove United Methodist Church, 105 East Grove Street, Poplar Grove, IL 61065 is requesting a special use pursuant to the Poplar Grove Zoning Ordinance, Table 8-11-5(C)(1) Permitted Signs by Type and Section 8-5-7 Special Uses. Specifically, the applicant is requesting a special use to have an animated sign at 105 East Grove Street with the GB, General Business District (pending rezoning) on approximately 5.5 acres of land (PIN: 04-19-101-057). The property is irregular in shape and developed with a church and parking area.

**BACKGROUND:**
The subject property is approximately 5.5 acres in size located southeast of North State Street (Poplar Grove Road) and East Grove Street (Illinois Route 173). The church was constructed on the large parcel in 1999. The property, along with two other parcels are currently being petitioned for a map amendment to the general business district in order to allow for the requested special use.

The proposed animated sign would measure 2'4" x 7'10.5" and would replace the changeable copy portion of the existing sign. The animated sign would provide the church the ability to advertise services, events and community outreach efforts. Conditions of approval regulating how messages are displayed will reduce potential negative impacts the sign may create.

The adjacent property owners were sent certified notices on August 31, 2021 and the green cards have been returned. The request was published in the Boone County Journal on September 3, 2021. The appropriate village staff and other agencies were notified on August 30, 2021. No objections from the agencies were received.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:**
Per Section 8-5-7(D) of the Village of Poplar Grove Zoning Ordinance, the criteria for granting a Special Use Permit are as follows:

**A.** **Findings: The establishment, maintenance or operation of the special use would not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort or general welfare.**

The animated sign will replace the existing changeable copy portion of the church's sign. Although animated signage can be distracting due to lighting levels and graphic displays, conditions of approval placed on the special use will reduce the potential negative impacts of the animated sign.

Churches often provide services that can be beneficial to the community. Various support groups, fundraisers and informational gatherings can be housed within a Church and notifying the community of such events can be difficult

B. **Findings: The special use would not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted or substantially diminish or impair property values within the neighborhood.**

Animated signage is becoming more and more popular with institutional uses due to their wide variety of offerings to the community. The ability to inform the community of offerings that could be beneficial to them would be advantageous to nearby property.

C. **Findings: The establishment of the special use will not impede the normal or orderly development and improvements of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.**

There are older residences along East Grove Street in addition to Bennett's Crossing which is located east of the property) and platted in 1995. The sign will be located along East Grove Street (Illinois Route 173) which is anticipated to develop with a mix of commercial uses and commercial signage. The planning staff is not aware of any development that was deterred due to a nearby animated sign.

D. **Findings: Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or necessary facilities will be provided.**

The property is currently developed with a church and parking area. It is adequately served by utilities. The special use would require a sign face change, but not new construction.

E. **Findings: Adequate measures have been taken to provide ingress or egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.**

The property is currently developed with adequate ingress and egress. The animated sign will replace an existing changeable copy sign which has not had a negative impact on traffic in the past.

F. **Findings: The special use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the districts in which it is located.**

The special use will be required to conform to all the applicable regulations of the Zoning Ordinance, the Subdivision Ordinance, all other regulations and to any conditions of approval enacted by the Village Board.

**RECOMMENDATION:**
The planning staff recommends approval of case 2021-05 subject to following conditions:

1. The animated portion of the sign shall be in substantial conformance with the picture submitted.

2. Messages displayed within the animated portion of the sign shall be static for a minimum of five seconds.

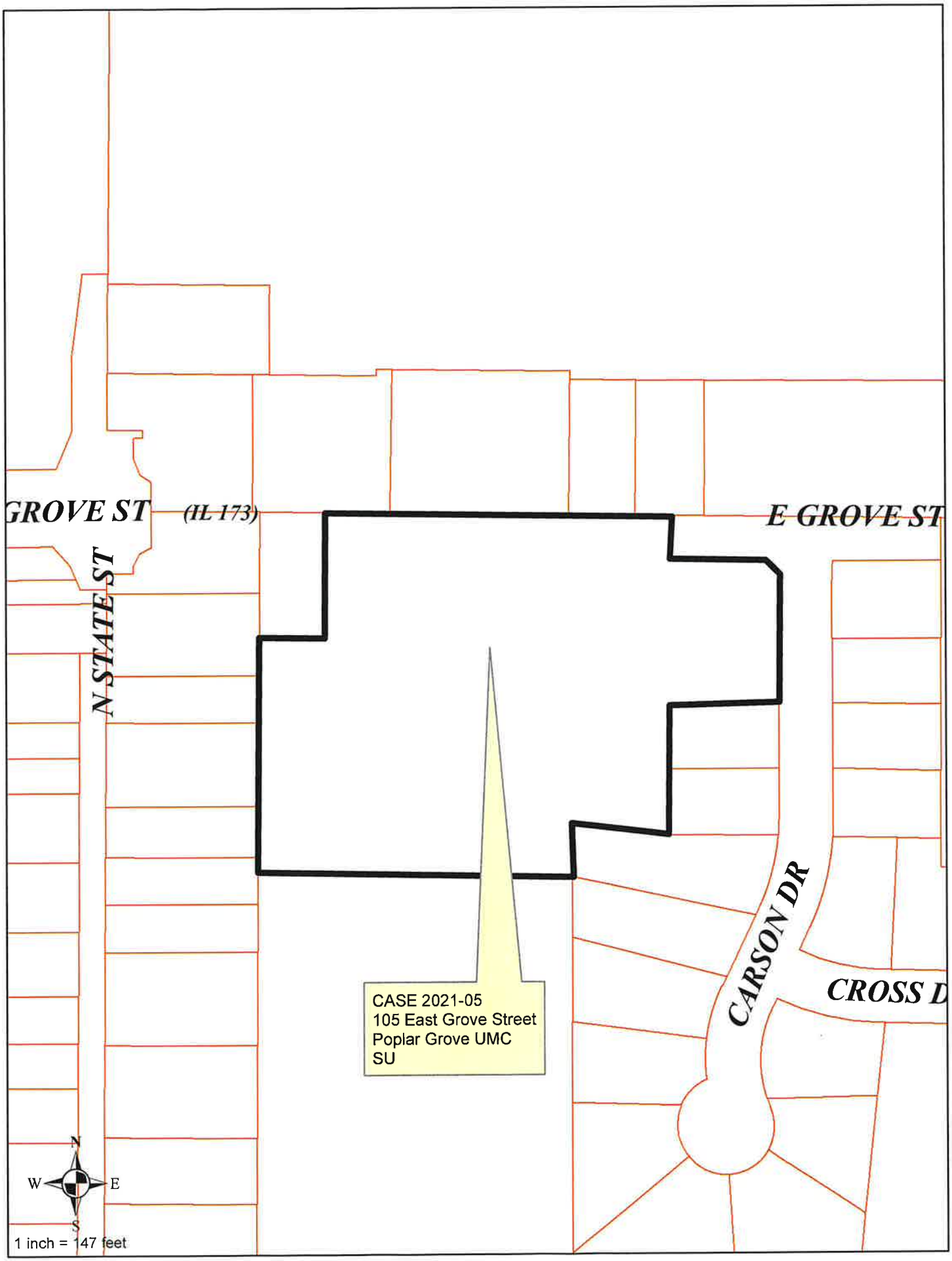
3. Illumination levels from the sign shall not exceed 0.5 footcandles at the property line.

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION/VILLAGE BOARD ACTION**

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall make and forward findings of fact as to the compliance of the proposed special use with the standards and make a recommendation to the Village Board. The Village Board shall review the findings and recommendation and may accept or reject the findings and recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission in whole or in part; or the Village Board may refer the matter back to the Planning and Zoning Commission for further consideration. Any approval shall be considered the approval of a unique request and not be construed as precedent for any other proposed special use.

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Location Map submitted by Planning Staff.
2. Aerial Photo submitted by Planning Staff.
3. Narrative submitted by the Applicant.
4. Site Plan submitted by the Applicant.
5. Pictures of the Existing Sign submitted by the Applicant.
6. Proposed Sign submitted by the Applicant.
7. NRI 1653 submitted by the Boone County Soil and Water Conservation District, Teagan Duffy, August 30, 2021.
8. Letter from Boone County Health Department, Amanda Mehl, September 10, 2021.


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(IL 173)
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CASE 2021-05
105 East Grove Street
Poplar Grove UMC
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1 inch = 147 feet


CASE 2021-05
105 East Grove Street
Poplar Grove UMC
SU
CARSON DR
CARSON DR
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S
1 inch = 92 feet

Saavedra Group Architects

August 23, 2021

Village of Poplar Grove
Poplar Grove Village Hall
200 North Hill Street
Poplar Grove, Illinois 61065

Re: Application for Zoning Change
Poplar Grove United Methodist Church
PIN #s 04-19-101-057, 04-19-101-001, and 04-19-101-014
Change from R1- Single Family Residential District to GB – General Business District

Dear Planning Department,

Poplar Grove United Methodist Church is in the process of changing our current sign on 105 East Grove Street in Poplar Grove, Illinois, from a manually changed message to an electronically change message to be done wireless. These types of signs provide a better way to give the message we would like to give to our community and congregants. However, our current zoning R1 – Single Family Residential District does not allow LED or Electronic Signs.

For us to be allowed to have an electronic sign on our property on 105 East Grove St, we need to change the zoning of our property from R1-Single Family Residential District to GB-General Business District and then apply for a Special Use in the GB – General Business District to comply with the regulations of the zoning and Planning Department of the Village of Poplar Grove.

The following are our reasons why we are asking that our zoning change and the special use be granted to our church:

1. In order to change our message, the current sign requires that a person must manually select all the individual letters for each word of the new message and keep them in order of placement.

2. The current sign is over fifteen years old. The hydraulic arms that lift and hold up the glass door no longer work. Stronger winds have in various occasions open the glass door and have caused more damage to the sign.

3. As a result of the hydraulic arms not functioning, the individual changing the message must sit or stand in a position to hold the glass up with their head. The alternative is to find an individual to stand at the sign with them and hold the glass. Neither of these is safe on a windy day.

4. There are messages we would like to make known to the community driving or walking by that we cannot do on our current sign limiting us in the messages we as a church provide to our community.

5. We have selected an electronic sign that fits exactly on the same area and opening of our current sign. There will be no need to change our current sign structure. This sign will provide our church sufficient flexibility and a different way to transmit our message.

6. Finding a volunteer to change this message is becoming more difficult.

7. The current building for Poplar Grove United Methodist Church was built in 1999. At that time, electronic signs were very cumbersome and did not provide the features these signs provide today. The Board of Trustees of PGUMC have been the lighting systems in the building over to LED. Most of the lighting on the interior has been completed from conventional to LED. Now we are focusing our efforts in converting the exterior light systems. In this effort we have already converted the parking lights to LED and the manual sign is the next step in this conversion.

8. The location of the electronic sign will be at the same location of our current sign. This sign is located between xxx feet to the closet residential property across Route 173 to xxx feet to the residences on Route 173 , North State Street, and Carson Drive.

Based on the points stated above, we would like to ask the Planning Department of the Village of Poplar Grove to grant our request to change our current R1- Single Family Residential District zoning to GB – General Business District and grant us with the Special Use to allow our site to have an electronic sign to transmit our message to our congregation and our community.

If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us with your concerns or questions.

Sincerely,

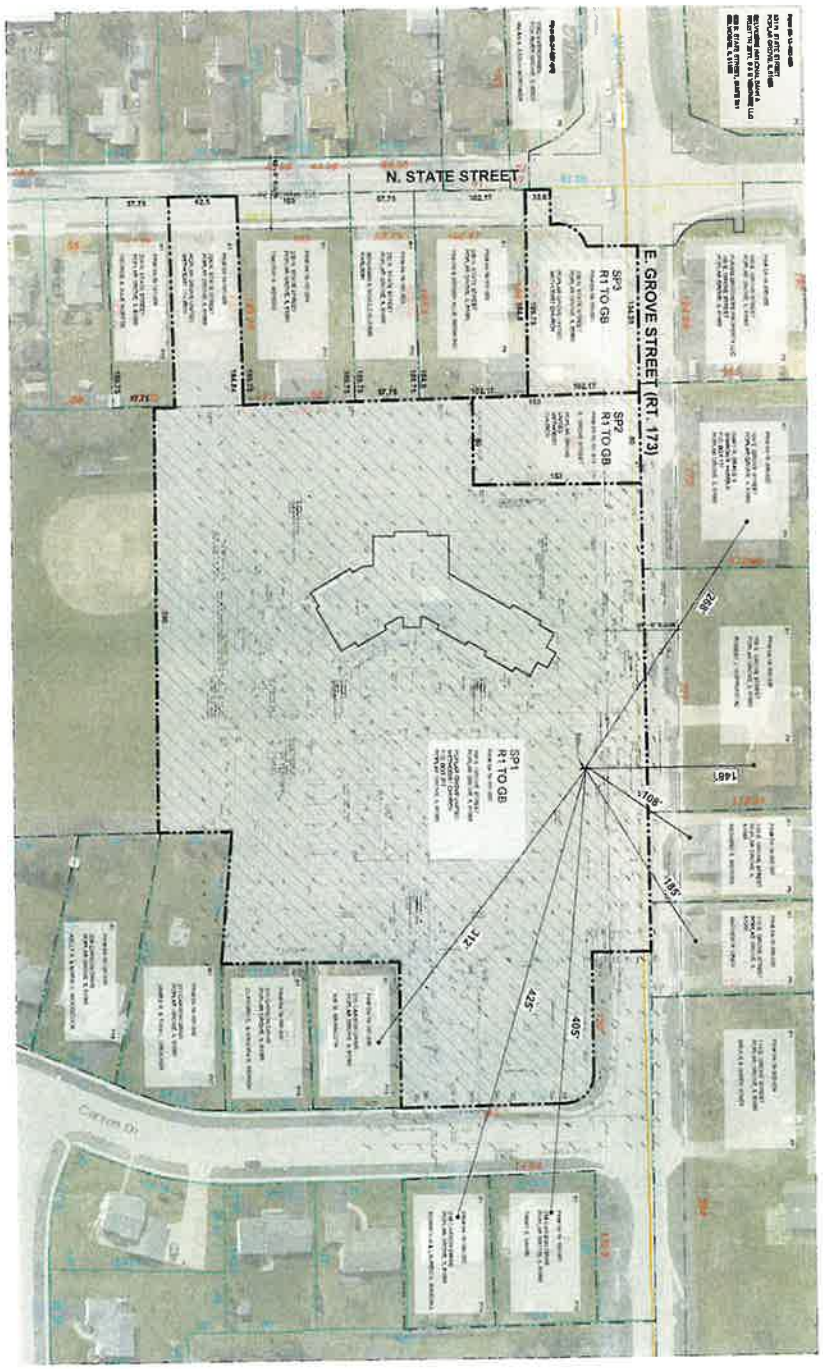
**Saavedra Group Architects**

Daniel G. Saavedra, AIA
President
Poplar Grove United Methodist Church Representative

ARCHITECTURE • ENGINEERING • MANAGEMENT
504 North Church Street, Rockford, Illinois 61103
Phone: 815-963-9392 Fax: 815-963-9021 www.sgadesign.com

Formerly Saavedra Gehlhausen Architects

1 PROPERTY REZONING & SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION 05-26-2021
1" = 40'-0"




LEGEND

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SHEET: A1.00 | PROJECT NUMBER: SHEET DESCRIPTION: PROPERTY REZONING & SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION | SHEET ISSUES | POPLAR GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH POPLAR GROVE, ILLINOIS | GRAPHIC SCALE 1" = 40'-0" CAUTION: IF THIS BAR DOES NOT MEASURE EXACTLY 1" THESE DRAWINGS ARE NOT PRINTED TO SCALE | CONSULTANT | ELECTRONIC MEDIA AND COPYRIGHT NOTICE | Saavedra Group Architects 304 North Church Street Rockford, Illinois 61103 T (815) 963-9393 F (815) 963-9331 www.saavedragp.com Illinois Registration Number: 184-007632 |


POPLAR GROVE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE."
JOIN US SUNDAYS @8AM&10AM


POPLAR GROVE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE."
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www.PGUMC.us
815-765-2001
Worship Times
Sunday 8:00 AM 10:00 AM
Sunday School 9:00 AM

# 2' 4" x 7' 10" Full Color Electronic Message Center




IMAGE SIGNS
ROCKFORD
BELVIDERE
PH: 282-4141
FAX: 282-4157

4/21/2021

SCALE

Notes:

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Boone County
Soil & Water
Conservation District

211. N. Appleton Road
Belvidere, IL 61008
815-544-3465 x3

30 August 2021

**SWCD NRI #:** 1665

Belvidere Planning Department
401 Whitney Blvd., Suite 300
Belvidere, IL 61008

Dear Sir/Madam,

A request for a Natural Resource Information Report was submitted. We will supply a written reply to your office as indicated below:

__X__ Our review does not apply in this instance.
_____ Other (see attached)

**Location of Site:** 105 E. Grove Street, Poplar Grove, IL 61065
**PIN(S):** 04-19101-057

| Contacts | Petitioner | Owner |
|---|---|---|
| Daniel Saavedra<br>504 N. Church St.<br>Rockford, IL 61103<br>Daniel.saavedra@sgadesign.com<br>(815) 222-7226 | Poplar Grove United<br>Methodist Church<br>105 E. Grove Street<br>Poplar Grove, IL 61065 | Same as Petitioner |
| (815) 765-2001<br>linda@pgumc.com | | |

**Request:** Special use for an LED sign and a change in zoning from R1 to GB.

**Comments:** The desired land use change will not significantly disturb soil or water resources.

Sincerely,

Teagan Duffy

Teagan Duffy
Boone County Soil & Water
Conservation District

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Boone County**
**Health Department**
1204 Logan Avenue, Belvidere, Illinois 61008
Main Office 815.544.2951 Clinic 815.544.9730 Fax 815.544.2050
www.boonehealth.org

*The mission of the Boone County Health Department is to serve our community by preventing the spread of disease, promoting optimal wellness & protecting the public's health.*

September 10, 2021

FAX: 815-547-0789

Gina DelRose
Community Development Planer
401 Whitney Blvd Suite 300
Belvidere, IL 61008

Planning Services for Village of Poplar Grove

Re: Case: 2021-05, Poplar Grove United Methodist Church, 105 E Grove St. (SU)

Dear Gina,

We are in receipt of a special use to have an animated sign at 105 East Grove Street with the GB, General Business District (pending rezoning) on approximately 5.5 acres of land. PIN: 04-19-101-057.

Our office has no objections or comments on this request.

Thank you,

Amanda Mehl
Administrator of Public Health
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