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 2021-04; 105 East Grove Street (MA)

REQUEST AND LOCATION:
The applicant and property owner, Poplar Grove United Methodist Church, 105 E. Grove Street, Poplar Grove, IL 61065 is requesting a map amendment (rezoning) on approximately 6 acres of land from the R-1, Single-Family Residential 1 District to the GB, General Business District in accordance with the Poplar Grove Zoning Ordinance, Section 8-5-5 Map Amendment. The property is located at the southeast corner of North State Street and East Grove Street and is commonly known as 238 North State Street and 105 East Grove Street. PINs: 04-19-101-057; 04-19-101-014 and 04-19-101-001.

BACKGROUND:
The subject property is comprised of three parcels totaling approximately 6 acres in size located southeast of North State Street (Poplar Grove Road) and East Grove Street (Illinois Route 173). It has been zoned residential since at least 2011. The current property owner acquired the two smaller parcels in 2020 and demolished the residence at 238 North State Street shortly after acquisition. The current church was constructed on the large parcel in 1999.

The properties to the south and east are zoned residential, Poplar Grove Elementary School is directly south of the property and zoned residential. The properties to the north and west are a mix of residential and commercial. Mortimer's Roadhouse and the former Grove Bar and Grill are the largest nearby commercial uses.

The General Business District allows for personal and professional services, indoor retail sales/services, indoor repair sales/services and utilities by right and public/private institutional, outdoor retail sales/services, indoor lodging, offsite parking and self-storage facilities by special use. Development in the General Business District can create 75% lot coverage, buildings can be 35 feet in height and be constructed 10 feet from the side lot line and 25 feet from the rear lot line.

The primary reason for requesting the rezoning is because of signage. Currently the church must adhere to residential sign requirements in terms of size, height, location and style. Animated signage and signage larger than 6 square feet are not permitted. By rezoning to the General Business District, the church has the ability to apply for a special use for animated signage that is larger than 6 square feet.

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:
To make a recommendation and to adopt the findings of fact, the Commission shall consider whether the change is consistent with the objectives of the Zoning Ordinance prescribed in Section 8-1-3. The objectives are as follows:

A. To promote and protect the public health, safety, morals, convenience and general welfare of the people.

Due to the proximity of North State Street and East Grove Street, a mix of commercial and residential land uses already exists. As more properties develop along Grove Street, additional commercial development is expected to occur.

B. To secure adequate natural light, pure air and safety from fire and other dangers.

All new development shall adhere to the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, Building Codes, Health Codes, Fire Codes, etc. All codes ensure that light, air and safety are being protected.

C. To protect the character and maintain the stability of residential, business and industrial areas within the Village of Poplar Grove and to promote the orderly development of the areas.

The Village's 2009 Comprehensive Plan calls for the property to remain residential. However, due to its location along a major thoroughfare, general business zoning is appropriate when the property can be served by nonresidential streets.

D. To lessen or avoid the hazards to persons and damage to property resulting from the accumulation or runoff of storm or flood waters.

Rezoning the property will allow the continuation of institutional (church) uses. Although certain commercial land uses tend to occupy more lot coverage than institutional land uses, development regulations with the Village of Poplar Grove will minimize the potential for stormwater runoff. The property is not within or adjacent to any FEMA designated floodplains or floodways.

E. To limit congestion in the public streets and highways.

In this situation, the size of the property, not just the zoning district, lends itself to creating higher levels of traffic. The 6 acres could be subdivided into potentially 13 residential lots and the existing church can create traffic during services and events.

F. To prohibit uses or structures which are incompatible with the character of other appropriate existing or intended uses within specified zoning districts.

The current building is compatible with both the R-1, Single-Family Residential 1 District and the GB, General Business District. Due to the location along Grove Street, any future development that is more commercial in scale would be compatible with the future commercial growth that is anticipated in the area.

G. To provide for the gradual elimination of those existing uses of land, buildings and structures that do not conform to the standards of the zoning district in which they are located.

Nearby properties are zoned a mix of residential and commercial and used in varying intensities of those land uses in addition to institutional land uses. The existing building is a church that is acceptable in both zoning districts. However, the signage is more appropriate in a commercial district rather than a residential district.

H. To conserve and enhance the taxable value of land and buildings throughout the Village of Poplar Grove.

Although the current land use is tax exempt, future land uses would be commercial innature. The Village intends to take advantage of the fact that Grove Street is a state route for future commercial growth.

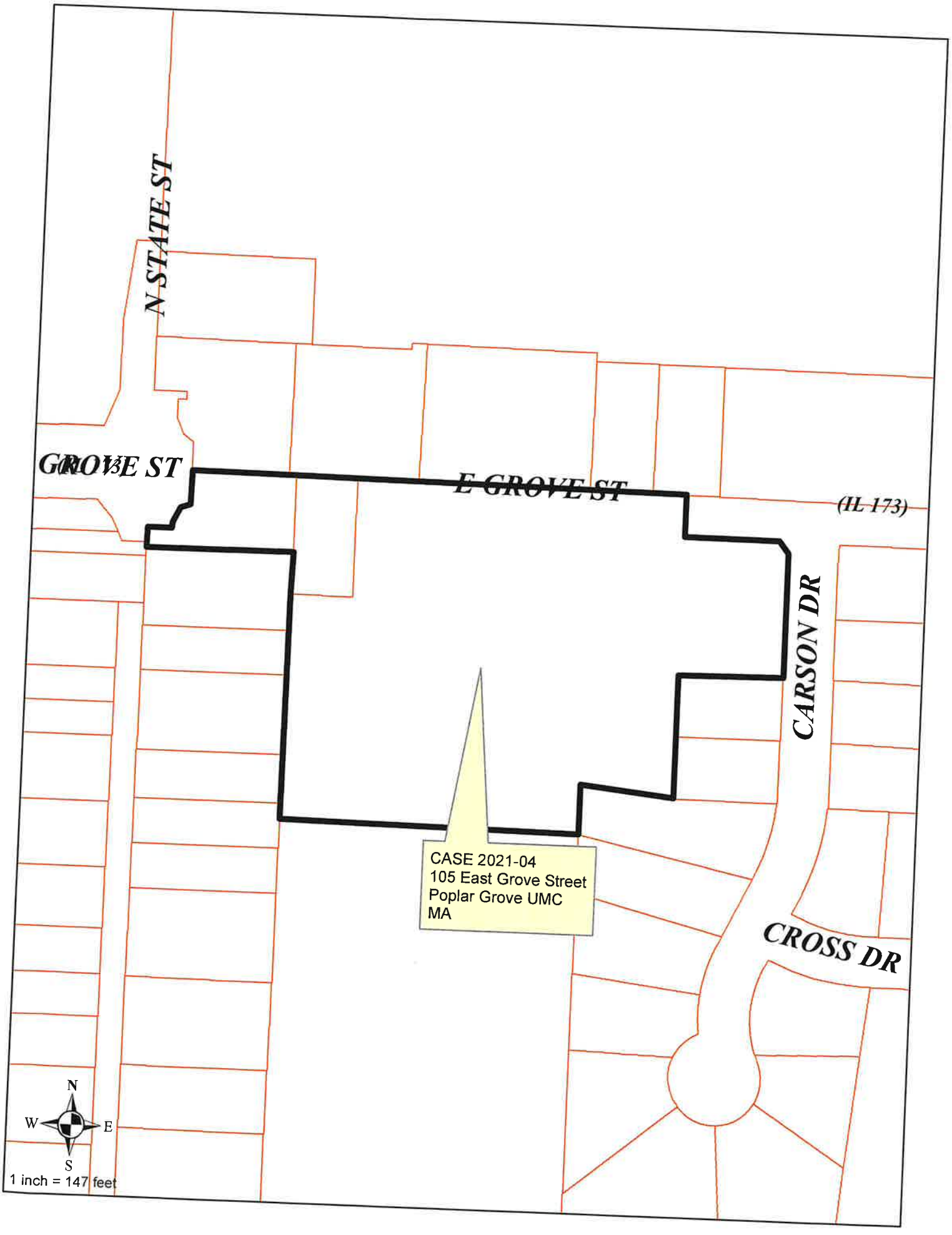
RECOMMENDATION:
The planning staff recommends approval of case 2021-04 for a map amendment from R-1, Single-Family Residential 1 District to the GB, General Business District.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION/VILLAGE BOARD ACTION
The Commission shall hold a public hearing on the proposed map amendment, after which a recommendation will be made to grant or deny the map amendment application to the Village Board based on the findings of fact by the Commission. The Commission may make the recommendation at the same meeting, or choose to continue the proceedings at a later date. The Commission may request additional information as needed. Once a recommendation is made, the Commission shall record its conclusion as part of the meeting minutes and written findings of fact and forward such documentation to the Village Board. The Commission's failure to act or submit a report within sixty-five (65) days of the public hearing shall constitute a recommendation for the request.

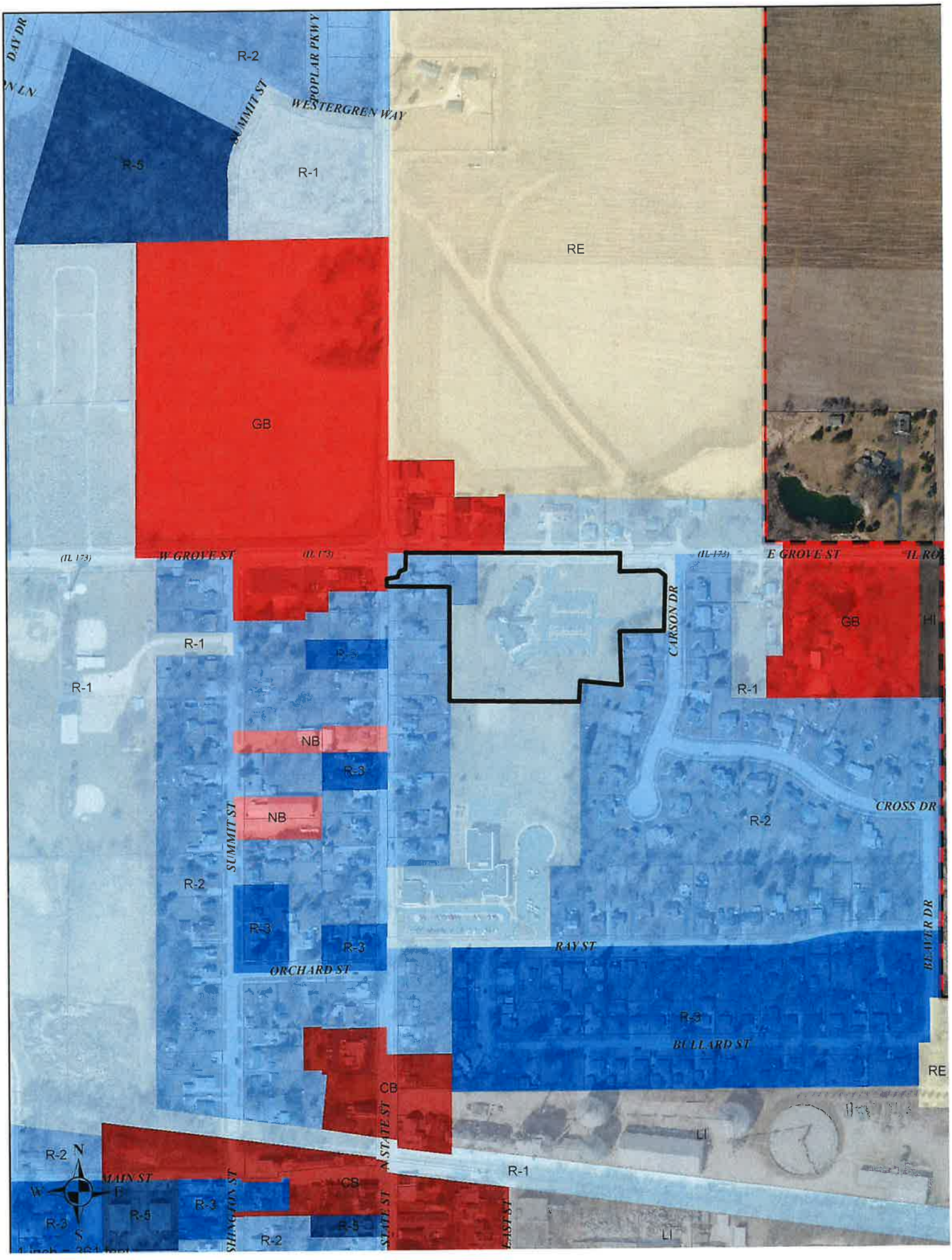
Within sixty-five (65) days of receipt of the Commission's recommendation, the Village Board shall act by ordinance to approve or deny the map amendment as proposed. The Village Board may also remand the request back to the Commission for further hearings and/or discussion. The Village Board's approval or denial of the requested amendment shall be considered the approval or denial of a unique request and shall not be construed as precedent for any other proposed amendment.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Location Map submitted by Planning Staff.
2. Aerial Photo submitted by Planning Staff.
3. Poplar Grove Zoning Map submitted by Planning Staff.
4. Narrative submitted by the Applicant.
5. NRI 1665 from the Boone County Soil and Water Conservation District, Teagan Duffy, August 30, 2021.
6. Letter from the Boone County Health Department, Amanda Mehl September 10, 2021.


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CASE 2021-04
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N STATE ST
CARSON DR
CASE 2021-04
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R-5
R-1
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WESTERGREN WAY
POPLAR PKWY
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(IL 173)
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CROSS DR
RAY ST
ORCHARD ST
BULLARD ST
BEAVER DR
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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

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 504 N. Church St. Rockford, IL 61103 Daniel.saavedra@sgadesign.com (815) 222-7226	Poplar Grove United Methodist Church 105 E. Grove Street Poplar Grove, IL 61065	Same as Petitioner
(815) 765-2001 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
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

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

FAX: 815-547-0789

Planning Services for Village of Poplar Grove

Re: Case: 2021-04, Poplar Grove United Methodist Church, (MA)

Dear Gina,

We are in receipt of a map amendment for Poplar Grove United Methodist Church, 105 E Grove Street, Poplar Grove, IL 61065 (rezoning) on approximately 6 acres of land from the R-1, Single-Family Residential 1 District to the GB, General Business District in accordance with the Poplar Grove Zoning Ordinance, Section 8-5-5 Map Amendment.

Our office has no objections or comments on this request.

Thank you,

Amanda Mehl
Administrator of Public Health
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