MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OF
THE CITY OF ANGOLA BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
HELD ON SEPTEMBER 22, 2025

The Board of Zoning Appeals held their regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, September 22, 2025 at 5:00 p.m., The minutes are recorded and prepared by the Department of Economic Development and Planning staff.

Chairman Phil Roe called the public meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Angola Council Chambers at City Hall.

The following members were present: Phil Roe, Chris Thomas, Jeff Martin, and David Roe. Absent Members: Susan Ralston. Also present at the meeting: Director Retha Hicks, and City Attorney Kim Shoup. Quorum was confirmed.

No minutes were presented for approval.

Director Hicks introduced new member, Jeff Martin. She mentioned that this was Jeff's first BZA but he had served on the city's Plan Commission Board for many years and has a great deal of knowledge in reference to our processes and standards.

Chairman P. Roe moved to the next item on the agenda – New Business – 2025-BZA-09001 – Development Standards Variance, Loves Travel Stop.

Application Type:	Development Standard Variance
Owner:	Love's Travel Stop
Applicant:	Kevin Keup, Effective Images
Location:	3443 W Maumee St
Request:	Section 18.180.080 Sign Standards, (B)(9)(b) Directional Sign Area and (c) Directional Sign Height
Current Zoning and Overlay Districts:	HC: Highway Commercial District
Applicable Code Provisions:	Title 18: Unified Development Ordinance Indiana Code: Board of Zoning Appeals 36-7-4 Series
Hearing Date:	September 22, 2025
Required Notice:	Legal Notice of the Public Hearing appeared in The Herald Republican on September 12, 2025. Eight (8) property owners within 300-feet of the project were sent notice on September 11, 2025.
Floodplain Status:	Not within a floodplain

Director Hicks summarized the project: Love's Travel Stop is requesting two variances for two new directional signs. The requested variances are for Section 18.180.080 (B)(9)(b) Directional Sign Area, and (B)(9)(c) Directional Sign Height. In 2014, the Board granted variance requests for the area and height of the existing directional signs. The proposed new signs will match the existing signs at 15-sqft per sign face with a height of 7-ft.

Director Hicks used images to show the existing signs.

The proposed new directional signs will be to direct traffic through the new RV hook-ups that Love's will soon be providing. There will be one sign located at the entrance of the RV area and one at the exit.

Director Hicks explained the variance requests:

Section 18.180.080 Sign Standards; (B) Permanent Signs. (9) Directional Device Signs. (b)
Directional device signs shall not exceed three square feet in area per side per entrance.
Request: Requesting sign faces of 15-sqft per side.

Section 18.180.080 Sign Standards; (B) Permanent Signs. (9) Directional Device Signs. (c)
Directional device signs shall not exceed 36 inches in height.
Request: Requesting sign heights of 7-ft.

Director Hicks gave the Contextual Zoning & Land Use:
The property is zoned HC: Highway Commercial District and surrounding land uses include:

- North – (Steuben County zoning) EC: Environmental Control and R1: Residential
- East – HC: Highway Commercial
- South – (Steuben County zoning) AG: Agricultural
- West – I1: Low Intensity Industrial and HC: Highway Commercial

Director Hicks informed the Board that an adjacent property owner stopped into City Hall earlier in the day to discuss the case. Once she explained, the property owner did not have any concerns.

Director Hicks concluded that Staff recommends approval. Granting the variances will allow the two new signs to match the existing signs, keeping the visual aesthetic and making it easier for the larger recreational vehicles to see the directional signage. The placement of the new signs will help with traffic flow and potential congestion.

Chairman P. Roe asked if the Board had any questions for Staff. Member Martin asked if the proposed signs will have the same setbacks from the rights of way as the existing. Director Hicks explained that the RV entrance is an internal entrance, but the exit sign will meet setback requirements.

Chairman P. Roe asked the petitioner to present their case. Frank Ille, Love's Travel Stops, joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams. He explained that the panel replacement on the existing signs is just to include directions for the RV hookups. He also explained that the new signs are only internal to the property. The RV area will have a one-direction flow, and they are requesting these signs to help travelers navigate.

Director Hicks asked Mr. Ille to speak on the duration of stays that travelers will have. Director Hicks asked if it was only 24 hours. Mr. Ille said that they can limit the stay, the intention is not to have anyone live or camp long-term at the rest stop. Love's Travel Stops have added RV hookups at 110 other locations over the last 2.5 years. The hookups are intended to be used overnight. The rules and regulations stipulate that travelers cannot stay more than 28 consecutive nights. The average stay for similar locations are 1.04 nights per customer. Mr. Ille reiterated that the intention is just for one-night stays. This will provide a safe place for travelers to park and have power, WI-FI, and water accessibility.

Chairman P. Roe asked if there were any questions from the Board, there were none.

Chairman P. Roe then opened the public portion of the hearing, but there were no comments from the audience.

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Chairman P. Roe mentioned that he had a concern with the allowed duration of stays. Director Hicks thanks Chairman P. Roe for his concern. She informed the board that the 28-night limitation was not what was presented with the initial project. She explained to the Board that this project will not require a Development Plan Approval from the Plan Commission, but that Staff will address the duration of stay limit with the applicant prior to permitting the project.

Director Hicks then presented the **Findings of Fact:**

Case: 2025-BZA-09001.1
Section 18.180.080 Sign Standards; (B)(9)(b) Directional Device Sign Area

1. The approval of the variance **will not** be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community as the request is to match the existing signs, which have not been injurious.

2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance **will not** be affected in a substantially adverse manner as the request is to match the existing signs, which have not affected the adjacent properties.

3. The strict application of the terms of the ordinance **will** result in practical difficulties in the use of the property as directional signs are necessary to control the flow of traffic. With large vehicles such as RVs, the increased size is necessary for visibility.

All present members agreed on the affirmative findings of fact.

Chairman P. Roe asked for a motion to approve the variance request for Sign Area. **Vice-Chairman Thomas made a motion to approve, Member D. Roe seconded.** All present members were in favor, none opposed.

Case: 2025-BZA-09001.2
Section 18.180.080 Sign Standards; (B)(9)(c) Directional Device Sign Height

1. The approval of the variance **will not** be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community as the request is to match the existing signs, which have not been injurious.

2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance **will not** be affected in a substantially adverse manner as the request is to match the existing signs, which have not affected the adjacent properties.

3. The strict application of the terms of the ordinance **will** result in practical difficulties in the use of the property as directional signs are necessary to control the flow of traffic. With large vehicles such as RVs, the increased size is necessary for visibility.

All present members agreed on the affirmative findings of fact.

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Chairman P. Roe asked for a motion to approve the variance request for the height variance. **Member D. Roe made a motion to approve, Vice-Chairman Thomas seconded.** All present members were in favor, none opposed.

Chairman P. Roe asked Director Hicks to present the next case: **2025-BZA-09002 Trine Sports Dome.**

Project Name:	2025-BZA-09002
Application Type:	Development Standard Variance
Owner:	Trine University
Applicant:	Michael Bock and/or MKS
Location:	1 University Ave, j/s of the Keith E Busse/SDI Athletic Recreation Center
Request:	Section 18.72.040, (M) Maximum Structure Height
Current Zoning and Overlay Districts:	UV: University District
Applicable Code Provisions:	Title 18: Unified Development Ordinance Indiana Code: Board of Zoning Appeals 36-7-4 Series
Hearing Date:	September 22, 2025
Required Notice:	Legal Notice of the Public Hearing appeared in The Herald Republican on September 12, 2025. Eighteen (18) property owners within 300-feet of the project were sent notice on September 11, 2025.
Floodplain Status:	Not within a floodplain

Director Hicks summarized the project: Trine University is requesting a development standard variance for the Maximum Height of a structure. The university will be building a sports air dome on their campus to accommodate practice areas for outdoor sports in the off seasons. The proposed air dome will be 240-ft x 380-ft, with an overall height of 73', requiring an 8-ft height variance. The air dome will be presented at the October 13th Plan Commission meeting to seek Development Plan Approval.

Director Hicks showed an image of the initial rendering to show the size of the proposed dome.

Director Hicks further explained the variance request:
Section 18.72.040, (M) Maximum structure height: 65 feet for primary structures; 20 feet for accessory structures.
Request: Requesting primary structure height of 73-ft.

Director Hicks covered the Contextual Zoning & Land Use:
The property is zoned UV: University District and surrounding land uses include:

- North – UV: University
- East – PR: Parks and Recreation and TR: Traditional Residential
- South – UV: University, AG: Agricultural, R2: Residential
- West – UV: University

No public input has been received.

Director Hicks concluded that Staff recommends approval of the proposed Trine Sports Air Dome. We support Trine University's growth and their desire to provide top notch resources and facilities for their athletes.

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Chairman P. Roe asked if the Board had any questions for Staff. Member Martin asked if there were going to be any drainage challenges with the amount of land disturbance. Director Hicks notified him that the drainage will be looked at as part of the Development Plan Approval process done by the Plan Commission.

Chairman P. Roe then asked the petitioner to present the case. Carter Seymour, MKS, mentioned that the dome will be in the center of campus, and will not cause any disturbances to adjoining properties. Mr. Seymour also mentioned that Trine University is steadily improving their athletic programs in hopes of drawing more students to the community.

Chairman P. Roe asked the Board if there were any questions for the petitioner. City Attorney Kim Shoup asked if the dome would be inflated year-round. Mr. Seymour confirmed that the intention was to use it year-round.

Member Martin asked what amount of snow the dome could handle. Mr. Seymour informed the Board that due to the design and slope of the dome, not much snow, if any, is accumulated on the surface. He also mentioned that he has previously played sports in a very similar dome and was very impressed with it.

For information purposes only, Director Hicks mentioned that there will also be a small entry building. Mr. Seymour informed the Board that the entry building is also part of the air-sealing process. Director Hicks also mentioned that due to the location of the dome, it will not front any public right of way. There had been a question on the plan review from the Fire Chief about access, but an access road has been added around the building for all emergency vehicles.

Chairman P. Roe opened the public portion of the hearing; there were not any comments. Closing the public portion, Chairman P. Roe asked Director Hicks to present the **Findings of Fact for 2025-BZA-09002:**

1. The approval of the variance **will not** be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community as the proposed dome is to be constructed on a portion of Trine's property that is internal and does not front any public right of way.

2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance **will not** be affected in a substantially adverse manner as the proposed dome will be surrounded by Trine's sports fields and their own golf course.

3. The strict application of the terms of the ordinance **will** result in practical difficulties in the use of the property as the dome needs to be a certain height to be an effective and useful facility for the sports teams to practice.

All present members agreed on the affirmative findings of fact.

Member Thomas asked if there should be a condition of no more than 73ft height, Director Hicks agreed.

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Chairman P. Roe asked for a motion. **Member Martin made a motion to approve the variance with the condition that the overall height will not exceed 73ft. Vice-Chairman Thomas seconded.** All present members were in favor, none opposed.

Chairman P. Roe asked Director Hicks to present the next case: **2025-BZA-09003 Angola Hillcrest Bible Church.**

Project Name:	2025-BZA-09003
Application Type:	Land Use Variance
Owner:	Angola Hillcrest Bible Church
Applicant:	Remax, Tim Zank
Location:	1207 S Wayne St
Request:	Section 18.80.020 Permitted Uses, (F) Dwelling Units (upper floors)
Current Zoning and Overlay Districts:	NC: Neighborhood Commercial (pending rezone)
Applicable Code Provisions:	Title 18: Unified Development Ordinance Indiana Code: Board of Zoning Appeals 36-7-4-900 Series
Hearing Date:	September 22, 2025
Required Notice:	Legal Notice of the Public Hearing appeared in The Herald Republican on September 12, 2025. Seventeen (17) property owners within 300-feet of the project were sent notice on September 11, 2025.
Floodplain Status:	Not within a floodplain

Director Hicks summarized the project: Angola Hillcrest Bible Church is currently selling the property, and the buyers are planning to convert the building into a hair salon/spa and add a dwelling unit. Upper floor dwelling units are permitted in NC: Neighborhood Commercial. However, the buyers are hoping to keep the exterior and the footprint of the building the same and add the dwelling unit to the ground floor. The request to rezone was heard by the Angola Common Council on 9/15 for first reading, and was passed unanimously.

Director Hicks further explained the variance request:
Section 18.80.020 Permitted Uses, (F) Dwelling Units (upper floors).
Request: Requesting dwelling unit on ground floor.

Director Hicks used images to show the proposed floor plan and the location of the existing church.

Director Hicks spoke on the Contextual Zoning & Land Use:
The property is currently pending a rezone from IS: Institutional to NC: Neighborhood Commercial.
Surrounding land uses include:

- North – R2: Residential
- East – I1: Low Intensity Industrial
- South – I1: Low Intensity Industrial (Storage Units), R2: Residential
- West – IS: Institutional (REMC)

Director Hicks informed the Board that she received call from a couple of neighbors. She spoke with one who had no concerns. The second, she responded to the call and left a voicemail detailing the project and the neighbor never called back.

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Director Hicks concluded that Staff recommends approval. The City of Angola's Comprehensive Plan speaks to promote housing growth. By granting this land use variance, it will allow the expansion of an existing business and a new residence without any major changes to the neighborhood.

Chairman P. Roe asked if the Board had any questions for Staff. Member Martin asked if combining the commercial and residential uses would cause any issues with State Fire and Building Codes. Director Hicks mentioned that having the dwelling unit on the first floor will help with fire escape plans. She also mentioned that this project will not be required to appear at Plan Commission for Development Plan Approval as it is just an internal remodel. However, Building Commissioner Scott Lehman, will be taking the change of use into consideration when permitting and determining what requirements must be met.

Chairman P. Roe asked the petitioner to speak on behalf of the project. Tessah Hill, the purchaser of the church, mentioned that the church building already has a full kitchen and separate classrooms. These features make the building very easy to separate out a residence. She also mentioned that the parking lot is large and they will have a dedicated area for the residents to park, so they will not be competing with salon guests for parking. The residence will not have internal access to the salon and vice versa; the only way between the two will be through the exterior doors.

Ms. Hill also mentioned that having the residence as well as the salon will provide a steady cash-flow for the business but will provide a reasonably priced single-family unit for a family in the community.

Director Hicks used an aerial view of the church to explain that the residence will have it's own exterior access point and the salon will have three.

Chairman P. Roe asked if the Board had any questions, there were none. He then opened the public hearing, but no comments were made. Closing the public portion, he asked Director Hicks to present the **Findings of Fact for case 2025-BZA-09003:**

1. The approval of the variance **will not** be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community because the exterior of the building will not be changing.

2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance **will not** be affected in a substantially adverse manner because the surrounding properties are mostly residential. Allowing a main floor residence will not affect the neighboring properties.

3. That the need for the use variance **arises** from some condition peculiar to the property involved because the space is conducive to residential and neighborhood commercial, however it is only one story and could not allow for a residence without a use variance.

4. The strict application of the terms of the ordinance **will** constitute an unnecessary hardship if applied to the property for which the variance is sought because to expand the business to the new location and add extra services, a rental unit is part of the business plan to ensure maximum return on investment and adding a second story would change the neighborhood appeal.

5. The approval **does not** interfere substantially with the Angola Comprehensive Plan because it will add a residence to Angola, directly aligning with the City's housing initiatives.

All present members agreed with the affirmative findings.

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Chairman P. Roe asked for a motion to approve. **Vice-Chairman Thomas made a motion to approve with the condition that the rezone to NC: Neighborhood Commercial is passed by Common Council. Member D. Roe seconded.** All present members were in favor, none opposed.

Chairman P. Roe asked Director Hicks to present the final case: **2025-BZA-09004 69 & 20 LLC.**

Project Name:	2025-BZA-09004
Application Type:	Development Standard Variance
Owner:	69 & 20 LLC
Applicant:	Mark Cockroft
Location:	206 S Shoup St
Request:	Section 18.100.040, (L) Maximum Primary Structures Section 18.160.190, (B) Fence Location
Current Zoning and Overlay Districts:	I1: Low Intensity Industrial District (pending rezone)
Applicable Code Provisions:	Title 18: Unified Development Ordinance Indiana Code: Board of Zoning Appeals 36-7-4 Series
Hearing Date:	September 22, 2025
Required Notice:	Legal Notice of the Public Hearing appeared in The Herald Republican on September 12, 2025. Eight (8) property owners within 300-feet of the project were sent notice on September 11, 2025.
Floodplain Status:	Not within a floodplain

Director Hicks summarized the project: 69 & 20 LLC recently purchased the existing self-storage business located at 206 S Shoup St, along with the parcel to the North. There is a pending rezone on the north parcel to match the south parcel that was presented to the Angola Common Council on Monday on 9/15 for the first reading . Once rezoned, the parcels will be combined. The applicant is requesting a development standard variance for the maximum number of primary structures. They have already started refreshing the existing units and are planning to expand the business with additional units totaling 7 primary structures if the variance request is granted.

The second development standard variance request is for fence location. Due to the nature of the business, the applicant is planning to add fencing to two sides of the property, one section will be located in the front yard. Along with the fence, they will be installing a coded gate at the entrance. The site plan for the project is shown below. The five buildings shown in yellow are the proposed new buildings. The black line is the proposed fence. The entrance on the North parcel will be removed, and all traffic will enter/exit using the Southern entrance.

Director Hicks used an image of the site plan to show where the requested structures and fence will be.

Director Hicks further explained the variance requests:
Section 18.100.040, (L) Maximum primary structures: four.
Request: Requesting seven primary structures.

Section 18.160.190, (B) Location, (1) Front Yards: Fences and walls shall not be permitted in front yards.
Request: Requesting a 6-ft chain link fence in front yard.

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Director Hicks used site photos to show the Board the existing structures. She also informed the Board that this project will appear before Plan Commission for the Development Plan Approval.

Director Hicks covered the Contextual Zoning & Land Use:
The property is currently pending a rezone and parcel combination. Once completed, the entire property will be zoned I1: Low Intensity Industrial. Surrounding land uses include:

- North – HC: Highway Commercial
- East – HC: Highway Commercial
- South – HC: Highway Commercial
- West – HC: Highway Commercial

No public input has been received.

Director Hicks In conclusion, Staff recommends approval of each variance request. Adding additional units and a fence to the property will allow economic growth and security for the self-storage business. Staff are encouraged to see the improvements to the property. As part of the gateway to Angola, improving the property will greatly benefit the City of Angola.

Chairman P. Roe asked if the Board had any questions for the Staff. Without any questions, Chairman P. Roe asked the petitioner to present their case. Jack Hilyard, 69 & 20 LLC, mentioned that they are currently cleaning up the landscape on the Northern edge of the property and are keeping any viable trees. Mr. Hilyard also mentioned that the reason the fence is protruding into the front yard on the northeastern corner is for stacking snow. Mr. Hilyard informed the Board that the entrance will have a coded gate. He also mentioned that they are in the process of painting and replacing roofs on the existing buildings. They will also be adding landscape and making the property as a whole look much more appealing.

Mr. Hilyard explained that three of the proposed buildings will be climate controlled. There are a lot of options in the community for self-storage, but not many climate controlled options.

Member Martin asked Mr. Hilyard what kind of fence they were planning to install. Mr. Hilyard stated that they will be doing a 6ft chain-link fence. Member Martin asked if it would be clear or if something would be weaved through the links. Mr. Hilyard stated that it would just be standard clear chain-link; there would not be any barbed-wire or anything.

Chairman P. Roe asked if there were any further questions, there were none. Chairman P. Roe asked Director Hicks to present the **Findings of Fact for case 2025-BZA-09004:**

Section 18.100.040, (L) Maximum Primary Structures

1. The approval of the variance **will not** be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community as the business is already existing, and the additional units are being constructed in a location not causing any line of site issues for motorists.

2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance **will not** be affected in a substantially adverse manner as the expansion of the storage units will be an improvement to the existing vacant lot that has not been maintained.

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3. The strict application of the terms of the ordinance **will** result in practical difficulties in the use of the property as the size of the property allows for the additional buildings while still maintaining vacant areas for green space.

All members agreed on the affirmative findings.

Director Hicks requested that any motion to approve would have the conditions that the rezone is approved, and the parcel combination is recorded. Chairman P. Roe asked for a motion. **Vice-Chairman Thomas moved to approve with the conditions that the rezone is approved, and the parcel combination is recorded. Member D. Roe seconded.** All present members were in favor, none opposed.

Director Hicks then presented the **Findings of Fact** for the second variance request.

Section 18.160.190, (B) Fence Location

1. The approval of the variance **will not** be injurious to the public health, safety, morals and general welfare of the community as the front yard fence still allows for vision clearance and will keep the buildings secure.

2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance **will not** be affected in a substantially adverse manner as there is only a small section of the fence in the front yard. The proposed fencing will help keep the buildings and property safe and secure.

3. The strict application of the terms of the ordinance **will** result in practical difficulties in the use of the property as this portion of the fence needs to be placed forward for easy movement of vehicles and snow removal.

All present members agreed with the affirmative findings.

Chairman P. Roe asked for a motion. Member Martin moved to **approve with the conditions that the rezone is approved, and the parcel combination is recorded. Vice-Chairman Thomas seconded.** All present members were in favor, none opposed.

Chairman P. Roe asked Director Hicks if there was any other New Business. There was nothing further.

Chairman P. Roe adjourned the September 22, 2025 meeting at 6:00 p.m.

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Phil Roe, Chairman Date

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Retha Hicks, Secretary Date

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