

TOWN OF PLAINFIELD BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS REPORT

DATE: November 17, 2025
CASE NO.: [BZA-25-080](#)
PETITIONER: Melissa Garrard, Pulte Homes of Indiana

REQUESTED ACTION: Variances of Development Standards

SITE INFORMATION: South of E US Highway 40 (4991-5165 E US Highway 40) to Hadley Road/CR 600 South (5128 E CR 600 S).

PARCEL SIZE: 217 +/- acres



EXISTING ZONING AND LAND USE			THRIVE! COMPREHENSIVE PLAN		
Site:	AG	Agriculture. Seeking Zone Map Amendment	Site:	SMR	Suburban Mixed Residential
North:	PUD RB	Vandalia PUD <i>Single Family Residential (Hendricks County)</i>	North:	SR CC	Suburban Residential Commercial Corridor
South:	AG AGR	Agriculture Agricultural Residential (<i>Hendricks County</i>)	South:	SR	Suburban Residential
East:	PUD AGR	Sugar Grove Farms PUD Agricultural Residential (<i>Hendricks County</i>)	East:	OS SMR	Open Space Suburban Mixed Residential
West:	AGR	Agricultural Residential (<i>Hendricks County</i>)	West:	SMR	Suburban Mixed Residential

PETITION OVERVIEW

Variance of Development Standards applications were submitted for the above referenced location. The application, submitted by Melissa Garrard on behalf of Pulte Homes of Indiana, seeks approval for the following Variances of Development Standards:

- 7.5.A.2 to increase the allowable sign base height for subdivision entrance ground signs
- 7.5.B to increase the allowable sign height for subdivision entrance ground signs.
- Section 7.5.B to increase the allowable sign area for subdivision entrance ground signs.
- Section 7.5.B to increase the number of ground signs allowed for a platted subdivision and to modify the allowable locations.

Indiana Code §36-7-4-918.5 and Article 10.3.C.1.e of the Town of Plainfield Zoning Ordinance state that a Variance of Development Standards may be approved only upon a determination in writing that the following three standards are met:

1. *The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community:*
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:*
3. *The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property.*

The petitioner seeks “variances for entrance and subdivision monumentation signage larger than would otherwise be permitted current Town standards” for two (2) monument signs related to the ongoing [Zone Map Amendment request](#) for the conversion of 217 acres from AG: Agriculture to a combination of R-3, R-4, and R-5 residential zoning as stated in the applicant’s narrative.

The Plainfield Zoning Ordinance (PZO) allows two ground signs per subdivision entrance and specifies (5) that only one monument is permissible per side of the intersection. All twenty-one (21) signs proposed by the applicant are ground signs.

The “Entry Monument & Columns Location” map indicates that the applicant would like to place their largest monument at the corner of a primary arterial (US40) and a local collector street (future designated roadway), which would not be the entrance to the subdivision as noted in the staff comments later in this report. Entry columns, shown in detail on pages 6-7 of the [Westlyn Entry Sign Exhibit](#) are proposed throughout the development.

Regardless of the number of “subdivision entrances” that exist, there are more ground signs (monuments and columns) than would be allowed by the PZO. There is also inconsistency in how signs are labeled in the provided location map. On multiple occasions, the color dot & its corresponding label do not match the provided legend.

Number, Dimensional Standards, Setbacks, and Size of Signs.

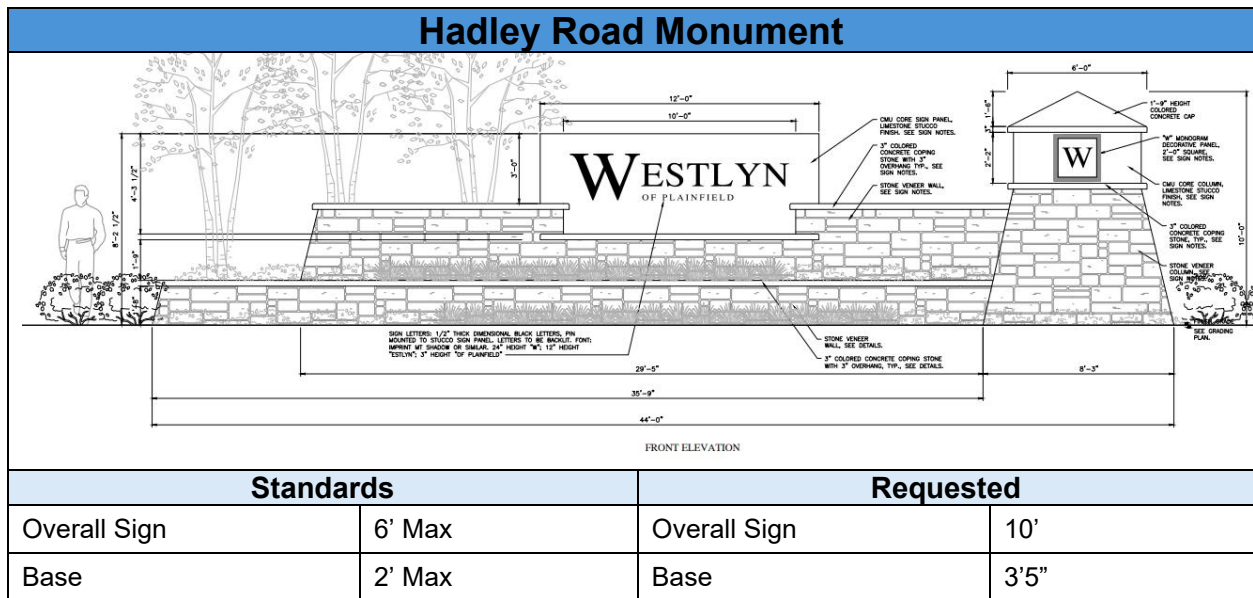
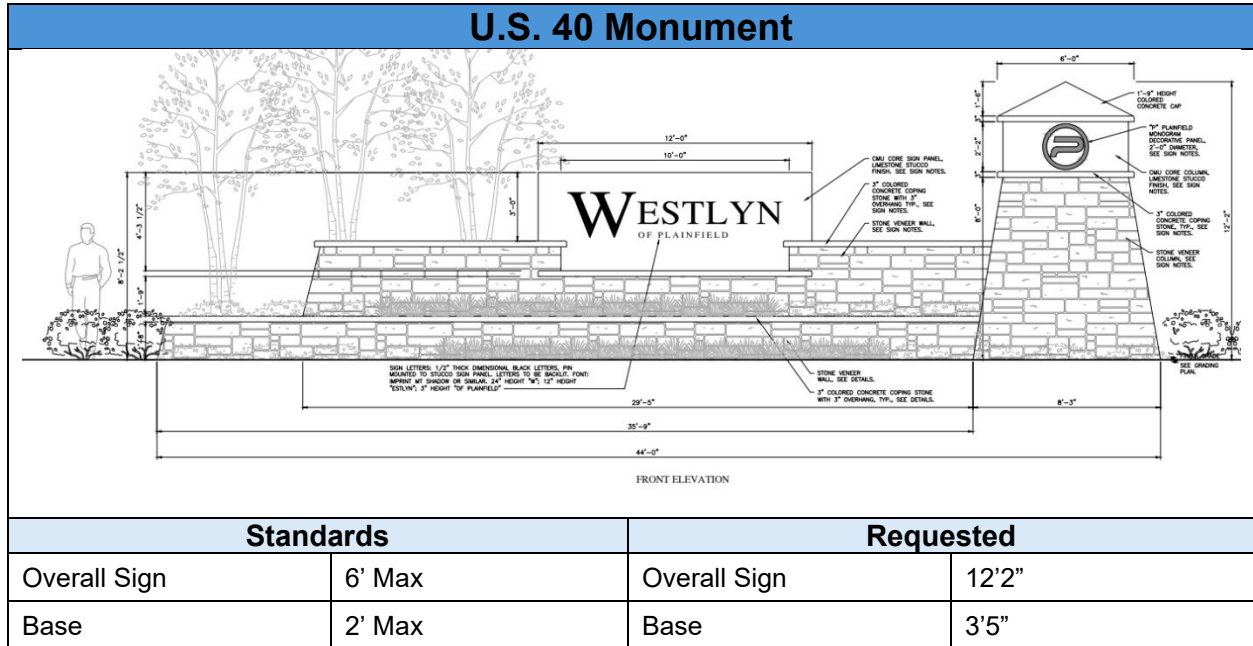
Table 7.5.B: Number, Dimensional Standards, Setbacks, and Size of Signs

Site Type	Number of Signs	Height (feet)	Sign Surface Area (square feet)	Setbacks (in feet)		
				Front Yard	Front Bufferyard	Side or Rear Yard
Single Use Site (Commercial/Industrial except TC)	One (1) <i>Ground Sign</i> shall be permitted for each <i>Street Frontage</i> of a Lot. ⁽⁴⁾	6	48	10	20	(6)
Single Use Site (TC) ⁽¹⁾		6	48	See 7.5.C.1-3		
Outlots of <i>Integrated Center</i>		6	48	10	20	(6)
<i>Integrated Center</i> smaller than 60,000 square feet		8	72	10	20	(6)
<i>Integrated Center</i> larger than 60,000 square feet		10	96	10	20	(6)
Recorded, platted Residential Subdivisions ⁽³⁾	Two per subdivision entrance ⁽⁵⁾	6	48	See 7.5.C.1-3		
Multifamily Dwelling Developments ⁽³⁾	One per street entrance ⁽⁴⁾	6	48	10	10	(6)
Business Permitted in Residential Districts by Special Exception ⁽²⁾	One	4	24	10	10	(7)

Height Variance of Development Standards

Section 7.5.A.1

Sign Height. The height of a ground sign shall be measured from grade, which shall include the finished surface of the ground five (5) feet from the base of the sign, to the highest point of the sign. (See Example 7.5.A., in the PZO).



Both proposed monuments have ornamental bases that are taller than Town standards and both signs, at their highest point, are taller than Town standards allow. The "Westlyn of Plainfield" portion of the sign itself is 8'2" tall, also exceeding Town standards.

Signage Area Variance of Development Standards

Section 7.5.A.2

Sign Area. The sign surface area of a ground sign shall be the smallest rectangle that can encompass all items of information or the sign face, outside of support structures, whichever is applicable. The sign base shall not be included in the overall calculation of Sign Surface Area, provided that no lettering, logo, text or other display of any kind shall be allowed on such base (except for information placed in compliance with Fire Code requirements). (See Example 7.5.A., of the PZO).

Using the applicant’s narrative, it appears that both proposed entry monuments (US 40 & Hadley Road) are intended to be applied for as a single sign each. The Plainfield Zoning Ordinance states, “the sign surface area of a ground sign shall be the smallest rectangle that can encompass all items of information” and the calculations for signage surface area below will reflect that statement. The **red outline** around each sign below indicates the smallest possible square footage measurable for each sign.

	Standard	Requested	
US 40 Sign	48 sq ft	129 sq ft	
Hadley Sign	48 sq ft	75 sq ft	

Signage Location Variance of Development Standards

Section 7.5.B

The Plainfield Zoning Ordinance specifies that two (2) signs per subdivision entrance are permitted. Figure 1 below, provided by the applicant, indicates the proposed location of all suggested subdivision entrance monuments. **Orange circles** note where the applicant proposes to place subdivision ground signs (entrance monuments and columns). The applicant’s legend and corresponding dot colors and labels are contradictory in multiple instances. A larger map may be viewed on pages 8-10 of the [Westlyn Entry Sign Exhibit](#).

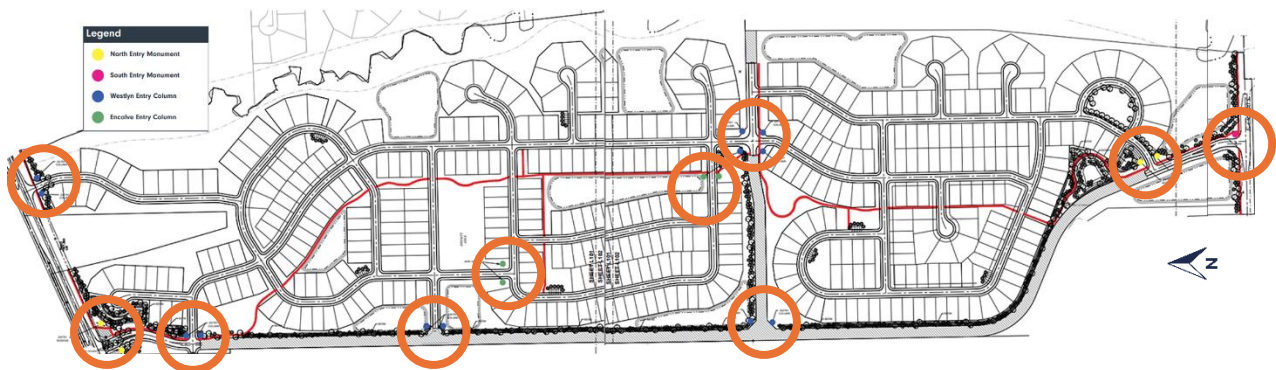


Figure 1 – Location of all proposed subdivision entrance monuments

Figure 2 was created by staff to demonstrate which of the proposed subdivision entrance monuments are/are not permissible under the Plainfield Zoning Ordinance. Red X's show where requested signs would not be allowed under the PZO. Green check marks indicate permitted entrances of the proposed subdivision where signage / monumentation is allowed.

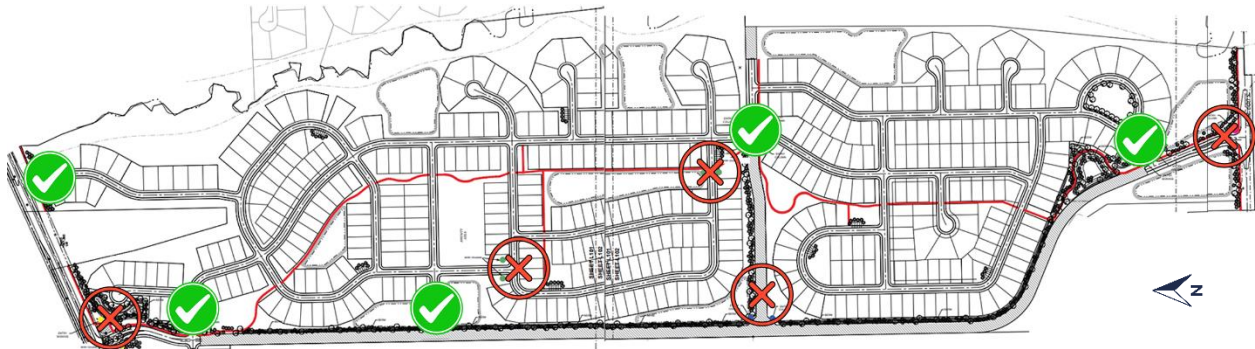


Figure 2 – Subdivision entrance monuments that are/are not permitted according to the Plainfield Zoning Ordinance

Subdivision entrance signs are only permitted at the entrance of subdivisions. The intersections of the proposed north-south collector street at both U.S. 40 and Hadley Road are not subdivision entrances. Additionally, transitional points between one housing type to another housing type (shown with green dots) within the same subdivision do not qualify as subdivision entrances.

The proposed development will have six (6) formal entrances based on current town standards, one (1) along US 40, three (3) along the proposed north-south collector street, and one (1) on either side of the proposed east-west collector street (total of 2). Exhibit 2 above demonstrates where subdivision entrance monumentation would be allowed (green check mark) without request for variance. The red X's indicate where requested monumentation would not be permitted under the PZO and would require a variance.

Signage Quantity Variance of Development Standards

Section 7.5.B

The Plainfield Zoning Ordinance states that only two signs per subdivision entrance are permitted, and that only one sign is permitted per side of the road. The applicant has applied for a total of 21 ground signs associated with this development, far more than is permitted by the PZO.

The proposed subdivision will have six (6) recognized entrances and therefore only permits 12 total entrance signs (two per entrance, one per side of the road).

STAFF COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS:

1. The applicant will not be able to request for each monument sign to be two (2) permits, as the Plainfield Zoning Ordinance only allows for one sign per side of intersection.
2. The Town of Plainfield will not be allowing permission of use regarding trademarked property as it relates to this project.
3. The petitioner has noted the following with respect to the Findings of Fact:

The signage is important to creating a sense of place and reinforcing the prestige and quality of the neighborhood. Given the amount of right-of-way the Applicant will be dedicating to the Town for both a future roundabout on US-40 and a future north-south road connecting US-40 and CR 600 S/Hadley Road, the signage will have to be set back

much further than is typically the case, and a sign adhering to the smaller standards of the Plainfield Zoning Ordinance is unlikely to be visible from the current perimeter roads.

As noted above, The location referenced in the petitioner’s findings (the intersection of the proposed north–south local collector and U.S. 40 would not be considered an entrance to the subdivision for signage purposes. As a local collector, this roadway is intended to serve multiple properties and potential future residential developments. Locating subdivision signage at an intersection with a primary arterial could create confusion regarding access points and may negatively impact the perception or value of adjacent properties.

Notably, the easternmost entrance along US 40 is unaffected by the right-of-way dedication described by the petitioner but entry “columns” are proposed at this location.

4. It does not appear that the strict application of the zoning ordinance creates a practical difficulty in the use of the property. If rezoned, the property could be developed and used for residential purposes, including the installation of subdivision entry signage, in full compliance with the standards of the zoning ordinance. The request appears to be based on preferences rather than a necessity arising from unique site conditions or limitations.

MOTIONS

Option 1

Height, Size, Location, Number, and Location of Signs

I move that the Board of Zoning Appeals **approve / deny / continue** [BZA-25-080](#) – Requesting Variance of Development Standards from Sections 7.5.A.2 and 7.5.B of the Plainfield Zoning Ordinance regarding maximum allowable sign height, base height, size, number, and location of ground signs for a residential subdivision.

Finding that:

1. The approval **will not / will** be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community;
2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance **will not / will** be affected in a substantially adverse manner;
3. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance **will / will not** result in practical difficulties in the use of the property.

And that such approval shall be subject to the following conditions (if applicable):

1. Completion of the zone map amendment described in petition [RZ-25-069](#); and
2. Plan Commission approval of [PP-25-015](#).

Option 2

Motion 1 - North Entry Monument – Height and Size

The following motion would apply to the dimensions of the north entry monument sign. Motion 3 may be used to allow the sign at the proposed location, if desired.

I move that the Board of Zoning Appeals **approve / deny / continue** [BZA-25-080](#) – Requesting Variance of Development Standards from Sections 7.5.A.2 and 7.5B of the Plainfield Zoning Ordinance to increase

the maximum allowable sign height from 6' to 12'2", increase the allowable sign base height from 2' to 3.5', and to increase the maximum allowable size from 48 square feet to 129 square feet for one (1) ground sign.

Finding that:

1. The approval **will not** / **will** be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community:
2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance **will not** / **will** be affected in a substantially adverse manner:
3. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance **will** / **will not** result in practical difficulties in the use of the property.

And that such approval shall be subject to the following conditions (if applicable):

1. Completion of the zone map amendment described in petition [RZ-25-069](#); and
2. Plan Commission approval of [PP-25-015](#).

Motion 2 - South Entry Monument – Height and Size

The following motion would apply to the dimensions of the south entry monument sign. Motion 3 may be used to allow the sign at the proposed location, if desired.

I move that the Board of Zoning Appeals **approve** / **deny** / **continue** [BZA-25-080](#) – Requesting Variance of Development Standards from Sections 7.5.A.2 and 7.5.B of the Plainfield Zoning Ordinance to increase the maximum allowable sign height from 6' to 10', increase the allowable sign base height from 2' to 3.5', and to increase the maximum allowable size from 48 square feet to 75 square feet for one (1) ground sign.

Finding that:

1. The approval **will not** / **will** be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community:
2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance **will not** / **will** be affected in a substantially adverse manner:
3. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance **will** / **will not** result in practical difficulties in the use of the property.

And that such approval shall be subject to the following conditions (if applicable):

1. Completion of the zone map amendment described in petition [RZ-25-069](#); and
2. Plan Commission approval of [PP-25-015](#).

Motion 3 – Number and Location of Allowable Ground Signs

I move that the Board of Zoning Appeals **approve** / **deny** / **continue** [BZA-25-080](#) – Requesting Variance of Development Standards from Section 7.5.B of the Plainfield Zoning Ordinance to increase the number of allowable ground signs for platted residential subdivisions from 12 to 21 and to allow signs at locations other than a subdivision entrance.

Finding that:

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

2. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance **will not / will** be affected in a substantially adverse manner:
3. The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance **will / will not** result in practical difficulties in the use of the property.

And that such approval shall be subject to the following conditions (if applicable):

1. Completion of the zone map amendment described in petition [RZ-25-069](#); and
2. Plan Commission approval of [PP-25-015](#).