

TOWN OF PLAINFIELD BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS REPORT

DATE: December 15, 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

This petition was continued by the Board of Zoning Appeals at the November 17, 2025 meeting. The staff report for that meeting can be found [here](#). All monumentation being requested by the applicant may be found in the [Westlyn Entry Sign Exhibit](#). Variances being requested will be highlighted below.

Variance of Development Standards applications were submitted by Melissa Garrard on behalf of Pulte Homes of Indiana seeking 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 modify the allowable locations for subdivision entrance ground signs.

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:

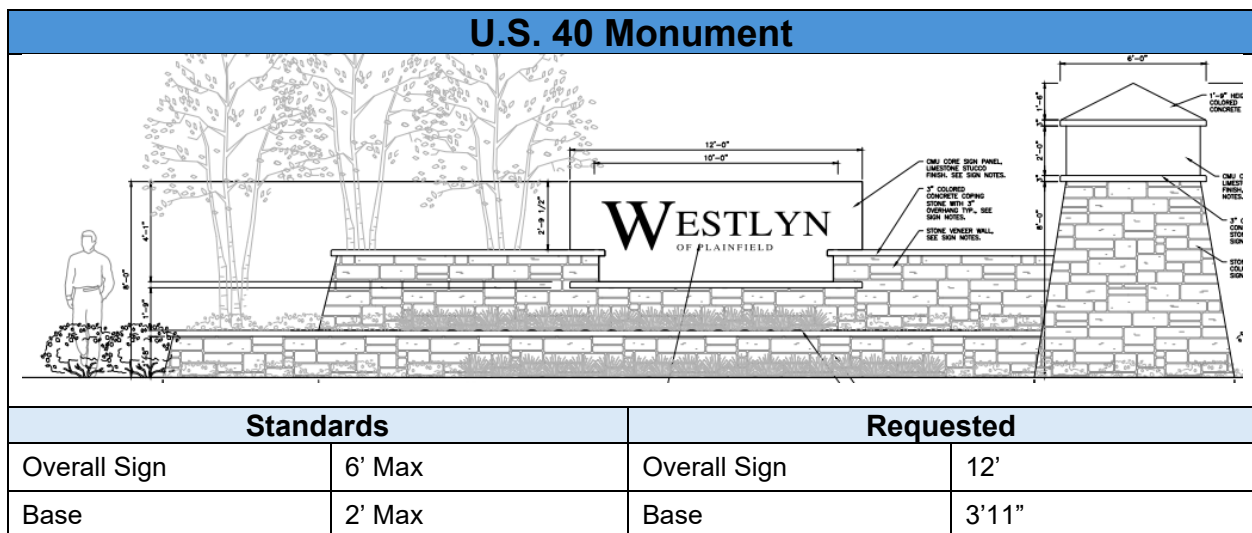
1. *The approval will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community:*
2. *The use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner:*
3. *The strict application of the terms of the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

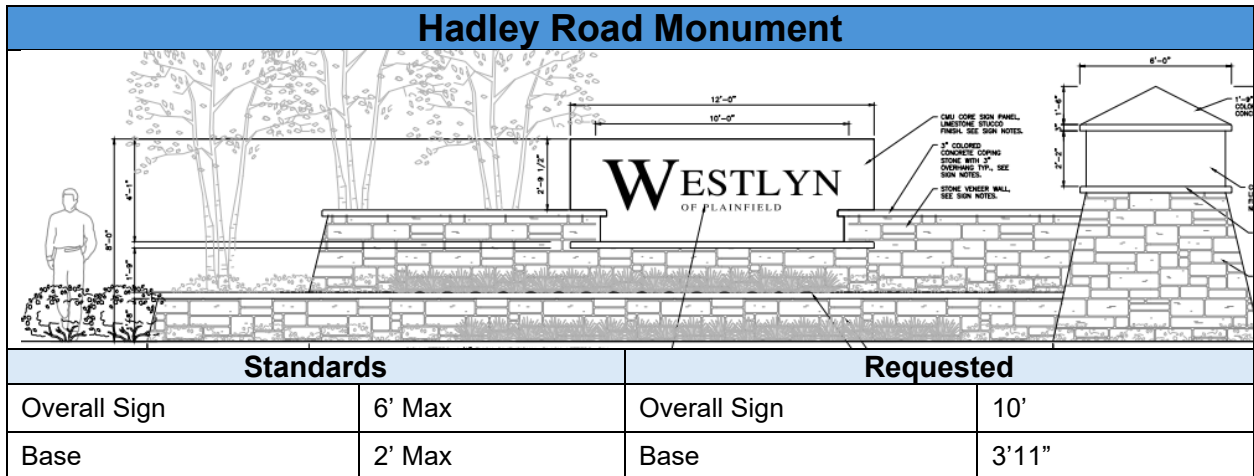
The ongoing request for the conversion of 217 acres from AG: Agriculture to a combination of R-3, R-4, and R-5 residential [Zone Map Amendment request](#) associated with this variance request received an unfavorable recommendation from the Plan Commission on 12-01-2025.

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).





Signage Location Variance of Development Standards

Section 7.5.B

The applicant has updated their overall signage plan and has included a map and corresponding legend in their resubmission. The figure 1 below, when paired with the included legend, the proposed location of each monument. Additionally, each requested variance is highlighted either on the map (red dashed circle – request for sign location variance) or in the legend (red text – request for sign/base height variance). A larger map may be viewed on pages 2 of the [Westlyn Entry Sign Exhibit](#).



Figure 1 – Location of all proposed subdivision entrance monuments

Indicates PZO Section 7.5.B Sign Location Variance Request

VARIANCE REQUEST SUMMARY						
Signage Type	Standard Sign Base	Requested Sign Base	Standard Sign Height	Requested Sign Height	Standard Sign Surface Area	Requested Sign Surface Area
North Monument (Qty: 1)	2' - 0" Max Height	3' - 11" Height*	6' - 0" Max Height	12' - 0" Height*	48 Square Feet	46 Square Feet
South Monument (Qty: 1)	2' - 0" Max Height	3' - 11" Height*	6' - 0" Max Height	10' - 0" Height*	48 Square Feet	46 Square Feet
Westlyn Entry Column (Qty: 8)	2' - 0" Max Height	0' - 0" Height	6' - 0" Max Height	6' - 0" Height	48 Square Feet	4 Square Feet
Enclave Entry Column (Qty: 2)	2' - 0" Max Height	0' - 0" Height	6' - 0" Max Height	6' - 0" Height	48 Square Feet	4 Square Feet
Blank Column (No Sign)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Indicates PZO Section 7.5.A.1 Sign Height & Base Variance Request

Figure 2, created by staff for the November BZA meeting, remains relevant for the applicant’s resubmittal. 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. Both green check marks and red X’s indicate where the applicant proposes putting signs, as shown in Figure 1.

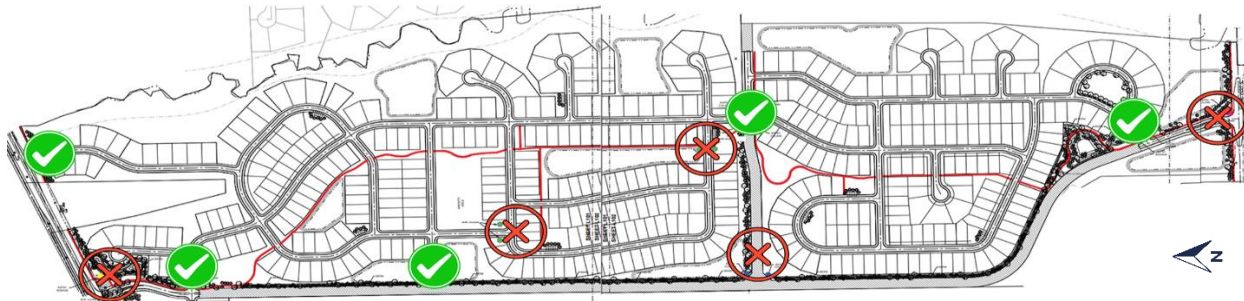


Figure 2 – Subdivision entrance monuments that are/are not permitted according to the Plainfield Zoning Ordinance

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 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.

Staff Comments

As outlined at the beginning of this report, Indiana Code requires all three statutory criteria be satisfied in writing for a variance to be granted. In this case, the third criterion remains unsubstantiated.

“The strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property.”

During the December 1, 2025 Plan Commission meeting, the applicant presented a PowerPoint slide that included the following statement:

“Pulte will return to the BZA on 12/16. While Pulte believes it has compelling reasons for the variances sought, ultimately, if its requests are denied, it will redesign the signage to strictly comply with the PZO”

This acknowledgement is important. The applicant has stated that a fully compliant sign package is achievable for the development. This statement weakens any claim of “practical difficulty” as defined by statute. A preference for a larger or more strategically located entry monument

does not constitute a necessity, nor does it meet the threshold for relief from the Town’s established sign regulations. Additionally, strict adherence to the Town’s sign regulations does not create a practical difficulty with respect to subdividing the land, constructing the approved residential uses, or the

Primary Plat - Entrance Monumentation

Pulte filed a revised signage plan with the BZA on 11/25, reducing the requested number of variances from five (5) to three (3):

Month	Reservations	Units	Revenue	Occupancy
Jan	10	10	\$10,000	100%
Feb	10	10	\$10,000	100%
Mar	10	10	\$10,000	100%
Apr	10	10	\$10,000	100%
May	10	10	\$10,000	100%
Jun	10	10	\$10,000	100%
Jul	10	10	\$10,000	100%
Aug	10	10	\$10,000	100%
Sep	10	10	\$10,000	100%
Oct	10	10	\$10,000	100%
Nov	10	10	\$10,000	100%
Dec	10	10	\$10,000	100%
Total	120	120	\$1,200,000	100%

reasonable use and enjoyment of those residences. The applicant's stated preference for enhanced entry signage is unrelated to the property's functional use and therefore does not meet the statutory threshold for a variance.

MOTIONS

Option 1

Sign Height, Base Height, 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, 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' and to increase the allowable sign base height from 2' to 3.5' 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' and to increase the allowable sign base height from 2' to 3.5' 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 –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 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](#).