

ROLL CALL

Scott Elzey	Geoff Lance
Harry Baumgartner, Jr.	Michael Karafin
Tyson Brooks	Tim Rohr
Rick Elwell	John Schuhmacher
Jarrold Hahn	Glen Werling
Bill Horan	

Michael Lautzenheiser, Jr., Director

On January 8, 2026, Michael Lautzenheiser called the meeting of the Area Plan Commission to order at 7:00 p.m., and eleven members were present for the roll call. Mr. Lautzenheiser welcomed Glen Werling to the board. Scott Elzey served as alternate for Vicki Andrews.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2026

President: Tyson Brooks

Motion to retain the same President: Jarrod Hahn

Second: Tim Rohr

Vote: 11-0

Vice-President: Bill Horan

Motion to retain the same President: Jarrod Hahn

Second: Tim Rohr

Vote: 11-0

Secretary: Michael Lautzenheiser, Jr

Motion to retain the same President: Jarrod Hahn

Second: Tim Rohr

Vote: 11-0

Appointment to the BZA: Tim Rohr

Motion to retain the same President: Jarrod Hahn

Second: Tim Rohr

Vote: 11-0

Plat Committee: Michael Lautzenheiser, Jr., Jarrod Hahn, Bill Horan, Nick Huffman, and Lynne Huffman

Motion to retain the same President: Jarrod Hahn

Second: Tim Rohr

Vote: 11-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Tim Rohr moved to approve the minutes with changes from the December 4, 2025, meeting. Jarrod Hahn seconded the motion, which carried 10-0-1, with Glen Werling abstaining due to not being present at the previous meeting.

OLD ITEMS:

There were no old items discussed.

NEW ITEMS:

A 26-01-01 JEFFERSON TWP. SW/4 15-28N-12E Meyer Properties LLC requests approval for rezoning to R-3. The property is located at 215 E Craig St., Ossian, IN 46777, and is currently zoned R-2.

Jason Meyer explained the rezoning request to R-3 and discussed the proposed project. There was discussion about the surrounding areas and the zoning of those properties. Tyson Brooks asked about on-street parking. Mr. Meyer said that there would be a garage and driveway parking for each unit. Geoff Lance asked how far the project was in the building phase. Mr. Meyer said that nothing was built. Glen Werling mentioned the demo work that has already been done. Scott Elzey talked about the property lines in that area of town. There was a board discussion on the difference between R-2 and R-3. It was mentioned that a development plan wouldn't be needed unless the project exceeded 3 units. The board discussed the site's layout.

Tyson Brooks opened the floor for public comment on this petition. Teresa Bradtmueller expressed concern about parking availability. She said there was no parking on Mill St. and that Craig St is always full. She said that Melching is a very busy street and that kids play in the road since there are no sidewalks. She didn't want to see an increase in traffic as it's already busy enough. She also talked about water run-off and the drainage concerns. Alexis Moyer mentioned the email that she sent to the office. She has concerns about the increased traffic since she has 6 children at home. She also mentioned the traffic issues in the area due to the elementary school's drop-off line. She mentioned the upcoming BZA petition and the added concern about moving the building closer to the property line/road. Mr. Brooks closed the public comment portion, as no additional members of the audience wished to speak about this petition.

Jarrold Hahn said that the town has its own stormwater drainage board. Glen Werling said it's made up of volunteers, and there are no members at present. Scott Elzey talked about the drainage in the area and how it is lacking. Tyson Brooks and the board's discussion protocol for resolving drainage issues. Mr. Werling said that he would bring it up to the town. Mr. Hahn asked about the possibility of having a sidewalk as part of the project and rezoning. Michael Lautzenheiser said it would be helpful to set up the parking area. Geoff Lance asked if there was a sidewalk fund to help residents fix or install sidewalks. Mr. Werling said that there wasn't, but that he'd bring it to the board. There was a discussion on how, if this were a duplex, then we wouldn't be hearing any of this. There was another discussion on the utility connections and where the lines ran. There was a review of the types of motions available for rezoning. Tim Rohr asked about lighting on the property, and there was a discussion on lighting in the surrounding areas.

Michael Lautzenheiser said that the community can help keep the storm inlets on the road clear of debris.

Motion to Send a Do Pass Recommendation to Ossian Town Board with the recommendation that the property owner install a sidewalk with the project along the west side of Melching between Craig & Mill: Jarrod Hahn

Second: Harry Baumgartner Jr.

Vote: 10-0-1 (Michael Karafin)

OTHER BUSINESS:**V2023-021: Rodger Watson, 7666 S 200 E, Bluffton (Junk Accumulation)**

Ellen Rasawehr, the sister of Rodger Watson, gave an update on the items removed from the property and the work done to remove them. She said that her brother is not in good health. She also said that the property is a mess and that, to remove the items that need to be removed, the brush must be removed as well. Tyson Brooks said that if progress is happening, he's okay with continuing it. Geoff Lance added that as long as it's good progress. There was a discussion about how violations work and the timeline for completing violations.

Motion to continue to July 2, 2026: Jarrod Hahn

Second: Geoff Lance

Vote: 10-0-1 (Michael Karafin)

V2023-023: Charles Captain, (Junk Accumulation)

Chad Captain was there on behalf of the violation. He said he was behind on getting work done due to his wife's and his own health issues. He's taken 3 loads of scrap off the property and is still working on cleaning the property up. He said he asked for a list of items to be removed; however, he hasn't received it. Tim Captain asked about the parcels in question, noting that they had different ownership, and he was never notified of the violation. There was a discussion on what was junk vs what was agricultural. Michael Lautzenheiser said that there has been progress, and he was ok with an extension to finalize the violation cure. He will meet at the site next week to go over the items with the property owner.

Motion to continue to July 2, 2026: Geoff Lance

Second: Rick Elwell

Vote: 10-0-1 (Michael Karafin)

V2023-030: Jeffrey C Newman, (Junk Accumulation)

Jeffrey C. Newman attended the meeting to provide an update on the violation. He said that originally, he had over 40 vehicles and is now down to 26. He asked the board for a 24-month continuation. Michael Lautzenheiser said that Mr. Newman has come in monthly with updates. Mr. Newman said that his barn is in bad condition and needs a new roof. Once that's done, he'd be able to move several cars into the barn. The board set a goal of 10 cars to be removed before the upcoming July meeting.

Motion to continue to July 2, 2026: Jarrod Hahn

Second: Bill Horan

Vote: 10-0-1 (Michael Karafin)

V2024-014: Lewis A West, 6333 S 600 W - 90, Warren (Junk Accumulation)

Michael Lautzenheiser gave an update that no progress had been made. He said the requested letter had just been sent to Mr. West and asked the board to continue the violation. There was a discussion on continuing the violation for 30 days.

Motion to continue to February 5, 2026: Jarrod Hahn

Second: Bill Horan
Vote: 11-0

Ordinance Update - Solar Amendments

Michael Lautzenheiser gave an update on which boards have reviewed and/or adopted the proposed amendments. He said that Vera Cruz adopted the ordinance; however, the County Commissioners and the City of Bluffton would possibly have changes they would like to see made before voting to adopt the amendments.

2024 Year-End Report

Michael Lautzenheiser recapped the Area Plan Commission and GIS items for the previous year and asked the board to approve the document.

Motion to Approve with changes discussed: Jarrod Hahn
Second: Tim Rohr
Vote: 11-0

2025 Plan of Operations

Michael Lautzenheiser recapped all aspects of the office, Area Plan Commission, and GIS as we look at the current year and the items we want to accomplish. He asked the board to approve the document.

Motion to Approve: Tim Rohr
Second: Jarrod Hahn
Vote: 11-0

Board Member Contact Sheet

The board was asked to review their contact information and inform the office of any changes.

WELLS COUNTY VISION 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROGRESS:

Michael Lautzenheiser gave an update on the Master Plan and how Bluffton had 1 vision team left.

REVITALIZATION & TRAILS UPDATES:

Michael Lautzenheiser said that the CRP applications have been sent out. He also talked about the Ossian TIF downtown project. He gave an update on the Poka-Bache trail and timeline.

HOUSING STUDY UPDATE:

Michael Lautzenheiser talked about creative ways to produce housing. Rick Elwell provided information about the January 15 meeting at the Dream Center regarding the OCRA grant for owner-occupied single-family homes.

ADVISORY:

Michael Lautzenheiser said the office would keep an eye on bills at the State House and notify the board of any that would be of interest.

The February 5, 2026, meeting of the Wells County Area Plan Commission was confirmed.

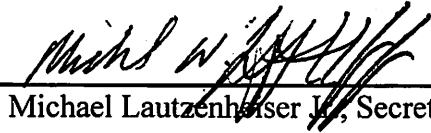
ADJOURN:

John Schuhmacher moved to adjourn the meeting, which Michael Karafin seconded. January 8, 2026, the Area Plan Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.



Tyson Brooks, President

ATTEST:



Michael Lautzenheiser II, Secretary