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**PORTER COUNTY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE  
January 29, 2020 – MEETING MINUTES**

LOCATION: County Administrative Center, Ste 205      TIME: 9:00 a.m.  
155 Indiana Avenue, Valparaiso IN

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Robert Thompson, Director  
Kevin Breitzke, County Surveyor  
Dan Boyd, Environmental Health Specialist  
Michael Novotney, County Engineer  
Matt Gavelek, Highway Engineer  
Rich Sexton - Highway Department  
Kristy Marasco, Assistant Director  
Monica Gee, Adam McAlpine, Jim Polarek

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**Docket No.: UV-19-0080**

**Applicant: Humane Indiana Inc. c/o Brian Fitzpatrick  
Porter County Wildlife**

**Location:** 571 North 450 East Valparaiso, Washington Township

**Zoning:** RR

**Acreage:** 3.40 +/- acres

**Request:** Informational review requested by Board of Zoning Appeals; to allow wildlife education classes in an existing single-family home located in Rural Residential (RR) District.

Brian Fitzpatrick presented on behalf of the applicant. On their 26 acres there is a 100-year-old house. They rehabilitate and release injured wildlife. They run education camps out of the house. In looking to improve the house they found there is a conservation easement. They can only work within the footprint of that house. That would be costly. They have been negotiating with the owners of the house across the street to acquire it and use it for the camps.

Discussion: Currently they run educational classes. They have sufficient parking. Larger classes are off campus. Parking along the road will not be allowed. Class size averages between 10 to 15. They were asked to contact the building commissioner to make sure the State Building Commissioner will not require anything since it is not residential. The camps are inside and run 9-2 weekdays. The other programs are outside. They should contact the Health Department and make sure the septic is sufficient.

Any land that is disturbed on this property that affects more than 5,000 feet will need to be reviewed by staff. Vehicles will be parking on the west side of the road. They should look into placing signs warning drivers of people crossing the road.

This case is an informal review and does not require a motion.

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**Docket No.: UV-20-0002**

**Applicant: A Mulch Depot, Inc. – Reeds Nursery**

**Location:** 910 US Highway 30, Valparaiso, Center Township

**Zoning:** I3

**Acreage:** 13.3 +/- Acres

**Request:** Informal review; to allow construction of up to three (3) warehouses.

Their Master Plan calls for approximately 25 buildings. Today they are requesting approval for three buildings. If successful, they would then go through the process of requesting a zoning change. There will be no sewer or water on the property. Storm water drainage will be designed and reviewed. Currently the land is being used for mulch.

Discussion: Bob Thompson suggested within 2-5 years they make the determination to down zone the property. The Petitioner feels three buildings will give them an indication if it is something they want to pursue further. Right now, everything drains to the south east to the existing ponds that are on Reith Riley property. They intend to create a new drainage pond on the south east side that will be on the Petitioner's property. The mulch will be separated from the buildings and will be in the back of the property. They will need to make sure the mulch is contained so it is not getting into the storm water drainage system or tracked out on the roads. They will utilize the same entrance as AmeriGas. It was suggested the Petitioner reach out to the City of Valparaiso in regard to access. They have some interesting plans to improve the aesthetics in that area.

This case is an informal review and does not require a motion.

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**Docket No.: UV-20-0003**

**Applicant: Green Sense Farms Holdings, Inc. c/o Attorney Todd Leeth**

**Location:** East side of Meridian Road (south of Toll Road) Chesterton

**Zoning:** R1

**Acreage:** 10 +/- acres

**Request:** Informal review; to allow a greenhouse and vertical farm in Low Density Single-family (R1) District.

Todd Leeth presented on behalf of applicant. The property is triangular. The north side of the property is the toll road. This is their second Porter County vertical farm and complex. The proposal is for a 15,000 sq. ft. vertical farm and office building and 80,000 sq. ft. greenhouse.

This will be heard before the BZA for a Use Variance. Once given approval, they will do design and engineering and will be back to this Board for review again.

Discussion: Conceptually they expect to have part time and full-time employees in the area of 17 fulltime equivalents. Hours will be one shift 7:00-4:00 and half day on Saturday. They expect five semi-trucks per month on the property and maybe one or two box trucks per week. There will be one well and one commercial septic.

Drainage is easterly. It needs to be watched to make sure the drainage from this project does not affect a farm tile currently there. They will have to have soil borings done. The State will review the well and septic and then have the local department issue the permits. They expect the height to be 20' for the vertical farm. They were asked to have the entrance/exit at a location so it is not in line with the house across the street. Lights from vehicles would be a nuisance if they were shining into the house. This is not a commercial nursery. No public will be coming to the property. There is a guardrail on the road over the toll road. They need to make sure there is enough sight distance. The Petitioner should talk to the Highway Department regarding the route to be used by trucks coming to the property.

This case is an informal review and does not require a motion.

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There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.