

WHITLEY COUNTY ADVISORY PLAN COMMISSION

STAFF REPORT

24-W-SUBD-17 PRIMARY PLAT APPROVAL

OCTOBER 16, 2024

Dennis Lincoln

AGENDA ITEM: 2

“Bluebell Forest Hideaway”, South Meridian Road, ¼ mile north of 400 South

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

Current Zoning:	AG, Agricultural		<u>Code Minimum</u>	<u>Proposed Minimum</u>
Area of plat:	21.96 acres	Lot size:	1.837 acre	8.28 acre
Number of lots:	2 lots	Lot width:	225'	443.23'
Dedicated ROW:	0.06 acre	Lot frontage:	50'	50'

The petitioner, owner of the subject property, is requesting preliminary plat approval for a two-lot subdivision to be named “Bluebell Forest Hideaway.” The proposed plat is located on the east side of Meridian Road, ¼ mile south of 400 South, in Section 35 of Columbia Township. The property is currently unimproved, with most of the area being tilled and about 7 acres being wooded. The 50’ wide required road frontage for Lot 2 will be acquired from the neighboring property that is in common ownership, while a portion of the parent tract will be added to the adjacent parcels to maintain their minimum areas.

The purpose of the proposed plat is to create new building sites for resale. Platting is required due to the number of previous splits since 1979. These are the first two platted lots from the 2018 parcel, so no rezoning is required.

The proposed plat appears to comply with the development standards of the zoning code as shown in the above table.

UTILITY AND REVIEW COMMENTS

Comment letters received (as of date of staff report)

Electric	X	Health	X	Cable TV		Parcel Cmte.	X
Gas		Co. Engineer	X	Sanitary Sewer	NA		
Telephone		SWCD	X	Water	NA		

The Soil & Water Conservation District commented that more than 80% of the area of Lot #1 is covered by hydric (wet) soils and there may be a high water table that limits construction. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Wetlands Mapper shows a large possible wetland on the northeast corner of Lot #1, but the actual presence of a wetland requires onsite determination by a qualified environmental professional. Also provided were routine comments regarding erosion control and guidelines to be provided to the applicant.

The County Engineer noted the presence of a legal drain on the lots along with concerns about its condition. He also stated that the buildable area of Lot 1 would be highly constrained due to potential wetlands and soil conditions. The extensiveness of this would need to be identified prior to development of the lots.

Health Department commented that soil analysis had been completed for Lots 1 and 2.

The Recorder noted that the length of the proposed subdivision name would not be able to be indexed properly and would be truncated. That would not create a duplication problem, but reducing the length was still recommended.

A 30’ wide right-of-way for county road would be dedicated. 10’ drainage and/or utility easements are shown on the perimeter of the lots.

No covenants and restrictions were submitted as of the time of writing.

WAIVER REQUESTS

There are no waiver requests.

REVIEW CRITERIA

Subdivision primary plats are reviewed for compliance with the standards of Subdivision Control Ordinance and the Zoning Code. Staff finds that the proposed primary plat appears consistent with the standards, with the following condition(s):

1. Two septic sites per lot are to be determined and approved by the Health Department prior to issuance of a building permit for a primary structure.
2. Remainder pieces of the parent tract must be combined with adjacent parcels.
3. Secondary plat approval delegated to the Plan Commission staff.

Date report completed: 10/03/2024

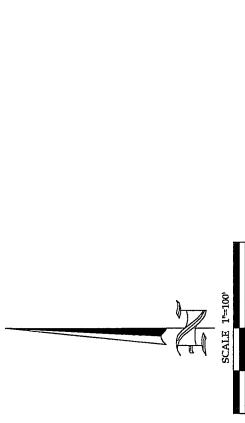
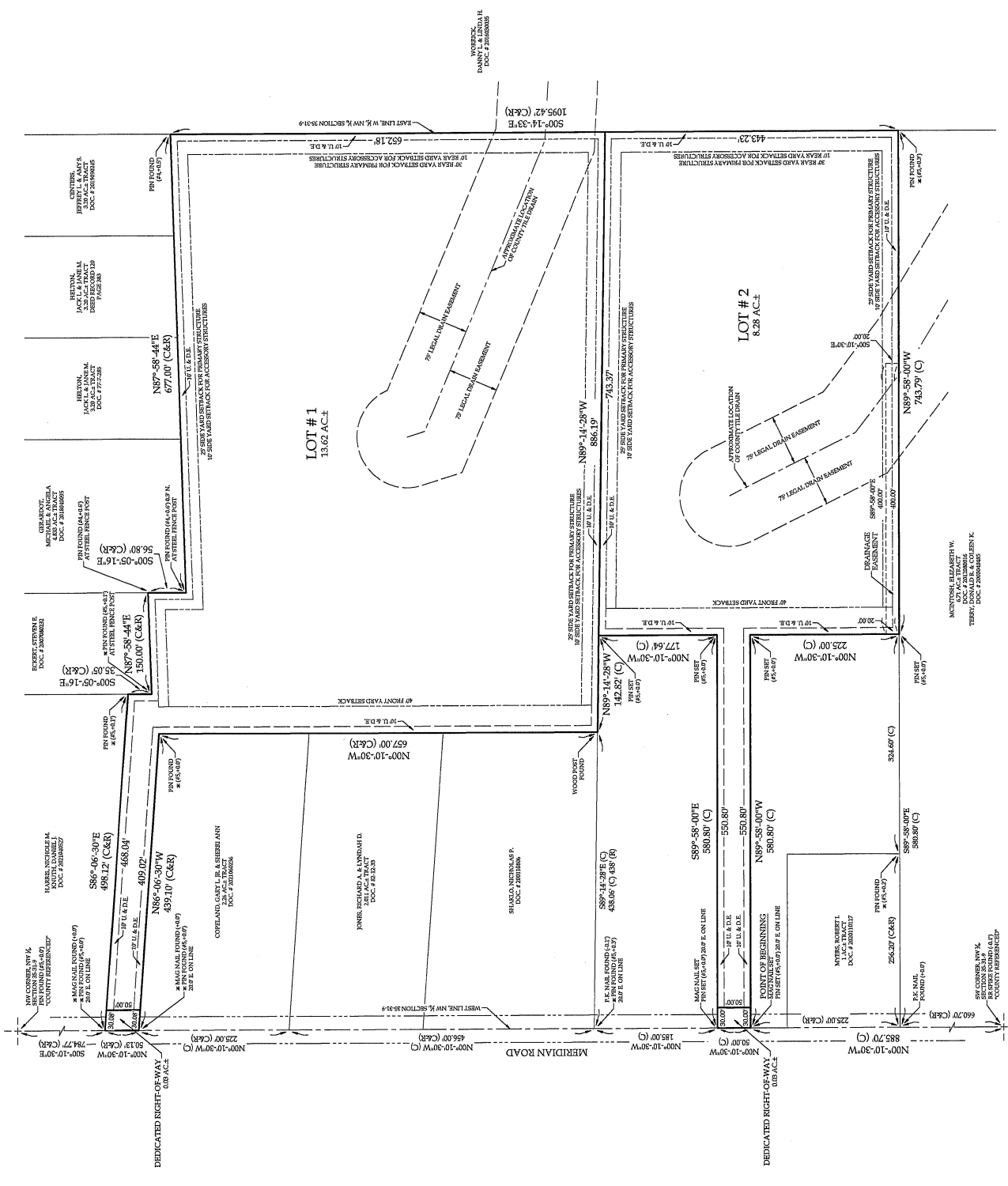
PLAN COMMISSION RECORD OF ACTION

Motion: By: _____ Second by: _____
 Approve —
 Approve w/conditions —
 Deny —

<i>Vote:</i>	Baker	Banks	Drew	Emerick	Green	Hodges	Johnson	Kurtz-Seslar	Wolf
<i>Yes</i>									
<i>No</i>									
<i>Abstain</i>									

BLUEBELL FOREST HIDEAWAY (PRELIMINARY)

SITUATED IN THE WEST HALF OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 35, TOWNSHIP 31 NORTH, RANGE 9 EAST, WHITLEY COUNTY, INDIANA



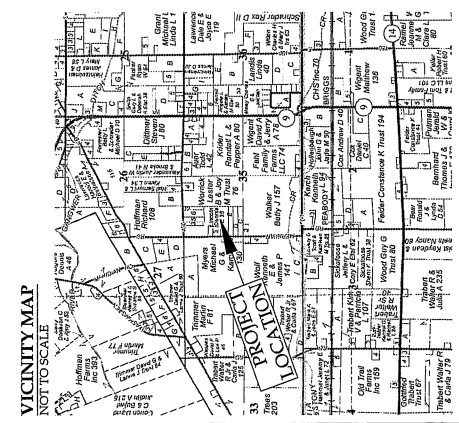
LEGEND
 C = CALCULATED
 P = PLAT
 R = RECORDED
 * = WALKER MONUMENT
 U. & D.E. = UTILITY & DRAINAGE EASEMENT

FIELD WORK COMPLETED ON 8-27-2024

BASIS OF BEARINGS
 The basis of bearings for this drawing is GPS bearings. Multiple GPS observations utilizing a WGS84 signal and a local coordinate grid were utilized this survey.

AREA NOTES
 The Plat of Bluebell Forest Hideaway contains 21.96 acres. Lot Number 1 contains 13.62 acres. Lot Number 2 contains 8.28 acres. There are 0.06 acres of Dedicated Right-of-Way.

SURVEY RECORDING NOTE
 The original boundary survey for this Plat is recorded in Document Number 2024090197 in the records of Whitley County, Indiana.



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 122 WEST VAN BUREN STREET
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LAND SURVEYING, CIVIL ENGINEERING, & LAND PLANNING

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**Whitley County Soil and Water Conservation District
788 West Connexion Way—Suite C
Columbia City, IN 46725
Phone 260-244-6266 ext. 3**



October 4, 2024

Brent Bockelman, Planner I
Columbia City/Whitley County
Joint Planning & Building Department
220 W. Van Buren Street, Suite 204
Columbia City, Indiana 46725

Re: Bluebell Forest Hideaway
Preliminary Plat

Construction activities that disturb one acre or more of land on either of the two lots will require coverage by IDEM's construction stormwater general permit. Coverage is obtained by submitting a stormwater pollution prevention plan to my office for review and subsequently, by submitting a Notice of Intent to IDEM. If less than one acre of land will be disturbed, permit coverage is not required but appropriate erosion and sedimentation controls should still be installed during construction. More information is available on the IDEM website: <https://www.in.gov/idem/stormwater/construction-land-disturbance-permitting/>

According to the USDA Soil Survey, more than 80% of the area of Lot #1 is covered by hydric (wet) soils. These soils, the Muskego muck (Mz) and Pewamo (Pw) are noted for high water tables in winter and spring, ponding of stormwater runoff, and low strength. Generally, they are considered unsuitable or severely limited for buildings, roads, or septic systems.

According to the Survey, the Blount (BmB2) and Glynwood (GsB2, GtB3) soils on the lots are prone to wetness and likely to have high water tables in the winter and spring. The Survey advises against basement construction. Installing subsurface drains can help control the water table.

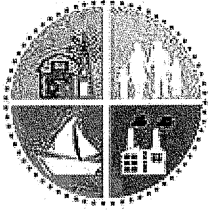
The Blount, Glynwood, and Morley (MxC3) soils on the lots are highly erodible. Minimizing disturbed areas, maintaining buffer strips of grass or vegetation around the perimeters of building sites, and planting temporary cover on areas left idle for more than one week can reduce the potential for erosion. In addition, the Glynwood and Morley soils have the potential to shrink and swell. Strengthening footings and foundations and backfilling with coarse textured material may help reduce damage due to shrinking and swelling soils.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Wetlands Mapper shows a large possible wetland on the northeast corner of Lot #1. I recommend early coordination with IDEM's Wetlands Section if any earthwork or construction is planned for the area occupied by the possible wetland. The actual presence of a wetland requires an onsite determination by a qualified environmental professional. More information about IDEM's wetlands program is available on the website: <https://www.in.gov/idem/wetlands/home/grading-or-clearing-you-may-have-wetlands/>

Sincerely yours,

Jon Gotz

Jon Gotz
Whitley County Soil and Water
Conservation District



WHITLEY COUNTY
INDIANA

October 10, 2024

Brent Bockelman
Columbia City/Whitley County
Planning & Building Department
220 W. Van Buren Street Suite 204
Columbia City, Indiana 46725

RE: Subdivision Plat 24-W-SUBD-17
Engineer Review

Dear Brent,

The subject subdivision plat have been reviewed for both drainage and highway requirements.

Drainage:

- There is a regulated drain on each of the two proposed lots of the subdivision. Any development, including woody vegetation, structures and driveways, will need approval from the Whitley County Drainage Board to be placed within the 75 foot easement from the top of bank of the drain
- These drains have been reported to the Drainage Board as non-functional and large areas on both lots around the drains regularly floods. A project to fix these drains has not been developed yet.
- Approximately 8 acres of the northeast portion of Lot #1 is most likely a wetland; it is on the national wetland map, it is mapped as muck soil, which regularly produces wetlands, and the vegetation is visibly different on the aerial imagery.
- I do not have enough information to render the site unbuildable, but much consideration would be needed before developing these lots.

County Highways:

- A drive permit will be required from the Whitley County Highway Department for each drive if not acquired already.
- There are no apparent restrictions due to sight distance, but sight distance will be reassessed when a permit is filed.
- When the driveway permit is filed, depending on the location, the appropriate culvert size will be determined.
- Finally, at a minimum, the first ten feet of the driveway needs to fall away from the edge of pavement, for drainage purposes.

Thank you,

Brad Allen, PE
Whitley County Engineer

WHITLEY COUNTY
Surveyor & Engineer Dept
County Government Center
220 West Van Buren St., Suite 203
Columbia City, IN 46725
Phone (260) 248-3107