



# SCHILLING

## DEVELOPMENT

OFFICE  
8900 Wicker Ave. (US 41)  
St. John, IN 46373

MAIL  
PO Box 677  
St John, IN 46373

(219) 365-6000

SCHILLINGDEVELOPMENT.COM

September 20, 2018

Town of St. John Board of Zoning Appeals  
10995 W. 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
St. John, IN 46373  
Attn.: Mr. Paul Panczuk, Chairman

Dear Mr. Panczuk and members of the BZA,

We are writing in response to the multiple (approximately 16?) variances requested by Crew Car Wash (Case 2018-0014). As you are aware, this corner property is a part of the historic, main intersection of the Town of St. John. This property is protected by the "U.S. Highway 41 Overlay District" (Section 8.4 in the current St. John Zoning Ordinance). To quote the Ordinance: *"US Highway 41 is an important retail corridor to the Town and is a premier commercial retail location and employment center whose viability, quality, and character are important to the community, to adjacent residents, to employees, to business owners, and to taxing districts...The purpose of the US 41 overlay district is to preserve the aesthetic qualities of those bordering properties through the establishment of high standards for buildings, landscaping, and other improvements constructed on the properties within the US 41 District"*.

To grant all or any of the requested variances would defeat the entire purpose of the Overlay District and send a message that future variances in this area will be acceptable. The use and value of the area adjacent to the property (and effectively the entire Town) will be affected in a substantially adverse manner. We respectfully request that you deny any variances from the Ordinance for this project.

In addition, although this may come at the Plan Commission level, any and all development or redevelopment at this intersection must dedicate substantial additional right-of-way. Per the Town of St John's 2016 thoroughfare plan:

(Page 10) *"New developments should have the required Right-of-ways dedicated at the time of planning approval."*

(Page 2) *"In areas of intense commercial development and added auxiliary lanes, the needed Right-of-way width may be 120' or greater."*

The existing right-of-way's on the east side of US 41 and south side of 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue are 30'. If the recommended (and necessary) 60' Right-of-way are requested at the Plan Commission level. The current site plan will likely require additional variances due to setback requirements.

Sincerely,

Jack A. Slager, Development Manager

Town of St. John Board of Zoning Appeals  
10995 W. 93rd Ave.  
Saint John, IN 46373

Re: Car wash variance request

September 20, 2018

To whom it may concern,

We, Frank Schilling and Dean Schilling, have become aware of an application for zoning variances for the property located on the south east corner of US 41 and 93<sup>rd</sup> Ave.

As lifelong residents of the town of St. John, we would like to voice concerns we have for this proposed development and change of use. We have also notified the land owner and developer of our concerns.

Our concern is in regards to the change of use from Professional Office to a Car Wash. Specifically, we are concerned as to how a proposed car wash and the new and consistent noise generated by any blowers, vacuums and excessive amount of car doors closing along with car radios and consistent excessive visual activity that would be introduced would negatively impact the historic church property atmosphere and use that lies directly across the street.

We feel that whatever redevelopment use comes to these corners should specifically be devoid of creating unwanted noise and excessive activity that could interfere with the use of the neighboring properties (example- a sit down restaurant would be more suitable than a drive through restaurant with drive through speaker and potential loud car radios)

About the historic Saint John the Evangelist Church property

- The church was started by the town founder and was the first church in Lake County and one of the first in the new State of Indiana
- The church, cemetery and school predate the construction of US 41 and the corners in question and are actively used daily for quiet and prayerful activities
- The main church building that faces the property seeking redevelopment is used for regular holy masses including for the neighboring school children, Mass of Christian Burial, Weddings and other regular masses
- The historic Log Cabin chapel is used for 24/7 for Holy Eucharistic adoration which includes at least two people in non-stop quiet prayerful devotion
- The historic cemetery is an actively used burial place and place of quiet reflection
- The historic school is actively a central part of quiet learning and outdoor play by hundreds of elementary students

About the corners

- The corners are the unofficial center of town and unofficially represent the towns image to residents and passersby
- The corners are one of the highest elevations in Lake County and their prominence is why they were chosen for the location of the church and center of town

- The corners experience an ongoing and severe lack of right of way for the current and future amount of traffic

Our connection with the corners

- We were both baptized, married and will be buried on the church property at this corner
- Our family has recently donated major upgrades for the benefit of the church grounds users and passersby including the illumination of the historic church, log cabin chapel and cemetery grounds and installed extensive outdoor seating areas for quiet and prayerful reflection on the grounds
- Our family built and donated the four lane Wall Street bypass of the US41 and 93<sup>rd</sup> intersection in the 1980's due to the up to 30 minute traffic jams that existed at the time (and we continue to experience)
- We have continued to lobby the town, county and state government to dramatically improve this intersection to provide improved quality of life for residents and return the residents tax dollars for needed improvements

We feel these corners set the tone of the town and that the needed redevelopment will set precedent for other developments and redevelopments around town. If the most prominent and historic corners of town are not used to their highest and best potential, why would the town planners, residents and businesses expect the other parcels around town to be used to their highest and best uses.

We respectfully ask that the developer withdraw the proposed redevelopment and design a redevelopment that fits with the current use of professional office or similar and that all residents of the town can be proud of and that enhance the neighboring properties and uses.

Sincerely,

Frank Schilling

Dean Schilling

There is an excellent historical account of the founding of the Town of Saint John and Saint John the Evangelist church on the town's website at [www.stjohnin.com/community/history](http://www.stjohnin.com/community/history)