

**Town Council Meeting**  
**Monday, January 10, 2022**  
**6:00 P.M. Edinburgh High School Cafeteria**

Edinburgh Town Council met in a regular session on Monday, January 10, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. at the Edinburgh High School Cafeteria, 300 Keeley Street, Edinburgh, Indiana.

Prior year President Jeff Simpson called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Members answering roll call ((e) represents virtual attendance):** Councilwoman Dawn Graham, Councilwoman Miriam Rooks, Councilman Ryan Piercefield, and Councilman Jeff Simpson. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Scott Finley, Town Attorney Dustin Huddleston, and Town Manager Dan Cartwright. Debbie Buck was absent.

**Election of Officers** – Councilwoman Graham made a motion to appoint Ryan Piercefield as President. Councilman Simpson seconded. Motion carried.

Councilman Simpson made a motion to appoint Dawn Graham as Vice President. Councilwoman Rooks seconded. Motion carried.

**Minutes** – Council Meeting of December 29, 2021. Councilman Simpson made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Councilwoman Graham seconded. Motion carried.

**Appointments to Library Board** – Mr. Cartwright said there are two vacant seats on the Library board. The first is held by Lori Henderson. It is recommended that her term be renewed for another 4 years. The second was held by Cindy Bechtel who can no longer serve on the board. The recommendation is to fill that seat with Bill Jones.

Councilman Simpson made a motion to fill the two vacant library board seats with Lori Henderson and Bill Jones. Councilwoman Graham seconded. Motion carried.

**Resolution 2022-1 LB Mold Tax Abatement** – Planning Director Wade Watson said this was brought before the council at the last meeting. The council voted to allow Mr. Huddleston to draft a resolution for the abatement. The resolution is ready for approval by the council. There was an error on the legal description that will be amended.

Councilwoman Graham made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-1. Councilman Simpson seconded. Motion carried.

Councilwoman Graham made a motion to allow President Piercefield to sign the SB-1 and the Memorandum of understanding on behalf of the council. Councilwoman Rooks seconded. Motion carried.

**Ordinance 2021-25 Amending the PUD for Timbergate (Second Reading)** – Mr. Huddleston said this ordinance would amend the standards of the current PUD for the Timbergate housing development. The council needs to adopt procedures for this hearing for the benefit of both the petitioner and the remonstrators. He recommended using the same procedures the Planning Commission used. The petitioner would get 20 minutes to explain changes, the remonstrators would get 20 minutes to explain their stance, and the petitioner would get 10 minutes to respond.

Councilwoman Graham made a motion to adopt the procedures proposed by Mr. Huddleston. Councilwoman Rooks seconded. Motion carried.

Mr. Watson presented the staff report to the council. He explained that the changes would only effect sections 3 and 4 that have not been platted. Timbergate is zoned R3, medium density. The zoning ordinances require the PUD to be updated after 5 years. It has been renewed and Gradison Development would like to alter the PUD. They would like to shrink the lot sizes from 80 feet to 70 feet and reduce the minimum square footage of the dwelling from 1500 to 1270 which is the minimum for R3. It would also establish a Homeowner's Association which would require 25% masonry on the exterior and a bump out on the rear of the dwelling with landscaping. It would prohibit fences and vinyl siding. This has been a banner year for construction in Timbergate with 10 homes built in 2021. The staff recommendation is for approval of amendments to the PUD with the stipulations in the staff report.

**Petitioners**

Adam Mears of Gradison Land Development gave a PowerPoint presentation. He said Gradison has accepted all the adjustments recommended by the town. He showed concept plan of the homes that would be built. The current PUD calls for all brick. Architecture has changed in the last 20 years and that is not necessarily what people want. The development has had about 70 houses in 20 years. Gradison plans to

build 48 houses per year. That would complete the development in 4 years. The average sale price would be \$325,000. The total AV to the town would be around \$60 million. If the PUD is not amended to allow 70-foot lots, the AV would drop by about \$7,000,000. This still leaves about 30 feet between each house. The investment cost for Gradison will be over \$9,000,000. An entrance will be added on County Line Road that will be landscaped. He said he does not believe these houses would be used as comps for the custom homes currently in Timbergate. They will be two separate neighborhoods. Gradison would be in charge of the HOA with a professional management company. He gave renderings of possible products as well as signage. The smallest home would be 1,335 square feet. Timbergate will not develop with the current plan.

Mr. Cartwright said at the planning commission meeting it was said that the smallest home would be 1,150 square feet.

Mr. Mears said to meet the town recommendations they dropped the 1,150 square foot model. They will offer 4 models starting at 1,335 square feet.

Mr. Huddleston said because of the changes, if the council would like to approve the amendment it would need to go back before the planning commission. The Planning Commission would then approve or deny. If they approved, the PUD would be amended. If they denied, it would come back to the council for approval. The council can also not consider any presented changes and approve or deny the current proposal.

**Remonstrators**

Paul Owens of 1141 E. Main Cross Street said he collected 270 signatures against the development. 190 were registered voters within the town. The petitioners said 25% would be masonry. The change says that 25% of the front facade would be brick. He believes this would be a detriment to the golf course. As a golfer, he has played on courses that have houses like these and it hinders the experience. Also, the amendment says they have the right, not the obligation, to enforce the HOA rules. The town has one chance to build this area right. The problem at Timbergate isn't the development, it's the owners of the land.

Robert Tetiken of 202 St. Andrews Avenue said he has lived in Timbergate for 5 years just before the new developments started. Development has increased and assessed values have risen. He wants to help the council understand the value of Timbergate. Edinburgh has a great location for logistics. His business is looking at the possibility of moving to the Edinburgh area from Franklin. Tax abatements in Franklin and Greenwood are a little stricter now because of the increased demand in the land. Timbergate does not need workforce housing. Timbergate is a gem that brings value to Edinburgh. Gradison is not the development for Timbergate.

Robert Dengel of 204 St. Andrews Avenue said after the planning commission meeting, he sent a letter to Gradison expressing concerns but never got a response. He produced an excel sheet showing the average size of the current houses. The average home was about 2,100 square feet with the smallest being 1,500 square feet. Half of the homes in Timbergate have 3 car garages. Gradison does not have that type of product available. Mr. Mears said he believes the new homes would sell for \$325,000. The two most recent custom homes sold at Timbergate sold for \$300,000 and \$325,000. He does not believe the new development homes will sell for \$325,000. Timbergate was stagnant for 10 years. In the last 4 years, 20 homes have been built. He also believes the current owners of the land are the issue.

Jim Dunn of 1122 Constitution Drive said he has been in residential construction for 20 years. It is not just Edinburgh that has been stagnant for 20 years. All building is now increasing. He explained that in his experience, developers maintain the HOA regulations while they are developing the land because they want the neighborhood to look enticing. After development is complete, the HOA enforcement falls off. Why would the town compromise when the demand is there?

Denise Koester of 1111 Constitution Drive said they have just recently built in Timbergate. They built there because they wanted what the community offered. Lots are more expensive in the Columbus area. They were able to purchase a less expensive lot in Timbergate which allowed them to invest more in their dream home. She said she does not believe the houses Gradison will be building will sell for \$325,000.

Robert Dengel of 204 St. Andrews Avenue said one reason he and his wife moved to Timbergate was to build a new house and live debt free. This was supposed to be their final home until they eventually moved to an assisted living community. They were banking on their home appreciating to cover those costs. He said he does believe those houses will be used as comps for the current homes.

Dick Tully of 1205 Capital Drive said Gradison is planning on adding 183 new homes means almost 400 additional vehicles. He does not believe the development, or the town has the infrastructure to handle that much new traffic.

### **Petitioner Response**

Mark Gradison of Gradison Land Development said the Amos family has not been the best stewards of the land. If Gradison does not purchase this land, he is not sure who will. It will take a substantial investment to purchase the ground and build the infrastructure. With the current covenants and restrictions, it will be difficult for a developer to invest that much money. Gradison is trying to hold the standard to a low maintenance, empty nester style community. This is not a workforce housing or first-time home buyer development. Gradison does feel obligated to enforce the HOA even after the development is complete. He does not know of a single development that does not still have a professional management company enforcing HOA rules. Today's architectural environment is very different than it was 24 years ago. Traffic and infrastructure should not be an issue. Gradison is only asking for 20 more lots than the original development was designed to handle. The assessed value of the home is usually about what you pay for your home. The assessed value will be pretty close to the purchase price.

Mr. Mears said in the busiest year at Timbergate, 10 homes were built. It is difficult to invest millions of dollars to sell 10 homes per year. Someone has to pay for the infrastructure and develop the lots. The current development is out of lots. The land will either sit vacant or someone passionate about the area will have to invest. He believes Gradison and Ryan Homes are a perfect fit for the area.

President Piercefield asked if the \$325,000 number was inflated due to the current real estate market.

Mr. Mears said those are actual figures from a similar development they are currently working on.

President Piercefield said he sees potential in the current homes being built.

Mr. Gradison said the course is out of lots and needs a development for new build sites. Home prices are not going down.

Mr. Huddleston said the ordinance drafted is what was presented to the planning commission. If the council wants to consider the new changes, it will need to go back before the planning commission. The council can move to approve or deny what was presented to the planning commission. As there are only 4 members present, a tie would deem the proposal denied.

Councilwoman Graham made a motion to deny the PUD amendment for Gradison Development. Councilwoman Rooks seconded. Motion carried 3 to 1 with Councilman Simpson voting nay.

### **Other Business**

Mr. Cartwright said in his town manager's report he sent a PDF of a possible town hall addition to expand the council chambers. He requested comments to be sent to him from the council as he would like to get that project out to bid.

Mr. Cartwright said the town received 2 bids for solid waste removal. One was incomplete. The staff will have a recommendation at the next meeting. He said he would also like to form a committee for modifications to the vaccine mandate policy. The council needs to formally adopt that mandate assuming the supreme court rules in favor. He recommended himself, President Piercefield, Councilwoman Rooks, Wade Watson, Scott Finley, and John Henderson.

Councilwoman Graham made a motion to establish the committee as presented by Mr. Cartwright. Councilman Simpson seconded. Motion carried.

Mr. Finley said the SBOA is more or less finished with the 2019-2020 audit. The exit conference will be held on January 20, 2022. All council members are invited to attend.

Fire Chief John Henderson asked the council to keep an eye on their Team Member Tuesday on the social media page. The department is organizing a Polar Plunge fundraiser. The advanced life support documents are being presented to the Department of Homeland Security for approval.

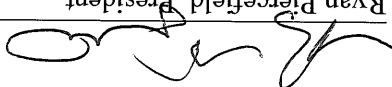
Parks Director Daniel Teter said basketball leagues started today. Registration for baseball and softball will start soon and planning for the Father/Daughter dance is underway. The staff will evaluate COVID numbers before proceeding with the event.

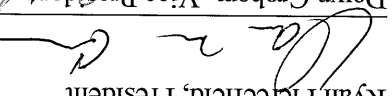
Community Center Director SaraBeth Drybread said she would love to see the passion showed by the remonstrators tonight in other local projects. She will be reaching out the council regarding Bicentennial events.

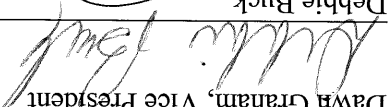
Town Marshall Doyme Little said the department is busy and has already had 110 calls 10 days into January.

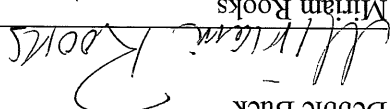
Being no further business or comments, Councilman Simpson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Graham seconded. Motion carried.

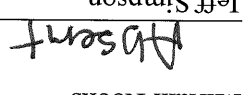
EDINBURGH TOWN COUNCIL

  
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Ryan Piercefield, President

  
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Dawn Graham, Vice President

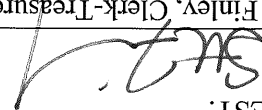
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Debbie Buck

  
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Miriam Rooks

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Simpson

Absent

ATTEST:

  
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Scott Finley, Clerk-Treasurer