

MARION COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

PUBLIC HEARING

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

January 19, 2006

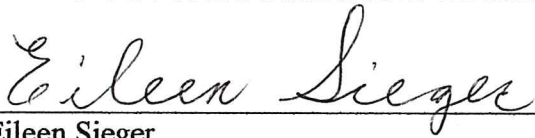
Members present: Marquette Eilerts, Bob Maxwell, Glen Unrau, Mary Avery, Eileen Sieger, Willis Ensz, Ervin Ediger and David Mueller. Zoning Administrator David Brazil was present.

Present from the public: Dan Crumrine, Marion; Milo Voth, Lehigh; Jim Clemmer, Tampa; Kurt Spachek, Marion; Gerry & Gary Greutz, Marion; J.C. Ehrlich, Marion; Dan Holub, Marion; Clifford Hett, Peabody; Darrel Helmer, Marion; Allen Meyers, Marion; Darvin Markley, Marion; Rocky Hett, Marion; Brad Putter, Marion; Charles Kannady, Marion; Vincenzo Trani, New Jersey (recently purchased land by Peabody).

Chairman Eileen Sieger opened the public hearing at 7:33 p.m. Sieger explained members are here only for the purpose of the public hearing. Sieger said the public hearing was published in the December 22, 2005, issues of the *Hillsboro Free Press and Free Press Extra*. Sieger said planning commission members are present to listen to public comment. She said comments should be only about proposed changes to zoning. Sieger explained that copies of zoning information are available in the planning and zoning office and at the courthouse, for the public to view. She said there would be no action or recommendations tonight. She said the public record for this hearing would remain open for one week for any additional written public comment. She said people should submit letters to the planning and zoning office. She said there are a number of letters that have already been received that will be read and entered into the record tonight. Brazil reviewed the proposed changes from a handout that members received. Sieger read letters that were received regarding the proposed changes. The first letter was dated November 3, 2005, and was from the City of Marion's City Administrator David Mayfield. It said the City of Marion wants to be excluded from the county's small lot development on ag land within a mile of the city. The next letter was dated November 1, 2005, and was from the City of Hillsboro. Gaylord Goertzen wrote the letter, saying the City of Hillsboro wants extra territorial jurisdiction. The next letter was dated December 22, 2005, and was from the City of Goessel. Anita Goertzen wrote the letter, saying the City of Goessel requests a one mile limited growth area around their city. The fourth letter was dated January 1, 2006, and was from Josh Weiser. He lives two miles from Goessel and he opposed the city expanding their border, he requests heavy restrictions on mobile homes and he encourages tourism. The fifth, and last letter, was dated January 17, 2006, and was from Elma David of Rural Durham. Her letter said that ag use is a top priority. Sieger explained the format for the public hearing. She said the planning commission will listen, but this hearing is not for discussion. Gary Greutz said the county should let the farmer sell his land, if he wants to. He questioned the 40-acre rule and said the county has lost common sense. Rocky Hett said if a farmer wants to sell off three acres and can make an agreement, then the county should let him sell it. Rocky Hett agreed about the lack of common sense. He said he is from the old school and it used to be you could sell off land, if you wanted

to. Putter said if someone wanted to put a restaurant in the county they would not want more than three acres, so the current regulations are limiting business growth possibilities. Looking at the county, the population is dwindling, he said. Putter said there are abandoned farm and home sites and we should allow someone that has the ability to redo a place to do it, and not give them grief. We should be excited that people want to move here, he said. But, 40 acres is too much, he added. Three acres would be a nice acreage to go with, Putter said. He questioned the 16 homes per section idea. Brazil explained in an ag district it's one per 40. If there's waste ground from a hillside, or valley, and I hate to call it waste ground because I don't believe it is, but farmers are rapidly declining and maybe selling a few acres would help them survive, Putter said. I want to see the county grow and prosper, he said. Putter said he is all for positive growth in the county and allowing businesses to come in. I'm for promoting having three-acre lots and for more houses, Putter said. Clifford Hett said he is glad the county got down to at least five acres so he could sell his land, but he still had to sell two acres of farm ground to meet the regulations. Sieger reminded members that Hett's application came before them about a year ago. Grentz asked why you couldn't live in a trailer until you get your house done? He said it would allow people to keep others from stealing their property. Kannady said there are a number of people looking for places to buy in the country. They are looking for what we call basic wasteland, he said. For example, if you take a piece of wasteland the tax would be approximately 33 cents an acre, but the same land with a house on it would be at \$49 a half acre or \$98 an acre, he said. People are not looking for a place to raise cattle or horses, he said. The state's requirement for a home site in the county I believe is one acre, he said. Anything above three acres is probably a waste of agriculture, he said. People take care of one and a half to two acres, and let the rest go, Kannady said. If we get it down to three acres, people are more likely to take care of it, he said. If they want livestock, they should need a certain number of acres depending on the number of head they have, he said. If your neighbor has a small lot or a large one, it's still the same requirements not to spray, etc., he said. I lost a number of fruit trees from the county spraying ditches, he said. Again, compare the taxes on ag land to residential, he said. I'd like someone else to help pay taxes, he said. Construction of new homes out in the county is not going to be a great number, he said. I don't think 16 per section will ever be a problem, he said. The population is down, Kannady said. Home sites in the county can be cleaned up, he said. This isn't a city/farm issue, he said. People in town can't live without farmers, and farmers can't live without people in town, Kannady said. He asked if most of the planning commission members live in the country. This has hurt a lot of young people, he said. You may need someone to bury you some day, he told members. No one else wished to speak. Sieger closed the public hearing at 8:07 p.m. Sieger reminded everyone that written comments will be accepted for one week. Maxwell invited all the public to come and see what the procedure is at a regular meeting. I heard some things right tonight, and I heard some things wrong tonight, Maxwell said. Please come in and see what is happening, he added. Sieger reminded everyone that all zoning information is available for the public to view.

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Eileen Sieger,
Chairman