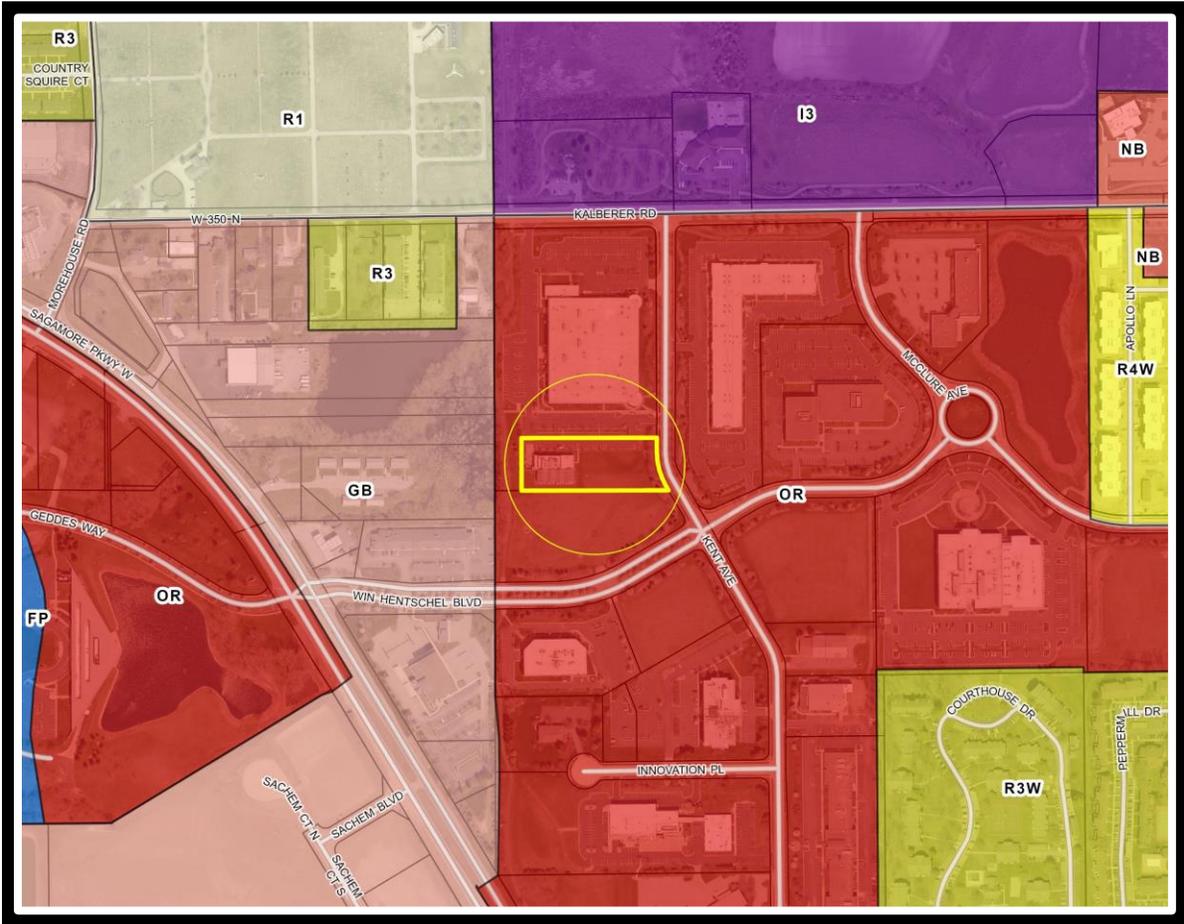

BZA-2056
WEST LAFAYETTE GREENHOUSE FACILITY, LLC
(variance)

STAFF REPORT
May 20, 2021



BZA-2056
WEST LAFAYETTE GREENHOUSE FACILITY, LLC
Variance

Staff Report
May 20, 2021

REQUEST MADE, PROPOSED USE, LOCATION:

Petitioner, with consent of the owner Purdue Research Foundation (PRF) and represented by attorney Marianne Mitten Owen of Stuart and Branigin, are requesting a variance to permit a lot coverage of 36.8% instead of the maximum permitted 25% in the OR (Office Research) zone. The site is located in the Purdue Research Park and is leased to Inari Agriculture, Inc. If this variance is approved, the existing 1-story building and attached greenhouses will be expanded with additional greenhouses stretching east towards Kent Avenue. The site is commonly known as 3315 Kent Avenue, West Lafayette, Wabash 1(SE) 23-5.

AREA ZONING PATTERNS:

This site and all surrounding land is zoned OR, Office Research. General Business zoning is located farther west outside the research park. There have been no recent rezones or BZA cases in the immediate area.

AREA LAND USE PATTERNS:

The site is used by Inari Agriculture, Inc., a research and development company specializing in plant breeding technology, with an emphasis of creating a sustainable approach reducing the land, water and other inputs required to produce food and feed.

Surrounding uses include a wide range of other research and development facilities.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION:

The site gains access to Kent Avenue on the adjacent lot to the north by way of an ingress/egress easement. The parking standard for this use is one parking space per employee on the largest shift. With six employees, the site complies with the parking requirement. Parking agreements with PRF supply additional parking needed by the user elsewhere in the research park.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND UTILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

City utilities serve the site; no bufferyards are required.

STAFF COMMENTS:

The petitioner's tenant, Inari Agriculture, Inc., is reconfiguring its operations and adding certain laboratory machinery and greenhouse space in a manner to match the existing facility. According to the petition, this location of the expansion is crucial, stating "due to

the biological nature of the plants worked on in the facility, close proximity between the laboratories and greenhouses is extremely important. As fragile seedlings are transported from the laboratories to the greenhouses, every increase in travel time/distance has the potential to increase deleterious effects and likelihood of failure of the research.”

Lot coverage (also known as building coverage) is one of a combination of UZO requirements establishing the maximum size of a building on its lot. Along with height, setbacks, and vegetative cover, their purpose is to assure sufficient light, air and open space on the ground and at all levels of a building. For this 1.915-acre lot, the 25% maximum lot coverage would permit a 20,854 square foot building footprint, however a building footprint of 30,715 square feet is proposed.

Staff understands the need for this expansion near its current operation but cannot find an ordinance-defined hardship with the request. It is the size of the expansion in relation to the lot size that is presenting a difficulty for petitioner. One potential solution could include adding some land from an adjoining lot to increase the lot area so the lot coverage standard could be met. The lot adjacent to the south appears to be unoccupied and an adjustment to this common lot line could eliminate the need for this lot coverage variance, however staff is unaware of the future plans for this lot.

Regarding the ballot items:

1. The Area Plan Commission at its May 19, 2021 meeting determined that the variance requested **IS NOT** a use variance.

And it is staff’s opinion that:

2. Granting this variance **WILL NOT** be injurious to the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community. Covering this lot with more roofed area than permitted by the ordinance will not create any issues in regard to public health and safety for surrounding users.
3. Use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance request **WILL NOT** be affected in a substantially adverse manner. The proposed lot coverage would still provide adequate separation of buildings, light and air on adjacent lots.
4. The terms of the zoning ordinance are being applied to a situation that **IS** common to other properties in the same zoning district. There is nothing unusual with the shape, size or topography of this lot compared to other OR zoned properties.
5. Strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance **WILL NOT** result in an unusual or unnecessary hardship as defined in the zoning ordinance. Denial of this variance will not make this lot unusable and continued use of the lot for research and manufacturing can still occur.

Note: Questions 5a. and 5b. need only be answered if a hardship is found in Question 5 above.

5a. The hardship involved **IS** self-imposed or solely based on a perceived reduction of or restriction on economic gain. It is petitioner's desire to cover more of the lot with roofed area than allowed by the zoning ordinance.

5b. The variance sought **DOES NOT** provide only the minimum relief needed to alleviate the hardship. Staff can find no ordinance-defined hardship, so there is no minimum relief.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Denial

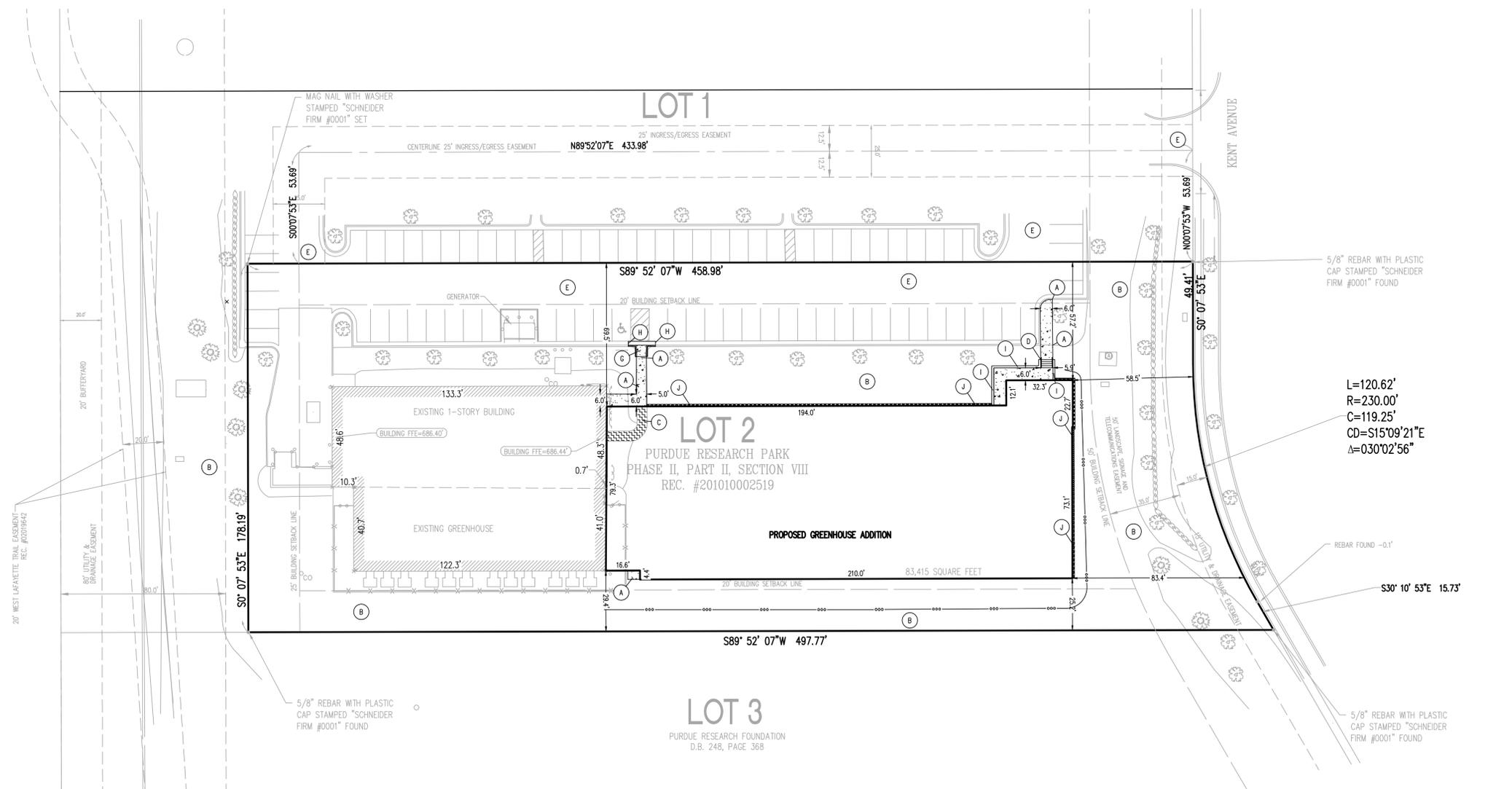
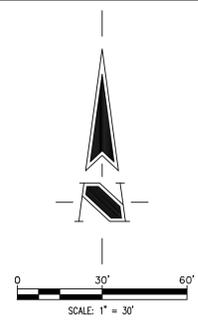
LOT COVERAGE

LOT SIZE:
83,415 SQ FT (1.915 ACRES)

MAXIMUM COVERAGE BY ALL BUILDINGS:
ALLOWED: 25% = 20,854 SQ FT = 0.473 ACRES
CURRENT: 36.8% = 30,715 SQ FT = 0.705 ACRES
DIFFERENCE: 11.8% = 9,860 SQ FT = 0.228 ACRES

MINIMUM VEGETATIVE COVER:
ALLOWED: 30% = 25,025 SQ FT = 0.575 ACRES
CURRENT: 38.6% = 32,225 SQ FT = 0.740 ACRES
DIFFERENCE: 8.6% = 7,200 SQ FT = 0.165 ACRES

PARKING:
MEETS PARKING ORDINANCE



811 Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

LEGEND

- (A) CONCRETE SIDEWALK/COMBINED CURB AND WALK
- (B) GRASS / LANDSCAPE AREA
(REFER TO LANDSCAPE PLANS FOR MORE INFORMATION)
- (C) DEMO EXISTING SIDEWALK
(AS NECESSARY TO CONSTRUCT BUILDING ADDITION AND INSTALL NEW SIDEWALK AND RAMP.)
- (D) FENCE
(REFER TO ARCHITECTURAL PLANS FOR DETAILED INFORMATION.)
- (E) CONCRETE STAIRS AND CHEEKWALLS WITH HANDRAILS
(REFER TO ARCHITECTURAL/STRUCTURAL PLANS FOR STAIR DETAIL.)
- (F) PROTECT EXISTING ASPHALT PAVEMENT
- (G) VEGETATIVE SWALE
- (H) ADA RAMP
- (I) SAW CUT AND REMOVE EXISTING CONCRETE CURB
- (J) RETAINING WALL
(REFER TO ARCHITECTURAL/STRUCTURAL PLANS FOR WALL DETAIL.)
- (K) MINERAL STRIP
(12" WIDE STRIP OF #8 STONE SHALL BE PLACED TO DEPTH OF FOUNDATION IN AREAS INDICATED.)

INARI
A HighLife Housing Company

STRONGBOX
COMMERCIAL

CSO
8831 Keystone Crossing, Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.248.7000 | csocorp.net

Schneider
GEOMATICS

SRA

PROJECT:
INARI GREENHOUSE EXPANSION
PURDUE RESEARCH PARK
3315 Kent Avenue
West Lafayette, Indiana

Scope Drawings

These drawings indicate the general scope of the project in terms of mechanical design, concept, the placement of the building, the major equipment, ductwork and the type of ductwork, mechanical and electrical systems. The drawings do not necessarily indicate or describe all work required for the performance and completion of the work shown on the drawings.

On the basis of the ground scope indicated or described, the firm certifies that it has all items required for the proper installation of equipment on the site.

Revisions

Issue Date	Drawn By	Checked By
04.27.21	KRB/QWE	---

Drawing Title:
ZONING EXHIBIT

Certified By:
PRELIMINARY FOR REVIEW/ NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Drawing Number:
C101

Project Number:
2020099

— SURVEY NOTE —
BOUNDARY AND TOPOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SHOWN PER ALTA/NSPS LAND TITLE SURVEY CERTIFIED BY SCHNEIDER GEOMATICS ON JANUARY 8, 2021