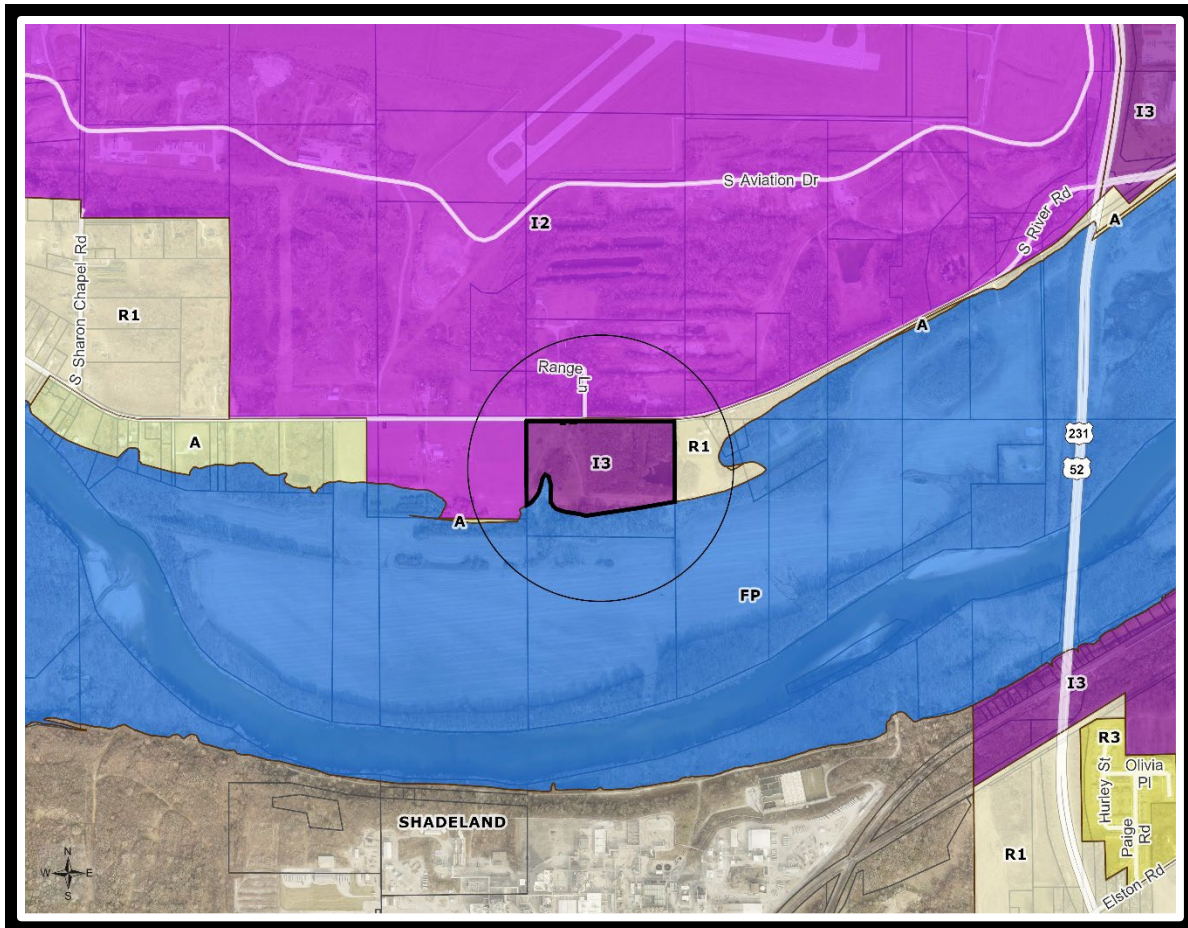

Z-2888
TRINITAS DEVELOPMENT, LLC
(I3 to R3)

STAFF REPORT
April 13, 2023



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April 13, 2023

REQUEST MADE, PROPOSED USE, LOCATION:

Petitioner, represented by attorney Ryan Munden and with consent of owner Heritage Aggregates, is requesting rezoning of 22.792 acres from I3 to R3 for a proposed multi-family apartment development located on the south side of S. River Road, approximately one mile west of US 231, opposite Range Lane (private), in Wabash 36 (NW) 23-5.

ZONING HISTORY AND AREA ZONING PATTERNS:

The subject property has been zoned industrially (I3) for many years, dating back to the 1960's, for the mining activity on site. The property immediately adjacent to the west and a large swath of land across S. River Road is zoned I2. To the east is R1, and further west is A zoning. The Wabash River lies to the south of this site, with an FP zoned property between.

This area of S. River Road has not seen any recent rezone or BZA activity, with the latest BZA case dating back to 1987.

AREA LAND USE PATTERNS:

The site is undeveloped and has not been used for mining in many years. The absence of public utilities has largely worked to detract from most types of development apart from single-family residential, horse farms and row-crop production, which exist on properties to the east and west. Properties adjacent to the west and across the road to the north, owned by Purdue Trustees, are maintained as conservation areas, and used by the school's veterinarian program. Across the road is the Purdue Trap & Skeet, with the Purdue Airport just beyond that.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION:

South River Road is classified as an urban secondary arterial by the adopted *Thoroughfare Plan*. There seems to be a nonformal entrance to a dirt road just to the west of Range Lane (a private drive).

If subdivided, right-of-way will be required to be dedicated for S. River Road to achieve the required width (70'). County Highway approval will be required to receive a driveway permit. The INDOT traffic count system shows that an average of 2,469 cars pass this site daily.

The nearest CityBus stop is approximately 2 miles away, near the roundabout at Tapawingo and River Road.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND UTILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

This site is currently outside the public utility service area. APC staff has learned that if the rezone is successful, the petitioner plans to install and maintain a private lift station and pump their waste to the nearest West Lafayette sewer connection, which is about a mile away, across the intersection of River Road and US 231.

Information from the National Wetlands Inventory map show two areas of wetlands on this property. The petitioner will need to work out any necessary permits as it pertains to wetlands and the proposed development.

STAFF COMMENTS:

If the rezone request is approved, the petitioner could construct multi-family apartment buildings on site. Any plans to construct more than one multi-family dwelling would require going through the multi-family subdivision process. Inquiries to the petitioner regarding further details for the development have gone unanswered at the time this report was published.

When this property was rezoned from Agricultural to Industrial in 1964, mining was allowed by right in industrial zones, and reclamation was regulated by the state. No records have been found to indicate when the property was last used as a mining site, nor has staff found anything to show what was done to bring the property back into development-readiness. This site has not been mined in several decades, and this area has maintained its rural single-family and agricultural feel.

Public water and sewer utilities are currently not available in this area. The single-family homes that dot this section of S. River Road are supported by individual septic systems and private wells. If this rezone is successful and the petitioner is allowed to construct a multi-family development, public utilities would need to be installed. Staff is concerned that this would encourage additional development along S. River Road, a state designated Wabash River Scenic Byway, where no growth has been planned since 1981. With the large amount of acreage zoned industrially near this site, public utilities could potentially make these properties very attractive for new industries.

Though this property is not within West Lafayette city limits, the city limit line borders the site on two sides. Email communication with city staff indicates that there are concerns about the city taking on the substantial long-term maintenance costs for the public utilities once they are installed by the developer, especially in a jurisdiction (the county) they do not control or create revenue from. West Lafayette also maintains this stretch of S. River Road, a two lane, relatively lightly traveled secondary arterial, which would see a noticeable increase in traffic counts with a multi-family development of this size. Other city services may also be expected once utilities are offered.

The adopted *Phased Land Use Plan Map* from 1981 shows this site as agricultural, with open space surrounding. According to the Plan, “[T]hese areas lay beyond the reach of rational urbanization...” The Plan is over 40 years old, and the unincorporated areas of

Wabash Township are currently under review for a plan update, which will not be adopted until later in 2023. Until a new plan has been adopted, the existing adopted plan remains in place. Before then, however, any major development, especially one which departs from the *Plan* recommendations, the historic use of the area, and the area's existing characteristics would be premature. Area property owners and other stakeholders have not yet had a chance to make their desires known, and the vetting and analysis associated with a comprehensive planning process has not yet occurred.

While staff is aware of the need for additional housing opportunities in Greater Lafayette, there are much more supportable areas for multi-family development besides an area the *Plan* indicates should remain undeveloped, along a designated Scenic Byway with no access to sewer and water or public transit.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Denial