



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

BIANCA L. TIRADO, CITY CLERK

ZONING & ANNEXATION

DECEMBER 8, 2025, 4:20 P.M.

Committee Members Present:

Dr. Oliver Davis, Rachel Tomas Morgan,
Karen L. White, Troy Warner, Stacey Odom

Committee Members Absent:

Henry Davis Jr.

Other Council Members Present:

Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers*, Sherry Bolden-Simpson*, Sheila Niezgodski

Others Present:

Bianca Tirado, Matthew Neal, Jasmine Jackson, Bob Palmer

Presenters:

Tim Staub, Delores Johnson

Agenda:

Bill No. 74-25 - Special Exception at 1005
White Oak Drive

Members marked with an asterisk (*) are in virtual attendance.

Please note the attached link for the meeting recording:

<https://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/browse.aspx?dbid=0&mediaid=402355>

Committee Chair Dr. Oliver Davis called to order the Zoning and Annexation Committee meeting at 4:20 P.M.

Bill No. 74-25 - Special Exception at 1005 White Oak Drive

Tim Staub, Zoning Specialist, with offices on the fifth (5th) floor of City Hall, South Bend, IN 46601, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the bill. He said the petitioner wants to build a two (2) unit dwelling on a one-half (1/2) acre lot in a suburban neighborhood. The petitioner intends to use one of the City pre-approved plans, and they will be required to bring the lot up to City standards with streetscaping. The bill comes with a favorable recommendation from the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

Delores Johnson, Property Owner, 1005 White Oak Drive, South Bend, IN 46617, said she wants to tear down her existing home and replace it with the duplex. She said she wants to have a separate unit in her home in case she needs a caretaker in the future.

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Jasmine Jackson
CHIEF DEPUTY CITY CLERK / CHIEF OF STAFF

Matthew Neal
DEPUTY CITY CLERK / DIRECTOR OF POLICY

Margaret Gotsch
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

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Committee Member Troy Warner addressed the petitioner, stating that she initially spoke to him about building an accessory dwelling unit (ADU). He asked about the change in plans.

Delores Johnson said she realized she would need more space, since ADU's are limited to eight-hundred (800) square feet.

Committee Member Warner asked about rentals.

Delores Johnson said she will not be using the unit for rentals.

Committee Vice Chair Rachel Tomas Morgan asked the petitioner about her intentions for the property and the timeline for construction.

Delores Johnson confirmed that she plans to continue living on the property as her primary residence. She said it would be at least six (6) months before construction begins.

Committee Member Karen L. White asked about neighbors' concerns.

Delores Johnson said neighbors shared their concerns with BZA last week. She said they are concerned about the appearance of the building. They are also concerned about the neighborhood changing, and they do not want it to be developed with more density like the Eddy Street Commons area.

Committee Vice Chair Tomas Morgan asked to see renderings of the proposed design.

Delores Johnson showed floor plans and a rendering of the building exterior. She said the pre-approved plan she wants to use has a single entryway and looks like a single-family home from the outside.

Committee Member Warner said he received correspondence from more than ten (10) concerned neighbors over the past week. He spoke about how investors have shifted the neighborhoods near the University of Notre Dame from single-family homes to short-term rentals.

Delores Johnson agreed that this is what neighbors are worried about. They have expressed concern that this will open the door for more duplexes to be built in the neighborhood.

Committee Chair Dr. Davis asked about future implications if the property is sold.

Tim Staub confirmed that the special exception goes with the property, and it is possible that a future owner would rent out the units if the property is sold.

Committee Chair Dr. Davis opened the public hearing.

James Waclawik, 925 White Oak Drive, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke against the bill. He expressed concern about setting a precedent. This would be the first special exception for a duplex in a suburban neighborhood zoning district.

Amanda Ceravolo, 1006 White Oak Drive, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke against the bill. She expressed concern about property values and the impact of adding density to a neighborhood with



narrow streets. She said the special exception should not be granted because there is no unique hardship associated with the property and there would be no community benefit.

Tim Ceravolo, 1006 White Oak Drive, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke against the bill. He expressed concern about how quickly things were moving, stating that neighbors were notified the day before Thanksgiving and the bill went before BZA the following Monday. He said BZA should not have given a favorable recommendation after hearing unanimous neighborhood opposition.

Patrick Krueger, 1611 Dorwood Drive, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke against the bill, echoing the concerns of his neighbors. He said he did not want to encourage other developers to build duplexes in the neighborhood, and that neighbors need more time to ask questions.

Kate Bergin, 1616 Dorwood Drive, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke against the bill, saying there is no hardship to justify the exception. She listed several alternatives for accommodating a live-in caregiver that do not require building a new duplex in this neighborhood.

Jeannie Wade, 1211 Black Oak Drive, South Bend, IN 46617, spoke against the bill, emphasizing how important single-family homes are to the character of the neighborhood. She expressed concerns about how the added density in nearby neighborhoods has increased traffic congestion.

Committee Chair Dr. Davis closed the public hearing. He allowed the petitioner five (5) minutes to respond to the neighbors' concerns.

Delores Johnson said she will leave the decision to the Committee.

Tim Staub clarified that there is no hardship requirement for special exceptions.

Committee Member Warner shared his concerns regarding the lack of communication with neighbors, the unique character of the neighborhood, and the risk of bringing in short-term rentals and student housing. He said he will not be supporting the bill.

Committee Vice Chair Tomas Morgan thanked the neighbors for speaking. She said she is generally in favor of higher density but acknowledges that some neighborhoods cannot support it. She echoed concerns about future development for short-term rentals and student housing. She said the petitioner should take more time to develop a suitable plan.

Committee Member White thanked everyone who spoke on the bill. She said more questions need to be answered, and expressed concern that the petitioner did not meet with neighbors in advance.

Committee Chair Dr. Davis said he will not be supporting the bill, citing a lack of collaboration between the petitioner and the neighbors. He spoke about characteristics of the neighborhood that make it unsuitable for a duplex, including the narrow streets and lack of sidewalks.

Delores Johnson said she was unable to speak with her neighbors because the letter came more quickly than she expected and arrived right before the holiday.

Citizen Member Stacey Odom said she will not be supporting the bill.



Committee Member Warner moved to table Bill No. 74-25 until January 12, 2026, which was seconded by Committee Member White and carried by a vote of four (4) ayes and one (1) nay with one (1) Citizen Member absent.

Committee Chair Dr. Oliver Davis – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Vice Chair Rachel Tomas Morgan – <i>Aye</i>
Committee Member Troy Warner – <i>Aye</i>	Committee Member Karen L. White – <i>Aye</i>
Citizen Member Stacey Odom – <i>Nay</i>	Citizen Member Henry Davis Jr. – <i>Absent</i>

Committee Member Warner advised the petitioner to speak with her neighbors and come back for a final decision on January 12, 2026.

With no further business, Committee Chair Dr. Davis adjourned the Zoning and Annexation Committee meeting at 5:15 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Oliver Davis, Committee Chair

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