

## **Memorandum**

**To:** Planning Commission Members  
**From:** The Development Department  
**CC:** Honorable Members of City Council, Clerk of Council, City Departments  
**Date:** July 31, 2009  
**Re:** Staff Report for Indiana Business College (Harrison College) – Development Plan Amendment

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**Item #4 – Indiana Business College (Harrison College) – Development Plan Amendment**  
**(PID# 200906240024)**

**Application:** Development Plan Amendment  
**Location:** 3880 Gateway Lakes Drive  
**Applicant:** Goldean Gibbs, Executive Director, Harrison College  
**Zoning:** PUD-C

**Relevant Code Section(s):**

- 1135.14 Zoning Districts and Regulations – Planned Unit Development District
- 1145.16 Signs – On-Premise Signs
- 1145.17 Signs – Highway Signs

**Project Summary:**

The applicant is requesting approval of an amendment to the original Development Plan for Harrison College (formerly Indiana Business College) to allow for the placement of a pylon sign along the frontage of I-71 for its new campus currently under construction at 3880 Gateway Lakes Drive. The applicant is proposing a 47 foot tall sign, supported by two grey pylons. The sign face is approximately eighty-four (84) square feet in area and internally-lit with the Harrison College name and emblem in two shades of blue (PMS 655 and PMS 654). The total sign area is proposed to be seven (7) feet tall by fifteen (15) feet wide, allowing for a grey border to match the pylons around the sign face. The base of the sign will be landscaped, per Section 1136.

**Background:**

The development plan for Indiana Business College was approved by City Council on February 2, 2009 (CR-08-09), and had been recommended for approval by Planning Commission at their hearing on December 23, 2008. Planning Commission's recommendation of approval included the proposed 15,000 square foot structure and a twenty-seven (27) foot tall sign between Gateway Lakes Drive and I-71 with a seven (7) foot by fourteen (14) foot LED sign under a six (6) by fourteen (14) foot internally-lit sign. The monument sign was removed from

the Development Plan at Council's February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting in order to move forward with the project. The Development Plan was approved with no signage, with the intent of addressing it at a later date.

**Code Analysis:**

Section 1145.16 (e) titled Monument and Pole (Free Standing) On-Premises Signs states that signs shall not exceed the height of eight (8) feet for commercial or industrial properties; however Section 1145.16 (g) states that signs for commercial properties located in a PUD zoning classification may request a deviation from such requirements subject to recommendations of the Planning Commission and Council approval. Such consideration for any deviation shall be based on providing consistent and complimentary signage for the entire project and to scale the signage to set backs, and wall space.

In the opinion of staff, the proposed sign is not to scale with or complimentary to the rest of the development. The proposed sign would have the approximate visibility and appearance from the road as the highway signage for Hampton Inn (approximately 55' tall, but located further east off of I-71). This sign is considered a Highway Sign, the new construction of which is not permitted by Code, and remains in existence through nonconformity per Section 1145.17.

Staff was supportive of the originally proposed height of 27'; however we cannot support the height increase to 47'. Typical pylon signs in the area are closer to the originally proposed height of 27', including BP's pylon sign (approximately 23' tall) located on Stringtown Road and Hampton Inn's pylon sign (approximately 24') located on Jackpot Road. Each of these signs are visible from the roadway and more suitably fit the intended character of the area. In the opinion of staff, a 27 foot tall pylon sign would be clearly visible from the interstate and would not add to the negative visual impact of the existing highway signs along I-71 at Stringtown Road.

**Recommendation(s):**

After review and consideration, the Development Department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of disapproval to City Council for the Development Plan Amendment due to the unwarranted increase in height for proposed signage.