

BLADE
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BEDFORD TOWNSHIP

Officials propose zoning change on Whitman land

By MARK REITER
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TEMPERANCE — Nearly two months after rezoning five of six parcels owned by auto dealer and businessman Jon Whitman, Bedford Township officials have proposed changing the zoning on the only parcel zoned for single-family housing.

The township board last week took steps to rezone about eight acres west of the Whitman Ford dealership on Lewis Avenue to allow professional and business office use.

The land in question was part of a rezoning request from Mr. Whitman involving six parcels covering 42 acres near the intersection of Sterns Road and Lewis Avenue.

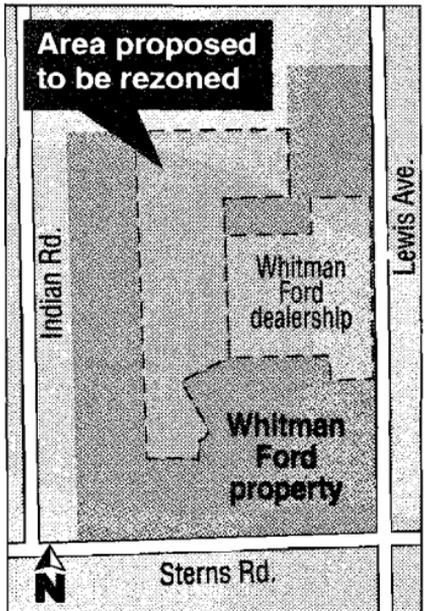
Mr. Whitman wanted the parcel changed from single family residential to C-2 commercial. The board rejected the request.

However, the board approved zoning modifications on the other parcels, including changing nine acres to the west that is adjacent to Indian Acres subdivision.

Zoning on that property was changed to allow a mixed use of professional and business office, residential for

NEW REZONING PROPOSED FOR WHITMAN PROPERTY

The Bedford Township board last week took steps to rezone about eight acres west of the Whitman Ford dealership on Lewis Avenue to allow professional and business office use.



SOURCE: Bedford Township THE BLADE

Rezoning

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people 55 and older, and multi-family residential.

Two parcels covering about seven acres along Lewis were rezoned from C-2 commercial to C-3 commercial, the most intensive commercial zoning allowed in the township.

Bedford Watch, a group of Bedford residents formed to advocate on behalf of good land-use planning and to oppose Mr. Whitman's plans to sell his property for construction of a Wal-Mart, submitted more than 2,400 signatures of registered voters to force a township-wide vote on the zoning changes ap-

proved by the township board for the Whitman property.

The referendum petition was certified last week by the township clerk and will be on the May 5 ballot.

Kevin Tracy, vice president of Bedford Watch, said the intention of the township board was to assist his group in the event that Mr. Whitman would eventually file a lawsuit to challenge the zoning action.

"We were surprised that [the township board] is doing this to protect us," he said.

Supervisor Walt Wilburn said the administrative zoning change would be contingent on the outcome of the referendum petition; if it passes, then the administrative zoning change will not be needed.

"There would be no sense in

doing it and having everything overturned again," Mr. Wilburn said.

The board vote on the administrative zoning change proposal was 6-1, with Trustee Paul Frances casting the dissenting vote.

Township officials said the administrative zoning proposal will serve as a better transition to the zoning changes enacted in December and follow the guidelines for land use in the township master plan.

Zoning for professional and business office "is pretty much the perfect scenario," Mr. Wilburn said.

The zoning proposal will follow the procedural path that any zoning request must take in the township. It will go to the township planning commission

and Monroe County Planning Commission for hearings and recommendations.

In other action, the township board approved hiring David Wehner, who is a construction manager with Mannik & Smith Group Inc. of Maumee, to oversee the renovation and addition project at the Lewis Avenue fire station.

Mr. Wehner, who will be paid \$91,340, will be responsible for the design and construction of the addition to the fire department administration office.

Chief John Bofia said bid proposals from 19 firms were submitted for the project, which will include adding a 40-by-80-foot fire truck bay and converting some existing space into a conference room.
