



CEDAR LAKE UNSAFE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
CEDAR LAKE TOWN HALL, 7408 CONSTITUTION AVENUE, CEDAR LAKE, INDIANA
September 17, 2025 at 5:30 pm

Call To Order:

Mr. Thiel called the Unsafe Public Meeting to order on Wednesday, September 17, 2025, at 5:31 pm with its members attending on-site. The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all.

Roll Call:

Members Present via Zoom: None

Members Present On-Site: John Hojek Member; Rich Thiel, Chairperson. A quorum was attained. **Also present:** Ryan Deutmeyer, Town Attorney; Ben Eldridge, Town Manager; Terrence Conley, Planning Director; Tony Gatto, Building Inspector and Cheryl Hajduk, Recording Secretary.

Absent: James Hunley; David Austgen, Town Attorney

Minutes: August 20, 2025 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Hojek and seconded by Mr. Thiel to approve the August 20, 2025 meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote:

Mr. Hojek Aye

Mr. Thiel Aye

Active Unsafe:

1. 14616 Dewey Street – Frick

Mr. Thiel stated the next order of business is for the property located in the vicinity of 14616 Dewey Street.

Mr. Thiel asked Mr. Eldridge if the meeting took place. Mr. Eldridge commented he spoke with Mr. Frick. We're trying to get it scheduled, but I've also had conversations with Mr. Kubiak, as to the importance of why we'd like to have it. Mr. Frick's argument is that he stated his property is fine, why does he have to give up his property so that the restaurant can have proper drainage in their parking lot.

Mr. Eldridge commented we want the easement for drainage, but if he doesn't give it up, are we just going to take it off the agenda and he's not going to give it up. Mr. Thiel commented the structure is still there. It is secured and boarded up. However, it still does not help the situation of the state of the house. Mr. Thiel commented he will not be able to get permits because he's got drainage problems because it sits in a pool.

Mr. Thiel commented from my understanding is there's claims that the drainage problem started with the raising of the parking lot over there with the neighbor to the North.

Mr. Eldridge commented we would really like this easement, and we would have to do all the work to make all the connections, but if he doesn't want to give it to us, he would not be able to build a house here.

Mr. Hojek asked is there anything we could do with Bugaboo's and him coming together, working something out together. Mr. Eldridge commented he did not don't know and the Town would be paying for everything.

Mr. Thiel commented his plans are presented to the Building Department.

Mr. Thiel commented he is not restricted by a legacy lot, metes and bounds parcels or size of lot. If you're building on too small of a lot, you have to have your plans presented before you even start demoing the other one.

Mr. Thiel asked has he applied for the demo permit yet. Mr. Gatto commented he applied for the demolition and rebuild.

Mr. Thiel asked Mr. Deutmeyer what would be the correct terminology for being blighted in certain areas. Mr. Deutmeyer commented there is a nuisance provision in the Unsafe Law as well, but simply boarding it up doesn't alleviate the unsafe condition. Mr. Gatto commented boarding it up alleviates the immediate danger of kids or someone going in there. But the Unsafe Building Law is pretty broad in its description of what unsafe is.

Mr. Eldridge commented in the interim we want him to tear the house down. and the drainage thing comes later. Now we want to meet with him to find out his plan for tearing down the house, the schedule for tearing down the house, because it is a violation of our Unsafe Ordinance. The drainage is just secondary.

Mr. Deutmeyer commented when the house is down, he doesn't have to come to these meetings, but working with the Building Department to get the drainage issue and the building plan figured out. But until the property's gone or rebuilt or repaired or rehabilitated, then it's still a violation of Unsafe Ordinance, which is why it comes up every single month.

A motion was made by Mr. Hojek and seconded by Mr. Thiel to defer this item for 30-days to the next meeting on October 15, 2025. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote:

Mr. Hojek	Aye
Mr. Thiel	Aye

Potential Unsafe:

1. 7131 W. 137th Place

Mr. Gatto commented it doesn't need to be on the list anymore because a roof has been put on it. This item will be removed off of the agenda.

2. 7704 W. 134th Court

Mr. Gatto commented he did an Unsafe Report for this property. He did recall someone submitting a permit application to work on the house, which was a few years ago. This house has been vacant.

Mr. Hojek commented this one needs to be secured and boarded up.

Mr. Thiel commented there was no response from the letter that was sent out. This should move up to active unsafe.

And does that motion include accepting the unsafe premises report that Tony did? Yes, sir. And it includes the unsafe report that Tony did. I concur. Roll call, please. Mr. Hogan? Yes. Mr. Teal? Yes. Motion carries 2-

A motion was made by Mr. Hojek and seconded by Mr. Thiel to remove this item from Potential Unsafe and move it up to Active Unsafe and accepting the Unsafe Premises Report. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote:

Mr. Hojek	Aye
Mr. Thiel	Aye

3. 7204 W. 129th Lane

Mr. Gatto commented we had a Site Inspection done. They are in for a lot of repairs and they want to try to do the repairs. They don't want to try to demo and rebuild at this point. It is moving through the process and if we don't hear from them next month, we can sit on this one as the Building Department is in communication with the owners.

4. 13025 Tyler Street

Mr. Gatto commented he did the Unsafe Report. Mr. Thiel commented we will move this to active unsafe.

A motion was made by Mr. Hojek and seconded by Mr. Thiel to remove this item from Potential Unsafe and move it up to Active Unsafe and accepting the Unsafe Premises Report. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote:

Mr. Hojek	Aye
Mr. Thiel	Aye

5. 13438 Hilltop

Mr. Thiel commented asked if an Unsafe Report was done. Mr. Gatto commented he has not gotten to it yet.

Mr. Thiel asked If there is no report yet, can we still vote to move it to active and have Mr. Gatto do the report on it? Mr. Deutmeyer commented no, because you need the report that says it's unsafe. That has to be your basis for making it an active case.

6. 7513 136th Lane

Mr. Thiel asked Ms. Hajduk if we sent a letter. Ms. Hajduk responded in the negative and commented that Mr. Hojek was going to take another look at the property.

Mr. Thiel commented we can send a letter after looking at the property and adjust the letter accordingly.

7. 13957 Fairbanks Street

Ms. Hajduk commented she received the green card back.

Mr. Thiel commented that Mr. Gatto went out to the property and it is owner-occupied and someone is living at the property. She explained that she is in the process of selling it as is, and would not allow them to enter the premises. Discussion ensued regarding removing owners from an unsafe home and public safety.

Mr. Thiel commented if this meets the criteria for unsafe building, this needs to be moved to Active Unsafe once Mr. Gatto does the report.

Mr. Deutmeyer commented maybe there are some agencies, county, state, whatever, that can assist in helping those individuals to relocate. But that's not a great situation based on the pictures, and to imagine if EMS or anybody had to respond if there was a fire or anything, you have significant danger if the entire structure collapsed.

Mr. Hojek suggested having a standard report system to document things like this in the Town. Discussion ensued.

8. 8623 W. 131st Place

Ms. Hajduk commented we did receive the green card, but no other communication with them.

Mr. Thiel commented the Building Department will make the report.

Under Permit/Demolition Orders:

1. 7105 W. 128th Avenue – Jovan Lozevski – Lakeview Homes & Development (Formerly Cagnina)

Mr. Thiel asked what is the situation. Mr. Gatto commented it is all cleaned up and it is not considered unsafe anymore, which has a new foundation and a new deck.

Mr. Deutmeyer commented 7105 and 7109, is this the one that the walls kind of went kicked out from underneath it that we talked about last time. It was a pile of rubble on top of a new foundation. If they're both taken care of, a motion can be made to remove 7105 W 128th Avenue off of the agenda.

A motion was made by Mr. Hojek and seconded by Mr. Thiel to remove this item from the agenda. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote:

Mr. Hojek	Aye
Mr. Thiel	Aye

2. 13333 Lemoore Street

Mr. Gatto commented they are working on it. Discussion ensued regarding the work that has been done and that it is an active construction site.

Update Items:

1. 12611 Cline Avenue – Kubiak Properties, Inc.

Mr. Thiel commented he spoke with Mr. Kubiak and as far as an update, the lights, cameras are up and would we just like to hear of monthly updates and appearances at the meetings are not needed.

2. 9320 W. 142nd Avenue – NWI Casas LLC

Mr. Thiel commented Mr. Martin was not able to make the meeting, but he sent an email to the Building Department and he stated he thought the sewer was capped, but will get this resolved.

3. 13713 Parrish Avenue – Diamond Peak Homes LLC

Mr. Thiel commented he tried last week to reach out to Mr. Herbers, who's been the individual that comes to the meetings. Mr. Herbers will give an update. Discussion ensued regarding the plans for the property.

4. 6599 Fernwood – Mogan

Mr. Deutmeyer commented the last activity that occurred was the filing of our claim against the estate for the demo costs sometime late last year. The Estate Attorney conveyed that the estate is pretty much insolvent. The only things that Mr. Mogan owned at his passing were those two properties. One that was conveyed to Mr. James. What was told to me is it was conveyed for practically nothing, considering Mr. Mogan was pretty delinquent on his property taxes. That attorney also indicated to me that they are behind on the taxes again for this particular property and they've been trying to offload it but haven't had any success, that there have been discussions potentially of them abandoning it, letting it go to tax sale. If that happens, our lien for the demo costs goes away. There may be an opportunity to explore, if the town were so inclined, in receiving that property as essentially payment for the lien. We do not know the exact answer on that, but that's something at least that you guys may want to consider.

Mr. Thiel asked can you see what, or is this a discussion we should have later, with what is owed in discussion with, who's ever in charge of the estate. If it is already delinquent on taxes, if we can take an initiative prior to going on a tax sale and losing whatever funds we have into it.

Mr. Deutmeyer commented it shows a total in the amount of \$5,334.16. That includes delinquent taxes from prior assessments. There's \$2,400 in tax, \$1,000 in penalties. Actually about \$1,800 in penalties. The town is tax-exempt, but the county might want to be paid for the taxes that are due.

Mr. Thiel asked should we instruct you to look into what we would have to do to try to acquire the property because of the situation. Trying to be good stewards of the money that we have into it for demoing the parcel and we are probably \$8,000 in it, and we have the potential of losing that, which we understand it going into the situation in the first place. But if we have a way to recover it by means of acquiring the property through whatever legal means. Mr. Deutmeyer commented if it goes to tax sale, you're done. Your options are basically do nothing, and you're never going to get paid, and it's going to go up for tax sale. Or potentially

pursue an avenue that could be there to acquire the property, but then you have it, and maybe it's excess property, surplus property that you can dispose of.

Mr. Thiel commented he would like to get the property working with the estate and versus just gaining nothing.

Discussion ensued regarding tax sale of the property.

5. 7029 W 135th Avenue – Ward
6. 7020 W. 139th Place – Land Bank Builders & Associates, Inc.

Mr. Deutmeyer commented we have the liens against the property. If you want to keep them on update items, you can. It's just a matter of collecting. Land Bank was sold at tax sale or was sold at tax sale and somebody's paying the taxes and they are current.

Mr. Thiel asked what is next in our process with this.

Mr. Deutmeyer commented we can wait for it to sell and the judgment lien is valid for 10 years. The other option would be to foreclose on that lien, and there isn't a mortgage exemption on the property. They didn't claim a mortgage to reduce their property tax liability. Doesn't mean there isn't one, but if there isn't a mortgage, then you're first lien priority. You could go ahead and sell it and recoup your expenses there, of course. That costs more money. It's just a matter of how you want to allocate those resources. Or you can go ahead and foreclose on it.

Mr. Thiel commented he would like to be proactive on it instead of waiting for them to do the latter of not paying and then we are in the same predicament as Land Bank and we recouped nothing.

Mr. Thiel commented there has been a complaint on the weeds at the property. We cannot sent notice to a deceased person for a weed Ordinance.

Discussion ensued regarding the process of what to do going forward with the Weed Ordinance and knowing the owners are deceased and doing a notice by publication.

Mr. Deutmeyer stated what the process could be going forward and getting Title Work.

7. W 127th Lane – Town of Cedar Lake

Mr. Austgen commented he did not have a second appraisal yet.

8. 14324 Edison – Town of Cedar Lake

Mr. Thiel commented no update at this time.

Discussion: Indiana Read Grant 2.0

Mr. Thiel commented this has expired. Habitat for Humanity and Rebuilding Together has been in Cedar Lake before doing project, but specifically 13957 Fairbanks and if that was active, but what can we do in the future if there is a Read Grant 3.0.

Mr. Thiel commented he would like the Unsafe Building Department, the Town Manager, and Building Department to look for possibilities for this situation, but we need to have your projects planned out, and presented. Discussion ensued regarding looking into the Grant for next year.

Public Comment: None was had.

Adjournment: Mr. Thiel adjourned the meeting at 6:31 pm.

TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE UNSAFE BUILDING

Rich Thiel, Chairperson

James Hunley, Member

John Hojek, Member

ATTEST:

Cheryl Hajduk, Recording Secretary

These Minutes are transcribed pursuant to IC 5-14-1.5-4(b) which states:

(b) As the meeting progresses, the following memoranda shall be kept:

(1) The date, time, and place of the meeting.

(2) The members of the governing body recorded as either present or absent.

(3) The general substance of all matters proposed, discussed, or decided.

(4) A record of all votes taken by individual members if there is a roll call.

(5) Any additional information required under section 3.5 or 3.6 of this chapter or any other statute that authorizes a governing body to conduct a meeting using an electronic means of communication.

Minutes of September 17, 2025