



CEDAR LAKE UNSAFE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
CEDAR LAKE TOWN HALL, 7408 CONSTITUTION AVENUE, CEDAR LAKE, INDIANA
October 15, 2025 at 5:30 pm

Call To Order:

Mr. Thiel called the Unsafe Public Meeting to order on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 5:33 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; James Hunley; Rich Thiel, Chairperson. A quorum was attained. **Also present:** Ryan Deutmeyer, Town Attorney; David Austgen, Town Attorney (present at 5:43 pm); Ben Eldridge, Town Manager; and Cheryl Hajduk, Recording Secretary.

Absent: Tony Gatto, Building Inspector

Minutes: September 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Hunley and seconded by Mr. Hojek to approve the September 17, 2025 meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote:

Mr. Hojek	Aye
Mr. Hunley	Aye
Mr. Thiel	Aye

Active Unsafe:

1. 14616 Dewey Street – Frick

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

- The board agreed to initiate Title Work to enable demolition orders on stalled unsafe properties, aiming to break multi-year inaction cycles.
- Mr. Hunley moved to instruct the attorney to start title work for 14616 Dewey Street to prepare a demolition order, with a typical title cost of \$300.
 - This step is necessary because the property owner, Mr. Frick, has not responded to multiple contacts, and drainage issues are blocking new construction approvals.
 - Title work will support a possible demolition order at the November meeting, with affirmation expected in December if no resolution occurs.

- The board sees this as a critical move to apply pressure, breaking the current stalemate where no progress has been made for years.
- The demolition cost will be pursued from the owner only if the town completes the teardown.

A motion was made by Mr. Hunley and seconded by Mr. Hojek to instruct the Town Attorney to start Title Work on this property and then the process of a Demolition Order can be started. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote:

Mr. Hojek	Aye
Mr. Hunley	Aye
Mr. Thiel	Aye

2. 7704 W. 134th Court

- The board deferred action to the November 19th meeting, directing the building inspector and Tony to re-assess the condition
 - The property is gutted and unsecured, with visible structural collapse risks and evidence of trespassing.
 - The board discussed declaring an emergency demolition order if the owner fails to act, with a 10-day removal requirement following official notice.
 - Ryan noted that town resources for demolition are limited; outside contractor quotes run 2-3 times the town's internal costs, sometimes near \$20,000.
 - A stronger warning letter will be sent before November, indicating possible emergency demolition consideration.

A motion was made by Mr. Hojek and seconded by Mr. Hunley to defer this item to the November 19, 2025 meeting. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote:

Mr. Hojek	Aye
Mr. Hunley	Aye
Mr. Thiel	Aye

3. 13025 Tyler Street

- Pablo Weber committed to obtaining demolition estimates and potentially selling the property, with the board deferring final action for 30 days to allow this process
 - The building department will issue demolition permits for up to 60 days if estimates are submitted and demolition initiated before the next meeting.
 - The board stressed that estimates should come from approved local contractors to ensure town protections and compliance.
 - Mr. Weber indicated financial hardship but expressed willingness to cooperate and pursue demolition if affordable.

A motion was made by Mr. Hojek and seconded by Mr. Hunley to have the Petitioner come back to the next meeting on November 19, 2025 with estimates of tearing down property or a permit can be issued if Petitioner comes back with estimates before the next meeting. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote:

Mr. Hojek Aye
Mr. Hunley Aye
Mr. Thiel Aye

Potential Unsafe:

1. 7204 W. 129th Lane

Mr. Thiel commented a report will need to be done for this address.

2. 13438 Hilltop

Mr. Thiel commented a report will need to be done for this address.

- The board stressed that police, fire, and public works must document visits to unsafe and occupied properties from day one to protect first responders and the town legally.
 - This documentation supports future court orders and liability defense if incidents occur.
 - Mr. Hojek highlighted the need for coordinated communication and record-keeping across departments.

3. 7513 136th Lane

Ms. Hajduk will send a Potential Unsafe Letter to the owner for the shed.

4. 13957 Fairbanks Street

- The board moved 13957 Fairbanks Street to active unsafe status due to severe structural damage and occupancy by two adults, with concerns about liability and first responder safety.
 - Police and fire departments are aware of the occupancy and condition but cannot forcibly remove residents without court orders.
 - The board plans to start title work concurrently to prepare for demolition after due process, expecting this to be a longer process extending into late winter or spring.
 - Mr. Hojek emphasized the need for documentation from police, fire, and public works to track ongoing risks and justify future actions.
 - Citations for ordinance violations like weeds may be pursued as additional pressure.

5. 8623 W. 131st Place

Mr. Thiel asked if we heard from the owners of this property. Ms. Hajduk responded in the negative. Mr. Thiel commented we still have a little time before the 60-days expire.

Under Permit/Demolition Orders:

1. 13333 Lemoore Street

Mr. Thiel commented they are remodeling.

Update Items:

1. 12611 Cline Avenue – Kubiak Properties, Inc.
 - the board acknowledged that lights and cameras have been installed as a deterrent, but no substantive redevelopment plans exist after four years of minimal progress
 - The moratorium on high-density subdivisions limits development options, complicating resolution.
 - Tony will report at the next meeting after inspecting the property to assess safety and needed next steps.
 - The board requested the property owner provide a clear plan for future use or rehabilitation.
2. 9320 W. 142nd Avenue – NWI Casas LLC

Mr. Thiel commented this item can be removed from the agenda. The Building Department is keeping up with any status.

3. 13713 Parrish Avenue – Diamond Peak Homes LLC
 - The barn on Parish Road remains on the unsafe list due to worsening structural deterioration and vandalism, despite prior efforts to preserve its heritage.
 - The board plans to discuss with owner Mr. Herbers at the next meeting to determine whether to allow demolition or implement enhanced security measures like chicken wire.
 - This reflects tension between preservation goals and safety/liability concerns.
4. 6599 Fernwood – Mogan
 - The property at 6599 Fernwood with \$5,300 in delinquent taxes was recommended by legal counsel for town council discussion on possible purchase or exchange to clear demolition liens
 - The board approved a motion for Rich to engage the town council on this option, signaling a shift toward proactive asset management.
 - Legal advised that tax exemption applies to the town, but clearing prior taxes requires tax sale or foreclosure action.
 - This approach aims to address properties where owners are deceased or unresponsive, securing control to resolve unsafe conditions.

A motion was made by Mr. Hojek and seconded by Mr. Hunley for a recommendation to the Town Council to start the foreclosure process. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote:

Mr. Hojek	Aye
Mr. Hunley	Aye
Mr. Thiel	Aye

5. 7029 W 135th Avenue – Ward

- The board approved forwarding a recommendation to council to pursue a foreclosure lawsuit to recover demolition judgments
 - This legal step would lead to sheriff sale or town ownership if no bidders emerge, enabling the town to recoup costs or sell the property.
 - The board emphasized these are policy decisions requiring elected officials' approval but sees foreclosure as a necessary enforcement tool.

A motion was made by Mr. Hojek and seconded by Mr. Hunley to send a recommendation to the Town Council to possibly pursue the purchase of this property. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote:

Mr. Hojek	Aye
Mr. Hunley	Aye
Mr. Thiel	Aye

6. 7020 W. 139th Place – Land Bank Builders & Associates, Inc.

Mr. Deutmeyer commented this is still in tax sale process and in the redemption period.

7. W 127th Lane – Town of Cedar Lake

Mr. Thiel commented there is no update this month.

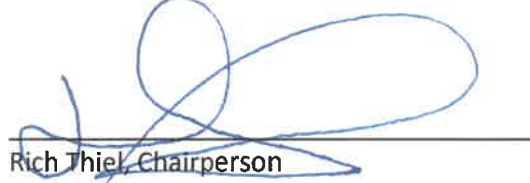
8. 14324 Edison – Town of Cedar Lake

Mr. Thiel commented no update at this time.

Public Comment: None was had.

Adjournment: Mr. Thiel adjourned the meeting at 6:30 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 October 15, 2025