Champaign County
Department of
PLANNING &
ZONING

Brookens Administrative Center 1776 E. Washington Street Urbana, Illinois 61802

(217) 384-3708 zoningdept@co.champaign.il.us www.co.champaign.il.us/zoning

CASE NO. 055-V-22

PRELIMINARY MEMORANDUM June 7, 2022

Petitioner: John Rash

Request: Authorize a variance for a proposed 21-acre lot in lieu of the maximum

allowed 3 acres in area for a lot with soils that are best prime farmland

in the AG-1 Agriculture Zoning District, per Section 5.3 of the

Champaign County Zoning Ordinance.

Subject Property: An existing 13.38-acre lot plus approximately 8 acres of a

112.94-acre tract in the Southeast Quarter of Section 29, Township 21 North, Range 10 East of the Third Principal Meridian in Rantoul Township, commonly known as the residence with an address of 1962 CR 2500N, Thomasboro.

Site Area: 13.38 acres existing, 21 acres as proposed

Time Schedule for Development: As soon as possible

Prepared by: Susan Burgstrom, Senior Planner

John Hall, Zoning Administrator

BACKGROUND

The Petitioner has expressed a need for an additional hangar for the Restricted Landing Area (RLA) on the subject property. There is insufficient room on the existing, irregularly-shaped property to construct a hangar and have maneuvering room for aircraft. The petitioner proposes adding an adjacent eight acres to create sufficient area, but there would be no change in the amount of land in agricultural production. The additional acreage would remove the notched areas of the current property, which would square off the line of tillage for the petitioner and the adjacent farmer. No changes would be made to the airstrip.

No comments have been received from relevant jurisdictions or the public.

EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING

Table 1. Land Use and Zoning in the Vicinity

Direction	Land Use	Zoning
Onsite	Residential, Restricted Landing Area, Agriculture	AG-1 Agriculture
North	Agriculture	AG-1 Agriculture
South	Agriculture	AG-1 Agriculture
East	Agriculture	AG-1 Agriculture
West	Agriculture	AG-1 Agriculture

EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION

The subject property is not located within the one and one-half mile extraterritorial jurisdiction of a municipality with zoning. Municipalities do not have protest rights on a variance and are not notified of such cases.

The subject property is located in Rantoul Township, which has a Plan Commission. Townships with Plan Commissions have protest rights on a variance and are notified of such cases.

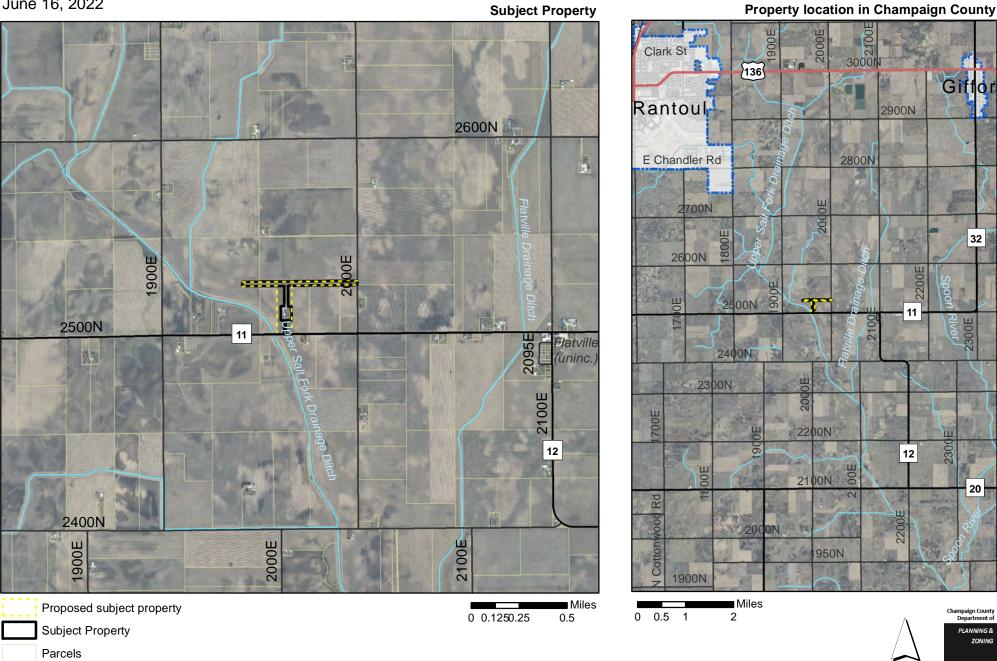
ATTACHMENTS

- A Case Maps (Location, Land Use, Zoning)
- B Site Plan (3 sheets)
 - Sheet 1: Plat of Survey prepared by Moore Surveying & Mapping, dated April 19, 2006
 - Sheet 2: Layout of farmstead area on 13.38-acre lot
 - Sheet 3: Existing and proposed property boundaries
- C 2020 annotated aerial prepared by P&Z Staff dated April 28, 2022
- D Site Images taken May 11, 2022
- E Summary of Evidence, Summary Draft Finding of Fact, and Final Determination for Case 055-V-22 dated June 16, 2022

Location Map

Municipal Boundary

Case 055-V-22 June 16, 2022



■ Feet

800

0 200 400

Land Use Map

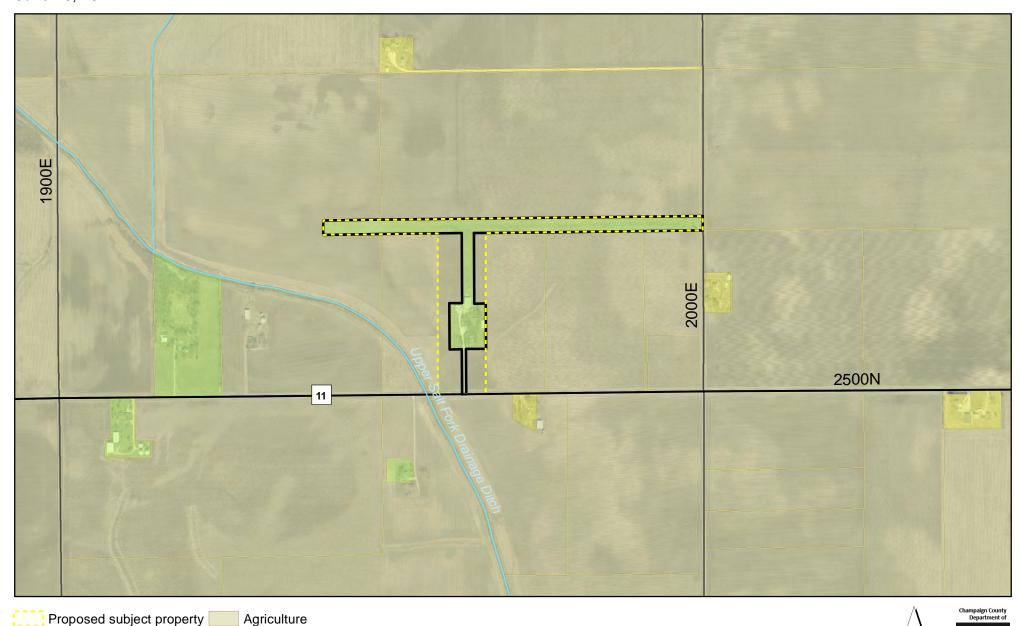
Subject Property

Parcels

Ag/Residential

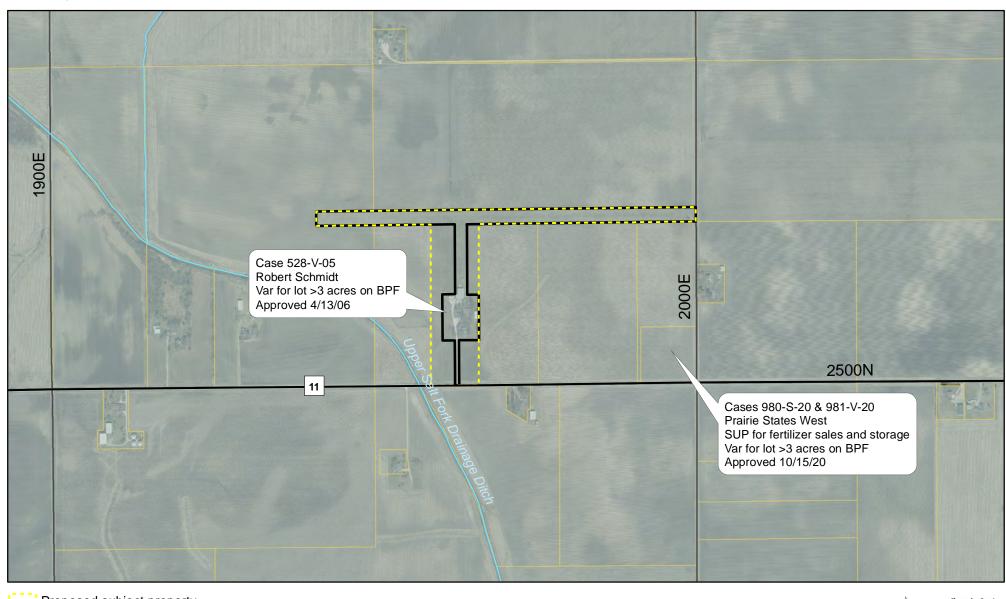
Residential

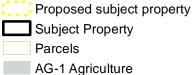
Case 055-V-22 June 16, 2022



Zoning Map

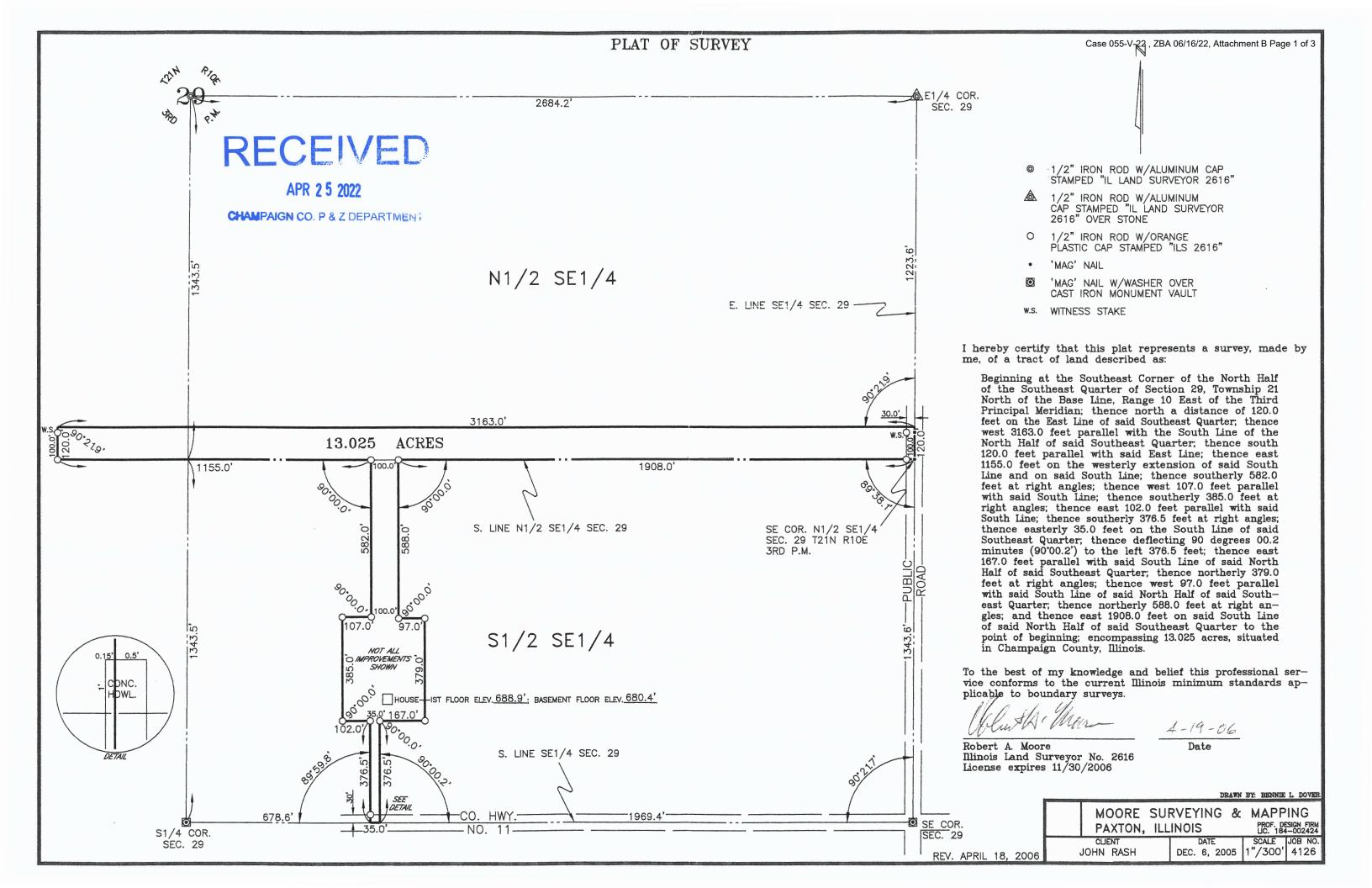
Case 055-V-22 June 16, 2022

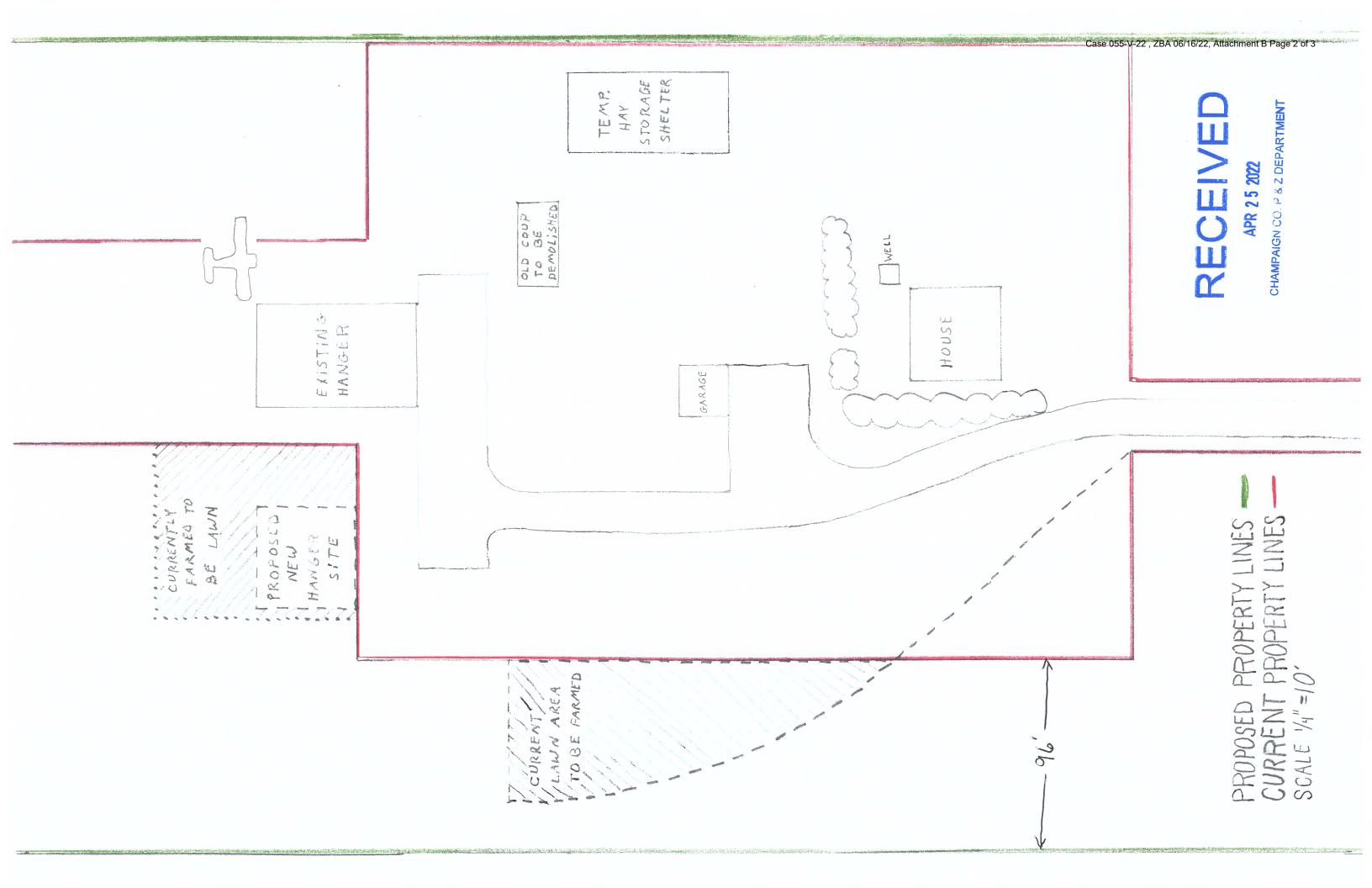




Feet 0 200400 800







CURRENT FOOTPRINT 304'

PROPOSED FOOTPRINT

400'

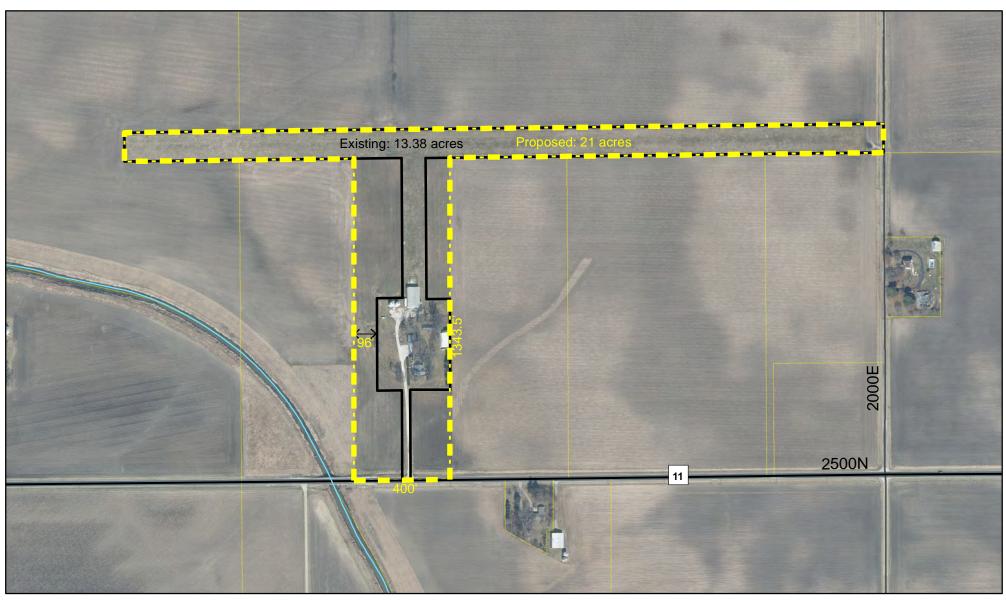
RECEIVED

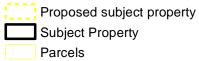
APR 2 5 2022

CHAMPAIGN CO. F & Z DEPARTMENT

Annotated Aerial

Case 055-V-22 June 16, 2022









055-V-22 Site Images



From CR 2500N facing north to subject property



From CR 2500N near CR 2000E facing NW to subject property

June 16, 2022 ZBA 1

055-V-22 Site Images



From CR 2500N facing NE to subject property



From CR 2000E facing SW to subject property

June 16, 2022 ZBA 2

055-V-22

FINDING OF FACT AND FINAL DETERMINATION

of the

Champaign County Zoning Board of Appeals

Final Determination: {GRANTED/GRANTED WITH SPECIAL CONDITION(S)/DENIED}

Date: {June 16, 2022}

Petitioners: John Rash

Request: Authorize a variance for a proposed 21-acre lot in lieu of the maximum

allowed 3 acres in area for a lot with soils that are best prime farmland in the AG-1 Agriculture Zoning District, per Section 5.3 of the Champaign

County Zoning Ordinance.

Table of Contents

General Application Information	2 - 3
Requested Variance	3
Specific Ordinance Requirements	3 - 5
Variance Evidence	
Documents of Record	8
Case 055-V-22 Findings of Fact	9
Case 055-V-22 Final Determination	10

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

From the documents of record and the testimony and exhibits received at the public hearing conducted on **June 16, 2022**, the Zoning Board of Appeals of Champaign County finds that:

- 1. Petitioner John Rash owns the 13.38-acre lot.
- 2. The subject property is an existing 13.38-acre lot plus approximately 8 acres of a 112.94-acre tract in the Southeast Quarter of Section 29, Township 21 North, Range 10 East of the Third Principal Meridian in Rantoul Township, commonly known as the residence with an address of 1962 CR 2500N, Thomasboro.
- 3. Regarding municipal extraterritorial jurisdiction and township planning jurisdiction:
 - A. The subject property is not located within the one and one-half mile extraterritorial jurisdiction of a municipality with zoning.
 - B. The subject property is located in Rantoul Township, which has a Planning Commission. Townships with Plan Commissions have protest rights on a variance and receive notification of such cases.

GENERALLY REGARDING LAND USE AND ZONING IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY

- 4. Land use and zoning on the subject property and in the vicinity are as follows:
 - A. Both the 13.38-acre tract and the 112.94-acre tract are zoned AG-1 Agriculture. The larger tract is in agricultural production and the 13.38-acre tract is residential in use with a Restricted Landing Area (RLA).
 - B. Land to the north, east, south and west is zoned AG-1 Agriculture and is in agricultural production.

GENERALLY REGARDING THE PROPOSED SITE PLAN

- 5. Regarding the site plan for the subject property:
 - A. The Site Plan received on April 25, 2022 has three pages and indicates the following:
 - (1) The first sheet is the existing survey for the 13.38 acre lot prepared by Moore Surveying & Mapping, dated April 19, 2006.
 - (2) The second sheet is a layout of existing features on the 13.38-acre lot:
 - a. One 928 square feet residence;
 - b. One temporary hay storage shelter on the east side;
 - c. One coop, to be demolished;
 - d. An aircraft hangar on the north side.
 - (3) The third sheet shows an outline of the existing 13.38-acre lot and the proposed 21-acre lot.
 - B. There is one previous Zoning Use Permit for the subject property:

- (1) ZUPA #196-88-02 was approved on July 14, 1988, to authorize a legally non-conforming Restricted Landing Area as an accessory use.
- C. There is one prior zoning case for the subject property:
 - Variance case 528-V-05 was approved on April 13, 2006, for petitioner Robert Schmidt to create the current 13.38-acre lot in lieu of the maximum allowed 3 acres on Best Prime Farmland.
- D. The requested variance is for a lot size of 21 acres in lieu of the maximum area of 3 acres for lots on soils that are best prime farmland, per Section 5.3 of the Zoning Ordinance.

GENERALLY REGARDING SPECIFIC ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS AND ZONING PROCEDURES

- 6. Regarding specific *Zoning Ordinance* requirements relevant to this case:
 - A. The following definitions from the *Zoning Ordinance* are especially relevant to the requested variances (capitalized words are defined in the Ordinance):
 - "AGRICULTURE" is the growing, harvesting and storing of crops including (1) legumes, hay, grain, fruit and truck or vegetable crops, floriculture, horticulture, mushroom growing, orchards, forestry and the keeping, raising and feeding of livestock or poultry, including dairying, poultry, swine, sheep, beef cattle, pony and horse production, fur farms, and fish and wildlife farms; farm BUILDINGS used for growing, harvesting and preparing crop products for market, or for use on the farm; roadside stands, farm BUILDINGS for storing and protecting farm machinery and equipment form the elements, for housing livestock or poultry and for preparing livestock or poultry products for market; farm DWELLINGS occupied by farm OWNERS, operators, tenants or seasonal or year-round hired farm workers. It is intended by this definition to include within the definition of AGRICULTURE all types of agricultural operations, but to exclude therefrom industrial operations such as a grain elevator, canning or slaughterhouse, wherein agricultural products produced primarily by others are stored or processed. Agricultural purposes include, without limitation, the growing, developing, processing, conditioning, or selling of hybrid seed corn, seed beans, seed oats, or other farm seeds.
 - (2) "AREA, LOT" is the total area within the LOT LINES.
 - (3) "BEST PRIME FARMLAND" is Prime Farmland Soils identified in the Champaign County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) System that under optimum management have 91% to 100% of the highest soil productivities in Champaign County, on average, as reported in the *Bulletin 811 Optimum Crop Productivity Ratings for Illinois Soils*. Best Prime Farmland consists of the following:
 - (a) Soils identified as Agriculture Value Groups 1, 2, 3 and/or 4 in the Champaign County Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) System;
 - (b) Soils that, in combination on a subject site, have an average LE of 91 or higher, as determined by the Champaign County LESA System; or
 - (c) Any development site that includes a significant amount (10% or more of the area proposed to be developed) of Agriculture Value Groups 1, 2, 3 and/or 4 soils, as determined by the Champaign County LESA System.

- (4) "LOT" is a designated parcel, tract or area of land established by PLAT, SUBDIVISION or as otherwise permitted by law, to be used, developed or built upon as a unit.
- (5) "LOT LINES" are the lines bounding a LOT.
- (6) "PLAT" is a map, plan or layout showing the SUBDIVISION of land and indicating the location and boundaries of individual LOTS.
- (7) "RESTRICTED LANDING AREA" is any area described or defined as a Restricted Landing Area under the Illinois Aviation Safety Rules (92 Ill. Admin. Code Part 14) and as further regulated by the Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics.
- (8) "VARIANCE" is a deviation from the regulations or standards adopted by this ordinance which the Hearing Officer or the Zoning Board of Appeals are permitted to grant.
- B. Section 5.3 of the Zoning Ordinance Footnote 13 states:
 - 13. The following maximum LOT AREA requirements apply in the CR, AG-1 and AG-2 DISTRICTS:
 - A) LOTS that meet all of the following criteria may not exceed a maximum LOT AREA of three acres:
 - 1) The LOT is RRO-exempt;
 - 2) The LOT is made up of soils that are BEST PRIME FARMLAND; and
 - 3) The LOT is created from a tract that had a LOT AREA greater than or equal to 12 acres as of January 1, 1998.
- C. Paragraph 9.1.9 D. of the *Zoning Ordinance* requires the ZBA to make the following findings for a variance:
 - (1) That the requirements of Paragraph 9.1.9 C. have been met and justify granting the variance. Paragraph 9.1.9C. of the *Zoning Ordinance* states that a variance from the terms of the *Champaign County Zoning Ordinance* shall not be granted by the Board or the hearing officer unless a written application for a variance is submitted demonstrating all of the following:
 - a. That special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land or structure involved which are not applicable to other similarly situated land or structures elsewhere in the same district.
 - b. That practical difficulties or hardships created by carrying out the strict letter of the regulations sought to be varied prevent reasonable and otherwise permitted use of the land or structures or construction on the lot.
 - c. That the special conditions, circumstances, hardships, or practical difficulties do not result from actions of the Applicant.
 - d. That the granting of the variance is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the *Ordinance*.

- e. That the granting of the variance will not be injurious to the neighborhood, or otherwise detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare.
- (2) That the variance is the minimum variation that will make possible the reasonable use of the land or structure, as required by subparagraph 9.1.9 D.2.
- D. Paragraph 9.1.9 E. of the *Zoning Ordinance* authorizes the ZBA to prescribe appropriate conditions and safeguards in granting a variance.

GENERALLY REGARDING SPECIAL CONDITIONS THAT MAY BE PRESENT

- 7. Generally regarding the Zoning Ordinance requirement of a finding that special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land or structure involved which are not applicable to other similarly situated land or structures elsewhere in the same district:
 - A. The Petitioner testified the following on the application: "The property has lot lines on the east and west sides that vary greatly making narrow areas and giving 'notched' property lines for both the subject and the adjacent fields. This creates an inefficient farming situation for the adjacent properties and an access restriction past the existing aircraft hangar for the subject property."
 - B. Regarding the soils that make up the subject property:
 - (1) The soil on the proposed 21-acre lot is BEST PRIME FARMLAND. It consists of 125A Selma Loam, 663B Clare silt loam, 149A Brenton silt loam, and 152A Drummer silty clay loam, and has an average LE of 96.
 - (2) There will be no change to the amount of land in agricultural production.
 - C. In zoning case 528-V-05 approved on April 13, 2006, the previous owner, Robert Schmidt, created a 13.38-acre lot that comprised the minimum possible acreage to include an existing farmstead and a Restricted Landing Area (RLA). The 13.38-acre lot was uniquely notched out to minimize the variance required.

GENERALLY REGARDING ANY PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES OR HARDSHIPS RELATED TO CARRYING OUT THE STRICT LETTER OF THE ORDINANCE

- 8. Generally regarding the Zoning Ordinance requirement of a finding that practical difficulties or hardships related to carrying out the strict letter of the regulations sought to be varied prevent reasonable and otherwise permitted use of the land or structures or construction on the lot:
 - A. The Petitioners testified the following on the application: "We have need for and wish to build an additional aircraft hangar. The existing aircraft hangar is located in a narrow section of the lot and will not allow an airplane past without being on the adjacent property preventing a building site south of the existing hangar. The existing lot is too narrow to allow a building site east or west of the existing hangar location. A building site north of the existing hangar would not allow enough clearance for aircraft to access the existing hangar. In addition to the subject property, the 'notched' lot lines present an inefficient farming scenario for the adjacent property owners."

B. Without the variance, the petitioner could not construct an additional hangar and have space to maneuver aircraft.

GENERALLY PERTAINING TO WHETHER OR NOT THE PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES OR HARDSHIPS RESULT FROM THE ACTIONS OF THE APPLICANT

- 9. Generally regarding the Zoning Ordinance requirement for a finding that the special conditions, circumstances, hardships, or practical difficulties do not result from the actions of the Applicant:
 - A. The Petitioners testified the following on the application: "No. The existing hangar was present when the property was purchased."
 - B. The 13.38-acre lot was created in a survey dated April 19, 2006. The current owner purchased the property on May 12, 2006.

GENERALLY PERTAINING TO WHETHER OR NOT THE VARIANCE IS IN HARMONY WITH THE GENERAL PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THE ORDINANCE

- 10. Generally regarding the Zoning Ordinance requirement for a finding that the granting of the variance is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Ordinance:
 - A. The Petitioners testified the following on the application: "The intent of the zoning ordinance for which the variance is requested is to ensure that best prime farmland continues to be used for agriculture. Since 2006, the 'notched' areas have been leased by the variance applicants and have been used for growing alfalfa hay. Farming of the 8 acres will continue as it has the previous 16 years, although a small amount of the tilled areas will be planted in turfgrass to allow access to the new building. In exchange, approximately the same square footage of existing turfgrass will be tilled for alfalfa cultivation. The income from this small farming operation is a necessary part of the household income for the applicants. This in addition to the history of farming this land and the increased property taxes that would be assessed if the requested variance areas were not farmed is an assurance to the county that the use of these small fields will not change with the granting of a variance."
 - B. The maximum lot size on best prime farmland requirement was first established by Ordinance No. 726 (Case 444-AT-04) on July 22, 2004. It was made permanent with Ordinance No. 773 approved December 20, 2005.
 - C. Ordinance No. 914 (Case 711-AT-12) approved on November 27, 2012, revised the best prime farmland definition to have a Land Evaluation (LE) rating of 91 or higher rather than the previous rating of 85 or higher.
 - D. The 21-acre lot area is 700% of the required three acre maximum, for a variance of 600%.
 - E. The requested variance is not prohibited by the *Zoning Ordinance*.

GENERALLY PERTAINING TO THE EFFECTS OF THE REQUESTED VARIANCE ON THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE

- 11. Generally regarding the Zoning Ordinance requirement for a finding that the granting of the variance will not be injurious to the neighborhood, or otherwise detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare:
 - A. The Petitioner testified the following on the application: "The use of the property will not change with the granting of this variance, only the ownership. The granting of this variance will allow the 'notched' field areas (which have been leased and farmed by the applicants for 16 years) to be sold to the applicants which will allow access to a new building site. The area farmed and use of the property will remain the same."
 - B. The Rantoul Township Highway Commissioner has been notified of this variance, and no comments have been received.
 - C. The Rantoul Township Supervisor has been notified of this variance, and no comments have been received.
 - D. The Thomasboro Fire Protection District has been notified of this variance, and no comments have been received.

GENERALLY REGARDING ANY OTHER JUSTIFICATION FOR THE VARIANCE

- 12. Generally regarding and other circumstances which justify the Variance:
 - A. The Petitioner testified the following on the application: "The granting of this variance will allow the subject property, and the adjacent properties to be squared off, eliminating the 'notched' property lines. This variance will also allow a new aircraft hangar to be erected. Without the variance, access to a new building would not be possible without traveling across the neighboring property. The intent of the ordinance for which the variance is requested would remain intact, as no acreage would be removed from crop production."

GENERALLY REGARDING PROPOSED SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

13. Regarding proposed special conditions of approval:

No special conditions are proposed at this time.

DOCUMENTS OF RECORD

- 1. Application for Variance received April 25, 2022, with attachments:
 - Sheet 1: Plat of Survey prepared by Moore Surveying & Mapping, dated April 19, 2006
 - Sheet 2: Layout of farmstead area on 13.38-acre lot
 - Sheet 3: Existing and proposed property boundaries
- 2. Preliminary Memorandum dated June 7, 2022, with attachments:
 - A Case Maps (Location, Land Use, Zoning)
 - B Site Plan (3 sheets)
 - Sheet 1: Plat of Survey prepared by Moore Surveying & Mapping, dated April 19, 2006
 - Sheet 2: Layout of farmstead area on 13.38-acre lot
 - Sheet 3: Existing and proposed property boundaries
 - C 2020 annotated aerial prepared by P&Z Staff dated April 28, 2022
 - D Site Images taken May 11, 2022
 - E Summary of Evidence, Summary Draft Finding of Fact, and Final Determination for Case 055-V-22 dated June 16, 2022

SUMMARY DRAFT FINDINGS OF FACT

From the documents of record and the testimony and exhibits received at the public hearing for zoning case **055-V-22** held on **June 16**, **2022**, the Zoning Board of Appeals of Champaign County finds that:

- 1. Special conditions and circumstances {<u>DO</u> / DO NOT} exist which are peculiar to the land or structure involved, which are not applicable to other similarly situated land and structures elsewhere in the same district because:
 - a. In zoning case 528-V-05 approved on April 13, 2006, the previous owner, Robert Schmidt, created a 13.38-acre lot that comprised the minimum possible acreage to include an existing farmstead and a Restricted Landing Area (RLA). The 13.38-acre lot was uniquely notched out to minimize the variance required.
- 2. Practical difficulties or hardships created by carrying out the strict letter of the regulations sought to be varied {WILL / WILL NOT} prevent reasonable or otherwise permitted use of the land or structure or construction because:
 - a. Without the variance, the petitioner could not construct another hangar and have room to maneuver aircraft within the property.
- 3. The special conditions, circumstances, hardships, or practical difficulties {DO / <u>DO NOT</u>} result from actions of the applicant because:
 - a. The 13.38-acre lot was created in a survey dated April 19, 2006. The current owner purchased the property on May 12, 2006.
- 4. The requested variance {SUBJECT TO THE PROPOSED CONDITION} {<u>IS</u> / IS NOT} in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Ordinance because:
 - a. The 21-acre lot area is 700% of the required three acre maximum, for a variance of 600%.
 - b. The requested variance is not prohibited by the Zoning Ordinance.
- 5. The requested variance {SUBJECT TO THE PROPOSED CONDITION} {WILL / WILL NOT} be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare because:
 - a. Relevant jurisdictions have been notified of this case, and no comments have been received.
- 6. The requested variance {SUBJECT TO THE PROPOSED CONDITION} {IS / IS NOT} the minimum variation that will make possible the reasonable use of the land/structure because:
 - a. 21 acres is the minimum acreage to include sufficient land for a new hanger and maneuvering room for aircraft, and to square up the east and west property lines for ease of tillage.
- 7. {NO SPECIAL CONDITIONS ARE HEREBY IMPOSED / THE SPECIAL CONDITIONS IMPOSED HEREIN ARE REQUIRED FOR THE PARTICULAR PURPOSES DESCRIBED BELOW:}

Case 055-V-22 Page 10 of 10

SIGNED:

PRELIMINARY DRAFT

FINAL DETERMINATION

The Champaign County Zoning Board of Appeals finds that, based upon the application, testimony, and other evidence received in this case, that the requirements for approval in Section 9.1.9.C {HAVE/HAVE NOT} been met, and pursuant to the authority granted by Section 9.1.6.B of the Champaign County Zoning Ordinance, the Zoning Board of Appeals of Champaign County determines that:

The Variance requested in Case **055-V-22** is hereby *{GRANTED/GRANTED WITH CONDITIONS/DENIED}* to the petitioner, **John Rash**, to authorize the following:

Authorize a variance for a proposed 21-acre lot in lieu of the maximum allowed 3 acres in area for a lot with soils that are best prime farmland in the AG-1 Agriculture Zoning District, per Section 5.3 of the Champaign County Zoning Ordinance.

{SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITION(S):}

The foregoing is an accurate and complete record of the Findings and Determination of the Zoning Board of Appeals of Champaign County.

Ryan Elwell, Chair Champaign County Zoning Board of Appeals
ATTEST:
Secretary to the Zoning Board of Appeals
Date