

MINUTES OF THE LIVINGSTON COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
HELD ON JANUARY 7, 2019, STARTING AT 7:00 PM
IN THE LIVINGSTON COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE
112 W. MADISON ST. PONTIAC, ILLINOIS

Chairman Mike Haberkorn called the meeting to order and roll call was taken.

Those present were: Jerry Gaspardo, Mike Haberkorn, Rudy Piskule, Eddie Hoerner, Verne Taylor, Dee Woodburn, Shane Long, Scott Cranford and John Slagel.

Those absent were: Keith Bahler, Dean Wahls and Scott Sand.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Chairman Haberkorn mentioned the agenda to this meeting. With no recommendations for additions or amendments to the agenda for this January 7, 2019 meeting, Jerry Gaspardo moved, seconded by John Slagel that the agenda for this meeting be approved as presented. This motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of the November 5, 2018 meeting were mentioned by Chairman Haberkorn. It was explained that Scott Sand was listed as both present and absent in these minutes, and that this oversight would be corrected. Then John Slagel moved, seconded by Jerry Gaspardo, that these minutes be approved as amended. This motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

BUSINESS:

Case ZT-1-18 - This zoning case pertains to a review of the status of a proposed zoning text amendment intended to clarify in what zoning districts solar farms are to be considered as special uses and to clarify solar farm special use regulations. The zoning administrator presented the latest report with notes regarding this proposed special use. The zoning administrator also included copies of the minutes from past meeting minutes to familiarize the planning commission members as to how this proposed text amendment had been discussed in the past. The zoning administrator then reviewed and clarified the notes on the report being reviewed by the planning commission members at this meeting. The issues regarding the fencing discussions were then mentioned. The fencing issue was then discussed among the zoning administrator and the planning commission members, including the type and height of the fence. Fence installation was then discussed. The reasoning for a seven foot fence was discussed. The reasoning for even having a fence was discussed. Jerry Gaspardo moved, seconded by Rudy Piskule, that he planning commission recommend a seven foot chain link fence. This motion carried by a voice vote of all ayes.

OTHER BUSINESS:

The planning commission members then reviewed a consideration for limiting the land area for solar farms, regarding solar energy and agricultural land importance. The zoning administrator provided the planning commission members with a partial copy of the Livingston County Comprehensive Plan with draft language for discussion regarding this consideration.

A review of the discussion regarding this consideration took place. John Slagel remarked about his reasoning for proposing this consideration, in part to spread the solar farms out, and to limit a potential larger solar farm. A need for limitation was discussed, in that some limitations exist, in that the number of solar farms is limited by current state regulations. A mention was made about being fair to allow any land owner to have the potential to have a solar farm on their property without restricting them and without limiting to so many per township. Remarks were made that solar farms just temporarily take farm ground out of production. Just limiting the size, in relation to limiting acres per solar farm, was then discussed. The LESA scoring system was then discussed and the comparison to agriculture land production. Conservation acres in relation to solar farms were then discussed. The draft language for discussion purposes was read to the planning commission members. It was noted that this would be in the comprehensive plan and could be used as a guideline in the planning commission making recommendations to the zoning board of appeals and county board. This draft language can be amended. Acreage limitation was then discussed, and the reasoning for this discussion. A discussion then took place in that initial contracts for leases for solar farms may be for 160 acres, and then when planned only 20 acres of that 160 acres are proposed to developed so how should the issue of leased as opposed to be developed be addressed. So it was agreed that only the acreage that would be developed should be part of the proposed 160 acres and not the entire 160 acres. It was the consensus of the planning commission to amend the language on to reflect development and not leasing of acreage. Once this language is agreed upon the process of amending the comprehensive plan can then proceed.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

INFORMATIONAL UPDATE:

The planning commission members present were informed that their next meeting is scheduled for Monday the February 4th at 7:00 pm.

ADJOURNMENT:

Jerry Gaspardo moved, seconded by Rudy Piskule, that the meeting be adjourned. This motion was unanimously approved.

This meeting was then adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles T. Schopp, Secretary
Livingston County Regional
Planning Commission