

AGRICULTURE, ZONING AND EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 16, 2020 MEETING

The committee chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm at the Livingston County Historic Courthouse, 112 W. Madison St., Pontiac, Illinois and roll call was taken.

Present: Jason Bunting, Gerald Earing, Scott Mennenga, Steven Lovell and John Slagel.

Absent: Paul Ritter, Tim Shafer

Others Present: Additional County Representatives included: County Board Chair Kathy Arbogast, non-committee county board members Seth Welch, Joel Barickman, Linda Ambrose and John Vitzthum County Executive Director Alina Hartley and Paul Brown representing Dollar General.

Committee Chair Jason Bunting commented about the agenda for this December 16, 2020 meeting. Gerald Earing then moved, seconded by Steven Lovell, that this agenda be approved as presented. This motion was approved by a roll call vote; Bunting-Yes, Ritter-Absent, Earing-Yes, Lovell-Yes, Mennenga-Yes, Shafer-Absent, Slagel-Yes

Committee Chair Jason Bunting then referred to the minutes of the November 5, 2020 committee meeting. John Slagel moved, seconded by Gerald Earing, that these meetings minutes be approved as presented. This motion was approved by a roll call vote; Bunting-Yes, Ritter-Absent, Earing-Yes, Lovell-Yes, Mennenga-Yes, Shafer-Absent, Slagel-Yes.

Business:

Review of Zoning Map Case – Case ZM-4-20 – Saunemin Dollar General

The zoning administrator provided a summary of this zoning case to the committee members regarding a request for AG, Agricultural, District property to be re-zoned as C2, Central Business, District property in order for a Dollar General to be constructed in unincorporated Saunemin. Additionally, the zoning administrator informed the committee of discussion had previously by the Regional Planning Commission as well as the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding safety concerns and the attempts by the applicant to find an alternative site. Minutes from the regional planning commission and zoning board of appeals meetings were part of the handout report given to the committee members.

Paul Brown of the Farnsworth Group was present to represent the applicant and answer any questions by the committee.

Prior to taking questions, Mr. Brown explained the alternative sites and their shortcomings during the process of ultimately acquiring the subject property.

Some issues that were encountered while seeking other property included owners not interested in selling their property and property that would not be suitable for construction of a Dollar General Store due to existing issues with the property. Additionally, Mr. Brown addressed the ideas for making foot and bicycle traffic safer to the subject property. He explained that his company contacted the Illinois Department of Transportation regarding a potential traffic safety study to potentially develop a crosswalk at the intersection of IL Route 47 and IL Route 116. Mr. Brown stated that IDOT did not seem interested in doing a traffic safety study. Mr. Brown also explained that the cost of constructing a sidewalk and road crossings would be cost prohibitive to the project. Further, Mr. Brown believed that constructing sidewalks and crossings would entice foot & bicycle traffic, with the entrance to the store to be 700 feet west of the highway's intersection.

Committee member, Gerald Earing, then communicated his concerns over children's foot & bicycle safety to the subject property, more specifically, the intersection of IL Route 116 and IL Route 47. Earing then asked about other nearby property to the East of IL Route 47 as well as property to the East of Saunemin. Mr. Brown reiterated their process of speaking with other nearby property owners who did not seem interested in selling. To Earing's point of property to the East of Saunemin, Mr. Brown explained that their clients typically seek property that will have the most visibility and believed that placing the store to the East of Saunemin would limit visibility to vehicle traffic.

Committee member, John Slagel, then asked about existing Dollar General stores in Livingston County such as Fairbury and Chatsworth that do not have sidewalks leading to them and whether they have experienced increased foot and bicycle traffic. A member of the public who was present commented that they observe people approaching the Fairbury Dollar General through the fields that surround the property, and along the Route 24 leading to that store. John Vitzthum noted he also has safety concerns for this proposed store location.

Committee Chair, Jason Bunting, then stated that he believed due diligence was done by the applicant in seeking alternative sites for the store. A comment was made as to how this area is a food desert, and the proposed store could partially fill that void.

A public comment was made that they did not feel it was appropriate to deny all Saunemin residents the opportunity to have a Dollar General based on speculated safety concerns, while noting that there is an increased risk to residents of Saunemin who must drive to Pontiac and other places a considerable distance from Saunemin to get groceries and other items that are not currently available in the village. Mr. Earing noted that he could not justify the approval of this zoning case.

Steven Lovell then made a motion for the committee to recommend approval of zoning case ZM-4-20 to the county board. With no second being made to the motion, the motion failed.

John Slagel then made a motion to forward zoning case ZM-4-20 to the county board with no recommendation. With no second being made to the motion, the motion failed.

Gerald Earing then made a motion for the committee to recommend county board that zoning case ZM-4-20 be denied, John Slagel seconded the motion. This motion failed by roll call vote. Bunting-No, Ritter-Absent, Earing-Yes, Lovell-No, Mennenga-No, Shafer-Absent, Slagel-Yes

As a result, zoning case ZM-4-20 will be forwarded to the county board with no recommendation.

It was pondered as to how the three motions failed.

Review of Zoning Case SF-4-20 – Slagel Subdivision

The assistant zoning administrator provided a summary of zoning case SF-4-20 to the committee regarding the applicant's proposal to subdivide a 6.45 acre parcel of land into two lots. This property is located in the Southwest Quarter of Section 5 of Forrest Township, at 8124 N – 2500 East Rd., Forrest. A plat of the proposed property division was part of the report pertaining to this zoning case. Lot "A" is a proposed 2.45 acre parcel containing farming and livestock buildings that the current owner of the property, Logan Slagel, wishes to retain for continued use. Lot "B" is a proposed 4 acre parcel containing a single family residence, a detached garage, and a pond that Mr. Slagel wishes to sell to a family member.

Water well and septic matters were then discussed regarding the property. It was determined that an easement should be considered between the proposed two lots if need be.

Gerald Earing then made a motion for the committee to recommend approval of zoning case SF-4-20 to the county board. John Slagel seconded the motion. This motion was approved by a roll call vote; Bunting-Yes, Ritter-Absent, Earing-Yes, Lovell-Yes, Mennenga-Yes, Shafer-Absent, Slagel-Yes

Review of the Final Update to the Livingston County Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazards Mitigation Plan.

The zoning administrator gave an overview of the plan that included a handout of the cover page, table of contents and planning process for this document of this 413 page document. The zoning administrator explained the purpose of this plan as a needed element for requests for disaster mitigation grants. The committee was informed that the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency had approved this document as it is drafted, meeting the requirements of those agencies. There was discussion about whether or not municipalities would receive aid that did not participate in the plan. It was related that the majority of the population of the county is covered with the and county and participating municipalities being part of this plan. There was also discussion about a mitigation method of removing buildings located in a flood hazard area, and as to who would take ownership of the would be vacant land.

Steven Lovell then made a motion for the committee to recommend approval of the Livingston County Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazards Mitigation Plan to the county board. John Slagel seconded the motion.

Other Issues to Come Before the Committee: None

Public Comment: None

Review and Approval of Bills:

An invoice was presented with a total amount of \$3,850.00 from Deigan and Associates, LLC for Professional Services for the period from October 27, 2020 to November 19, 2020 relating to landfill monitoring and technical reviews of Republic/Allied Waste’s Livingston and Streator Area Landfills, for environmental/solid waste landfill consulting service. A second invoice was presented with a total amount of \$1,534.00 from Deigan and Associates, LLC for Professional Services for the period from November 16, 2020 to December 7, 2020 relating to landfill monitoring and technical reviews of Republic/Allied Waste’s Livingston and Streator Area Landfills, for environmental/solid waste landfill consulting service. John Slagel moved, seconded by Steven Lovell, that this committee approve of these invoices. This motion was approved by a roll call vote; Bunting-Yes, Ritter-Absent, Earing-Yes, Lovell-Yes, Mennenga-Yes, Shafer-Absent, Slagel-Yes

Adjournment:

Gerald Earing moved, seconded by Scott Mennenga, that this meeting be adjourned. This motion was approved by a roll call vote; Bunting-Yes, Ritter-Absent, Earing-Yes, Lovell-Yes, Mennenga-Yes, Shafer-Absent, Slagel-Yes

This meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Charles T. Schopp, Administrator
Livingston County Regional
Planning Commission