

AGRICULTURE, ZONING AND EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 8, 2022 MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m.. Pursuant to Public Act 101-0640 and the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation related to COVID-19, participation in this meeting was offered in person, through Zoom and by teleconference.

Present: Tim Shafer, Gerald Earing, Scott Mennenga Steven Lovell, John Slagel, and Paul Ritter

Present Via Zoom: Jason Bunting

Absent:

Committee Chair Bunting commented about the agenda for this February 8, 2022 meeting. With no needed corrections or amendments noted, Steven Lovell moved, seconded by Paul Ritter that this agenda be approved as presented. This motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Committee Chair Bunting then referred to the minutes of the January 4, 2022 committee meeting. Gerald Earing then moved, seconded by Tim Shafer that the January 4, 2022 minutes be approved as presented. This motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Business:

Case ZT-1-22 – Livingston County Board (Special Uses)

This zoning case was a review of a proposed zoning text amendment to the Livingston County Code of Ordinances as it pertains to the approval of special use requests. More specifically, the final approval of airports and mineral extraction site special use requests.

The assistant zoning administrator gave a brief overview of the zoning case to the board members and that there was little input from the planning commission and the zoning board of appeals prior to coming back to this committee.

There was a question about why it is termed “mineral extraction” instead of “rock and limestone”. It was explained that the mineral extraction term covers all types of quarrying and that each case can be individually addressed as they come before the county.

There was then some discussion about making a punctuation correction for the new proposed language to prevent confusion over its understanding. It was taken under consideration by the zoning administrators.

With no other questions or comments noted, Steven Lovell moved, seconded by Paul Ritter that zoning case ZT-1-22 be approved.

The motion carried by a roll call vote:

Jason Bunting – Yes	Steven Lovell - Yes
Paul Ritter – Yes	Tim Shafer – Yes
Gerald Earing – Yes	John Slagel – Yes
Scott Mennenga – Yes	

Airport Setback Discussion:

The assistant zoning administrator then noted some definitions of different examples of counties' airport ordinances and definitions for consideration going forward if the board chooses to amend the airport ordinance entirely at some point in the future.

There was a question about the Illinois Department of Transportation – Aeronautics Division's definitions regarding airports. The assistant zoning administrator stated that he did not have those definitions readily available, but could look them up.

It was noted by a board member that it could be a good idea to distinguish and define different types of airports so that they can be addressed appropriately in the future.

Briefing on Solid Waste:

The zoning administrator then provided an update on the Livingston and Streator landfills to board members.

It was noted that last month there were elevated levels of various organic compounds found in multiple wells of the Livingston Landfill, but were not concerning.

There was also an observed exceedance in nitrate in one of the wells at the Streator Landfill.

Solar Development Discussion:

The assistant zoning administrator informed committee members that the zoning office had recently received a phone call from a citizen with some questions about an upcoming 350 megawatt solar project in Livingston County. The citizen cited a Chicago Tribune article that they had read. The zoning office, at the time, was unaware of any solar project of that scale. The article was found by the zoning office after some research which indeed stated that a 350 megawatt "solar array" was being developed in Livingston County.

The assistant zoning administrator stated that they have since been contacted by an attorney as well as a developer on this project and that at this time, the only information that the zoning office knows is that the project seems to be slated for the Livingston/LaSalle County line area. It was related to committee members that the project is currently estimated to take up 1,000 acres or more of land area.

The assistant zoning administrator then added that a previous utility-scale solar project for the Cayuga area had also recently contacted the zoning office for zoning district information on several parcels of property. It is unknown what stage of planning that project is in.

The zoning administrator then informed committee members that the state guidelines have changed for previously approved community solar projects and can now expand up to 5 megawatts from their previous 2 megawatt plans that were originally proposed. Therefore, these projects may submit new applications for increased acreage and power output.

E-Recycling Discussion:

The assistant zoning administrator presented a tonnage summary from the November, 2021 Dwight collection event that showed approximately 46,000 pounds of recyclables were collected.

There was then discussion as to where the next collection event would be held since the county is approved for 2 more collection events in 2022. It was agreed upon by committee members that it would be held in Pontiac in the Spring. Dates and times were also discussed for potentially having the next collection event.

Regional Planning Commission Re-Appointments:

The assistant zoning administrator informed committee members that Verne Taylor and Dean Wahls have both accepted invitations to be reappointed to the Regional Planning Commission and the necessary paperwork has been forwarded for formal approval.

Other Issues to Come Before the Committee:

There was discussion about a recent news story that was published about the Ancona plant regarding the leaking of natural gas underground. The article states that there have been millions of cubic feet of natural gas that has escaped the underground storage location of Ancona's plant. There was further discussion about whether or not a representative from Nicor could come in to explain the issue to the board so that there was a better understanding of the problem.

Public Comment: None

Review and Approval of Bills: None

Adjournment:

With there being no further business to come before the committee, there was a motion by Steve Lovell, seconded by Scott Mennenga to adjourn. The motion was carried with a roll call vote of all ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m..

Jesse J. King, Assistant Administrator
Livingston County Regional
Planning Commission

