

MINUTES
LIVINGSTON COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Livingston County Historic Courthouse
112 W. Madison St., Pontiac, Illinois

Regular Meeting
7:30 p.m.

July 7, 2022

The meeting came to order at 7:31 pm

Members Present: Joe Stock, Neil Turner, Joan Huisman, William Flott, and Dave Randolph

Others Present: Jesse King, Charles Schopp, Doug Raber, Mike Crouch, Stephen Ziegenhorn, Kiera Gavin, Nick Standiford, and Doug Kahle

Members Absent: Richard Kiefer and Richard Runyon

Approval of the Agenda:

Chair Huisman noted the agenda for this meeting. William Flott moved, seconded by Neil Turner that the agenda for this July 7, 2022 meeting be approved as presented.

This motion was then approved by a roll call vote.

Kiefer –	Absent – No Vote	Runyon –	Absent – No Vote
Flott –	Yes	Stock –	Yes
Randolph-	Yes	Turner –	Yes
Huisman -	Yes		

Approval of Minutes:

Chair Huisman noted the minutes of the May 5, 2022 ZBA meeting with a correction that had already been made. Bill Flott moved, seconded by Dave Randolph that the May 5, 2022 minutes be approved as presented.

The motion carried by a roll call vote:

Kiefer –	Absent – No Vote	Runyon –	Absent – No Vote
Flott –	Yes	Stock –	Yes
Randolph-	Yes	Turner –	Yes
Huisman -	Yes		

Business to be reviewed:

SU-5-13 – Prairieland Designs (Review)

This zoning case pertained to the review of a previously approved special use for property in an AG, Agriculture, District to be used as a craft and service business in unincorporated Gridley.

The assistant zoning administrator gave an overview of the case to board members.

Doug Raber, 6654 E. 1200 North Rd., Gridley, IL, was present at the meeting as a representative of this case. Mr. Raber stated that their location is not utilized much anymore and is mostly used for receiving and storing cabinets for certain types of projects. Mr. Raber also added that they have no employees and that they mostly work out of their business front in Fairbury now.

With there being no further questions or concerns from board members, Neil Turner made a motion, seconded by Dave Randolph that this case be approved with another review to take place in 5 years.

The motion carried by a roll call vote:

Kiefer –	Absent – No Vote	Runyon –	Absent – No Vote
Flott –	Yes	Stock –	Yes
Randolph-	Yes	Turner –	Yes
Huisman -	Yes		

V-2-22 – SU-5-04 – Crouch (Review)

This zoning case pertained to a review of a previously approved special use that allows for property located in a C3, General Business, District to be used as a junkyard/recycling center in unincorporated Pontiac.

The assistant zoning administrator gave an overview of the zoning case to board members.

Mike Crouch, PO Box 62, Emington, IL, was present at the meeting as a representative of this case. Mr. Crouch spoke to the discussion that was held at the last review of his case of the potential for Behr Iron & Metal to buyout his business. Mr. Crouch explained that the company has since gone out of business and that they would not be buying his business. Mr. Crouch added that there have been no changes in his business and that he is okay moving forward as things have been. He also explained that he currently has 6 employees and that only 1 of them is not a family member.

With there being no further questions from the board members, Neil Turner moved, seconded by Dave Randolph that this case be approved with another review being held in 5 years.

The motion carried by a roll call vote:

Kiefer –	Absent – No Vote	Runyon – Absent – No Vote
Flott –	Yes	Stock – Yes
Randolph-	Yes	Turner – Yes
Huisman -	Yes	

SU-3-15 – Ziegenhorn (Review)

This zoning case pertained to the review of a previously approved special use to allow for property located in an AG, Agriculture, District/FP, Flood Plain, District to host a campground in unincorporated Fairbury.

The assistant zoning administrator provided an overview of the case.

Stephen Ziegenhorn, 5001 Fleming Ln., Bloomington, IL, was present at the meeting as a representative of this case. Stephen noted that he moved to Bloomington recently from Arizona so that he could be around to be more involved with the maintenance and development of the campground. He stated that he is looking to keep expanding and is currently working with the state on doing that. Stephen mentioned that he has noticed that a lot of people who camp at his property enjoy playing frisbee golf and so he has developed an interest in constructing a frisbee golf course at the campsite to accommodate those who wish to play. He added that the most frequent use of his property has been fishing. He stated that he keeps the pond on his property stocked and that he gets many people who come to the campground to fish during the weekends.

There was a question about how many people each cabin on the campground could sleep. Stephen explained that each cabin could sleep 2 people.

Stephen was then asked about the Prairie Central High School prom that he hosted out at the campground. He added that originally, there were only 25 kids signed up to attend prom, but once it was discovered that it would be held out at the campground, the number rose to around 110 people and it worked out great.

He was then asked about his campground numbers during the races. He stated that he typically only gets a few people, but that he was currently working with Matt Curl from the race track on promoting his campground to host tented camping since most of the tented campers put on the baseball diamond near the track. Stephen explained that it is tough for them to drive stakes through the sand of the baseball diamond.

Stephen was then asked about his biggest camping night up to this point. He stated that he believes he had around 20 people camping there at one time.

Stephen also mentioned to board members that he and Matt Curl were also in discussion about possible future expansion of the racetrack grounds to include his campground.

Expansion of fencing was then discussed which was part of his original conditions of approval for the campground. Stephen explained that it was hard to find cedar wood at the moment for the fencing, but he would get it done as soon as he could get the wood for the fencing.

It was then suggested by a board member that quiet hours be added to the conditions of the special use. It was noted that it is a current rule of the campground, but it was decided that it would be a good idea to reinforce that rule as a condition of the special use itself.

With there being no other questions, Neil Turner moved, seconded by William Flott that this case be approved with a one year review with the fencing construction to begin and that quiet hours of 11 PM – 6 AM be added as a condition to the special use.

The motion carried by a roll call vote:

Kiefer –	Absent – No Vote	Runyon –	Absent – No Vote
Flott –	Yes	Stock –	Yes
Randolph-	Yes	Turner –	Yes
Huisman -	Yes		

SU-4-22 – Haab Forest Products

This zoning case pertained to a proposed special use to allow for a crating and pallet business to operate on 3 properties, all located in an AG, Agriculture, District.

Robert Haab, the applicant, was not present at the meeting, therefore the case was skipped over.

Chair Huisman then paused the meeting for a break at 8:25 PM.

The meeting was then called back to order at 8:33 by Chair Huisman.

SU-3-22 – Thresherman Solar

This zoning case pertained to the review of a proposed special use to allow for property located in a AG, Agriculture, District to be developed as a 5 MW solar farm in unincorporated Pontiac.

The assistant zoning administrator provided an overview of the zoning case to board members. It was explained to board members that this case had been approved as a smaller project before as zoning case SU-2-18, but that this was to be treated as a new, separate case as a larger project. The assistant zoning administrator also informed board members that Jim Fornero, 841 S. Manlove St., Pontiac, IL had called the office earlier in the day and wished to have his opposition to the project known to board members.

Kiera Gavin, 3259 N. Clifton Ave. #1, Chicago, and Nick Standiford, 70 W. Madison, Chicago, were present at the meeting as representatives of this case.

Ms. Gavin and Mr. Standiford provided a more in-depth presentation of the solar project to board members.

There was a question as to whether there was a lottery for the 5 MW project. Ms. Gavin explained that there was not a lottery for this project and that the projects would be ranked on merit which has yet to be determined.

The expansion of the project was then clarified as extending to the South from the original project footprint.

The timeline of construction was inquired about by a board member. Ms. Gavin explained that construction typically takes between 12-16 weeks.

There was then a question about fencing and living screens for the project. Ms. Gavin explained that there would be a fence around the entire project and that a living screen would be planted along the Southern border of the project to hide it from the nearby neighbors' residence.

There was then a question about the maximum height of the solar panel units. Ms. Gavin explained that the maximum height that the solar panels would reach is approximately 12 feet off of the ground.

The cabling of the project was then discussed. Ms. Gavin explained that the project would have mostly underground cabling to the panels, but that overhead cabling would be installed for where the electricity output would be connected to the grid.

Decommissioning was then discussed. The financial aspect of decommissioning was clarified that a letter of credit to the county for the projected cost of decommissioning would be furnished once construction of the project was confirmed. The life of the project was determined to be between 25-30 years.

With there being no further questions, William Flott moved, seconded by Dave Randolph that this case be recommended for approval to the county board.

The motion carried by a roll call vote:

Kiefer –	Absent – No Vote	Runyon –	Absent – No Vote
Flott –	Yes	Stock –	Yes
Randolph-	Yes	Turner –	Yes
Huisman -	Yes		

Other Business:

Doug Kahle was present at the meeting to discuss his intentions of selling semi tractors and trailers from his property in unincorporated Chatsworth. He explained that the Illinois Secretary of State required that a zoning official sign off on paperwork stating that their property was properly zoned to do so. Board members and the zoning administrators discussed this issue and determined that the use seems to deviate from any applicable special use categories for the AG, Agriculture, District that the property is in. Therefore, the county would need to assume that the majority of sales of this equipment would be for farming purposes for it to be a permitted use or a zoning text amendment would need to be done to add a relevant special use for this particular use. Zoning map amendments were discussed, but were deemed to be an unfavorable approach due to the spot zoning effect that it would create. Mr. Kahle was told that the Livingston County State’s Attorney would be contacted to discuss how to proceed with this matter.

The Miacomet Solar project was then discussed as it would need to potentially be reviewed next month rather than the anticipated November date that had originally been established.

The EDF wind project and its possible timeline for submittal and hearings were then discussed. Board members also discussed tentative meeting dates for the project if it is submitted within in the next week or two.

Neil Turner left the meeting at 9:48 PM.

Findings of Fact and Decision:

William Flott moved, seconded by Joe Stock, that the Findings of Fact and Decision be approved.

The motion carried by a roll call vote:

Kiefer –	Absent – No Vote	Runyon –	Absent – No Vote
Flott –	Yes	Stock –	Yes
Randolph-	Yes	Turner –	Absent – No Vote
Huisman -	Yes		

Public Comment: None

Report of Officers: None

General Discussion: None

Adjournment:

The chair then asked for a motion to adjourn. William Flott moved, seconded by Dave Randolph, that this meeting be adjourned.

The motion carried by a roll call vote:

Kiefer –	Absent – No Vote	Runyon – Absent – No Vote
Flott –	Yes	Stock – Yes
Randolph-	Yes	Turner – Absent – No Vote
Huisman -	Yes	

This meeting was adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

Material regarding these proceedings is on file in the Livingston County Regional Planning Commission Office, in the Livingston County Historic Courthouse, 112 W. Madison St., Pontiac, Illinois.

Respectfully submitted,

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