

MINUTES OF THE LIVINGSTON COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
HELD ON JANUARY 2, 2024, STARTING AT 7:00 PM
IN THE LIVINGSTON COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE
112 W. MADISON ST. PONTIAC, ILLINOIS

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll call was taken.

Those present were: Jim Davis, Ed Hoerner, Michael Haberkorn, Rudy Piskule, Dee Woodburn, Verne Taylor, Keith Bahler, and Shane Long

Those absent were: Joel Barickman, Dean Wahls, Marvin Hilti

Board Members Present: James Carley, Bob Weller

Also Present: Zoning Administrator Brittney Miller, County Board Executive Director Alina Hartley, Michelle Harms, Troy Harms, Andrew Keyt

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

The agenda to this meeting was mentioned by Haberkorn. Taylor moved, seconded by Woodburn that the agenda for this meeting be approved as presented for this January 2, 2024 meeting. This motion was unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the November 6, 2023 meeting were then mentioned by Haberkorn. Long moved, seconded by Piskule that the minutes be approved as presented. The motion carried with a voice vote of all ayes.

BUSINESS:

Case SU-21-23 – Harms Country Farms, LLC

This zoning case pertained to the review of a proposed special use to operate a wedding/event venue on property located in an AG, Agricultural District in unincorporated Chenoa.

Harms presented the committee with photos detailing the site plan of a proposed bridal suite building, a site plan of the lot, and as the business plan for the venue. Questions were asked regarding parking, traffic, capacity of the building, and liquor licensing. Harms stated that there is a 1 ½ acre grass parking area and no parking on the road, traffic is minimal, the building holds 200 people, and that the family does not hold a liquor license. Piskule questioned if the applicant already has a special use permit and if the committee is permitting the bridal suite shed. Miller corrected the

statement, noting that the applicant does not have a special use permit, however, the applicant is in compliance to receive the special use permit. Miller stated that the meeting is part of the special use permit process. Woodburn questioned if neighbors complain, to which Harms stated that she has spoken to the neighbors and have had no complaints.

With little discussion and no further questions, Piskule made a motion, seconded by Woodburn that this zoning case be recommended as presented for approval. Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote. **Ayes:** Haberkorn, Taylor, Woodburn, Piskule, Davis, Long, Bahler, and Hoerner
Nays: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:** Wahls, Barickman, and Hilti

Case ZT-6-23 – Livingston County Board

This zoning case pertains to the review of a proposed zoning text amendment to revise Chapter 56, Article VIII-B of the Livingston County Code of Ordinances regarding an addition of Battery Energy Storage Systems to solar farms.

Keyt presented the amendments made to the solar farm ordinance, thoroughly discussing each amendment. There were questions regarding the purpose of battery storage and how it works, how many battery storage systems are expected, and the living buffer expectations. Keyt gave a brief explanation on how battery energy storage systems work, noting that the BESS is new to developers and can't give an estimate on how many foreseeable BESS applications will be expected. Keyt discussed the living buffer amendment, stating that the amendment will help the developer plant a living buffer that will not die out as quickly.

Keyt stated that the BESS regulations needed to be obtainable and has to allow for the solar farm to be developed.

Hoerner questioned if a private company could obtain a BESS unit, giving the example of a grain bin. Keyt stated that a private company using solar onsite will not need a BESS unit and that the BESS is for larger companies that produce energy to sell.

With little discussion and no further questions, Long made a motion, seconded by Bahler that this zoning case be recommended as presented for approval. Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote. **Ayes:** Haberkorn, Taylor, Woodburn, Piskule, Davis, Long, Bahler, and Hoerner
Nays: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:** Wahls, Barickman, and Hilti

Case ZT-1-23 – Livingston County Board

This zoning case pertains to the review of a proposed zoning text amendment to revise Chapter 56, Article VIII of the Livingston County Code of Ordinances regarding an addition of Battery Energy Storage Systems to wind farms.

With no discussion and no further questions, Hoerner made a motion, seconded by Taylor that this zoning case be recommended as presented for approval. Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote. **Ayes:** Haberkorn, Taylor, Woodburn, Piskule, Davis, Long, Bahler, and Hoerner
Nays: None **Abstain:** None **Absent:** Wahls, Barickman, and Hilti

OTHER BUSINESS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

Miller noted that the next meeting will be Monday, January 29, 2024 and that the 2024 schedule was provided in the packet.

ADJOURNMENT:

Dee Woodburn moved, seconded by Bahler, that the meeting be adjourned. This motion carried by a voice vote of all ayes.

This meeting was then adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brittney Miller, Assistant Administrator
Livingston County Regional
Planning Commission