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DeKalb County Government  
Sycamore, Illinois

**Planning and Zoning Committee – Special Meeting Minutes**  
(March 28, 2018)

The Planning and Zoning Committee of the DeKalb County Board met March 28, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. in the DeKalb County Legislative Center, Gathertorium, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Committee Members: Kevin Bunge, Dan Cribben, Steve Faivre, Tracy Jones, Mark Pietrowski, Craig Roman, and Suzanne Willis; and Community Development Department staff: Derek Hiland and Marcellus Anderson. Also in attendance were: Jim Hutcheson; Greg Milburg, of the DeKalb County Farm Bureau; Brad Belanger; Mark Gershan; P.J. Saliterman, of EDF Renewables; and County Board Members: Tim Bagby, John Frieders, and Roy Plote.

Mr. Faivre, Planning and Zoning Committee Chairman, called the meeting to order.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*Ms. Willis moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Roman, and the motion carried unanimously.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Mr. Pietrowski move to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2018 meeting, seconded by Ms. Willis, and the motion carried unanimously.*

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Bill Penrod, of the Sycamore Sportsman's Club, asked to speak on the text amendment proposal to change the definition of a "Gun Club" in the DeKalb County Zoning Ordinance. Was informed that the time for comment was during the public hearing, but if a Committee member has a question for him, then he would be asked to speak.

Mel Hass inquired when the Committee was proposing to address sound and property value issues related to wind energy systems. Mr. Faivre informed him that those topics would be addressed at a future date, but that a specific time for those discussions had not been set at that time. He also added that notice would be posted on the County's website regarding which topics related to wind energy systems, if any, the Committee would be discussing at its next meeting.

Dennis Leifheit informed the Committee that he would be available to answer any questions the Committee might have regarding the "gun club" issue.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS – ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT – ACCESSORY BUILDING HEIGHT**

Mr. Anderson informed the Committee that at the direction of the Committee staff composed a proposal to amend the text of the DeKalb County Zoning Ordinance regulations regarding the maximum height of accessory structures. He informed the Committee that a public hearing had been held January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, at which one person spoke in favor of and none against the regulations. The public hearing was continued to February 15, 2018, where staff presented a revised proposal which addressed some comments raised at the previous hearing. Mr. Anderson noted that the Hearing Officer had forwarded his recommendation of approval of the revised proposal. He then asked the Committee to review the proposal, and the Findings and Recommendation of the Hearing Officer, and forward a recommendation to the Full County Board regarding the application.

*Mr. Jones moved to recommend approval of the revised proposal, seconded by Mr. Bunge.*

The Committee had a brief discussion regarding the choice of twenty-one (21) feet as the maximum height on residential parcels of less than two (2) acres.

*The Committee unanimously voted to recommend approval of the revised proposal.*

**NEW BUSINESS – ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT – GUN CLUB DEFINITION**

Mr. Anderson informed the Committee that it had been brought to staff's attention that the definition for "Gun Club" as stated in the Zoning Ordinance did not fully encompass the various application and uses to which the definition had been applied, and it was suggested that the definition be revised to more accurately reflect the County's policies and past practices regarding such uses. Therefore, staff composed a proposal to amend the definition of "Gun Club" in the Zoning Ordinance. He informed the Committee that a public hearing had been held January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, at which a number of concerns were raised regarding the regulations. The public hearing was continued to February 15, 2018, where staff presented a revised proposal which addressed the comments raised at the previous hearing. Mr. Anderson noted that the Hearing Officer had forwarded his recommendation of approval of the revised proposal. He then asked the Committee to review the proposal, and the Findings and Recommendation of the Hearing Officer, and forward a recommendation to the Full County Board regarding the application.

*Ms. Willis moved to recommend approval of the revised proposal, seconded by Mr. Bunge.*

The Committee had an extended discussion amongst themselves and with members of the audience regarding the proposal, in particular, the differences between commercial versus non-commercial gun uses, and the status of concealed carry classes conducted by independent firearms instructors.

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*Mr. Jones moved to amend the language to exclude “firearms training classes”, no second was forwarded.*

Further discussion was have regarding the motion to exclude “firearms training classes” from the proposal.

*Mr. Jones moved to table the matter to the April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting, seconded by Ms. Willis, the motion carried unanimously.*

#### **OTHER BUSINESS – WIND FARM DECOMMISSIONING WORKSHOP**

Mr. Hiland noted that at its February meeting, the Committee had begun a discussion regarding the decommissioning of wind energy turbines. The Committee packet had included substantial information regarding the topic, and after much discussion, the Committee decided to table the matter to its March meeting to allow themselves more time to review the materials presented to them. Mr. Hiland noted that the Committee had been notably impressed with the report prepared by Stantec for a facility in Palo Alto, Iowa, and had directed him to contact Stantec regarding for the County. Mr. Hiland reported that he had contacted Stantec, and learned that the cost for a similar decommissioning plan prepared for DeKalb County would cost between \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Mr. Bunge note that the Iowa plan was very well done and formatted, and suggested that the County use the decommissioning plan prepared by Stantec to develop a template detailing the type of the County would require in a decommissioning plan and the format it should have. He noted that a template could be simply prepared by removing the project specific data from that plan, and adding simple directions directing the applicant to supply the referred to information. Such a template could then be given to a developer letting know exactly the kind of information the County wants to see and the format it should take, which should make review of the information easier for all involved. Mr. Jones agreed that this was good idea. He did note however that he had an issue with the salvage value listed in the Stantec report. Mr. Bunge explained that the template would not include any “numbers”, just directions what the County expects to see.

Mr. Faivre inquired as why not just requiring complete removal of the site materials and restoration of the site to its original state. The Committee had an extended discussion of this idea and the financial guarantees needed. The Committee also gathering input from an industry representative as to typical policy and practices regarding site restoration.

Mr. Hass suggested that any reclamation agreement should include provisions for the repair of streets and highways damaged during the decommissioning the wind turbines. Mr. Bunge pointed out that the issue is addressed in the Stantec report and would be something that the County would also be required to be addressed by a developer.

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Mr. Faivre asked that the Stantec Iowa plan be made available on the County's website. Mr. Hiland responded that he would see that it got added to the "Hot Topics" section of the County's webpage.

Mr. Belanger noted that the Committee had stated that the wind energy ordinance would be community driven and not industry driven, and voiced his concern that the Stantec plan that the Committee was discussing had been created by Stantec for EDF. Mr. Bunge explained that the decommissioning plan for a project would be a requirement imposed by the County on the developer of the project, but not something that the County itself would pay for. It would be the developer's responsibility to have a decommissioning plan prepared, typically by a company such as Stantec, to be presented to the County as part of its application. And that the Committee's discussion had been about how it had approved of the thoroughness and format of the plan prepared by Stantec and their desire that any future decommissioning plan presented to the County should be prepared in a similar manner. He added that any decommissioning plan presented to the County would still be reviewed by the County Engineer to assure that it meets the County's standards and requirements.

Mr. Hiland noted that he would verify with Stantec that there would be no issues with the County adopting a stripped down version of the document as a template for any wind farm potential developer to follow.

Mr. Faivre inquired as to which section of the proposed wind energy ordinance the Committee should discuss next. After some discussion, it was decided that Mr. Hiland would reach out to Lee County, which was in the process of decommissioning several towers and see if they would be available to speak to the Committee at its April meeting about their experiences. It was also determined that the next subject to be discussed would be setbacks, which would probably happen at the May Committee meeting.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

*Ms. Willis motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Roman, and the motion carried unanimously.*

**Respectfully submitted,**

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**Steve Faivre**  
**Chairman, Planning and Zoning Committee**

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