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DeKalb County Government  
Sycamore, Illinois

**Planning and Zoning Committee Special Meeting**  
(August 9, 2018)

The Planning and Zoning Committee of the DeKalb County Board met August 9, 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, Brad Belanger, Lisa Bergeron, Greg Millburg, John Emmerson, and numerous members of the public; John Baker and Shanelle Montana, of EDF; and County Board Members: Tim Bagby, John Frieders, Tim Hughes, Diane Leifheit, Roy Plote, Chris Porterfield, Paul Stoddard, and Jeff Whelan.

Mr. Faivre, Planning and Zoning Chairman, called the meeting to order. Mr. Pietrowski arrived after the meeting began.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*Mr. Jones moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Roman, and the order carried unanimously.*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Cohain, a retired NIU professor, talked about the history of wind energy in Illinois and presented his arguments in favor of wind energy.

Dave and Sandra Davis gave a presentation as to why wind farms are needed, and presented a written statement to the Committee summarizing the main points of their presentation.

Meryl Domina gave a presentation in support of the development of wind energy.

Dirk Enger, business manager of Ironworkers Union Local 393, informed the Committee that local workers are used to construct wind towers, and described the benefits to local workers from such projects.

Drew Alexander informed the Committee about his belief that the "Barn on Baseline" animal shelter was in violation of its Special Use ordinance, and requested that the Committee consider discussing the matter. He also distributed a handout regarding the differences between a "pet care center" and an "animal shelter".

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Lisa Bergeron, of the Concerned Citizens of DeKalb County, presented the Committee with a jump drive containing updated versions of the draft wind ordinance created by their group, and recommended that the Committee adopt a requirement that wind turbines be setback 6,552 feet from property lines. She also submitted a handout containing a draft “Property Value Payment and Guarantee”, and talked about the elements of the proposed draft.

Kathy Stelford, of Oaken Acres, distributed a booklet titled “Wind Farms & Wildlife”, and discussed the information contained in it. She also asked that the Committee consider establishing a minimum setback that wind turbines must be from eagle nesting sites, and spoke about the potential wind turbines have for bird kills. The Committee also briefly discussed the Identiflight system mentioned in the booklet.

John Baker, of EDF, informed the Committee that EDF was concerned about the revised sound language in the draft ordinance, noting that they felt that they (wind energy companies) were being singled out, and discussed with the Committee their concerns over the L90 levels mentioned in the language. He also expressed their concerns over the various proposed setbacks, noting that such language was unfriendly to wind companies, and that it would allow the owners of small parcels (single persons/families) to restrict the actions of all others within a range of approximately four (4) miles of them.

Shanelle Montana, of EDF, informed the Committee that the current Committee direction taken in regards to wind energy projects was very wind unfriendly, and suggested that the Committee needed to take a more balanced approach in developing their wind energy ordinance. She distributed two handouts disputing the purported negative health impacts of wind turbines. She also asserted that the anti-wind people did not represent the majority of residents. Mr. Pietrowski noted that her being an employee of a wind energy company cast some doubt as to veracity of her statements, and noted that setbacks of one-half (½) to one (1) mile were common in Europe. Ms. Montana responded that she was proud of her company and that setbacks of one (1) mile were not good.

Jerry Smith, mayor of the City of DeKalb, discussed the potential impacts a wind farm could have on a municipality. He noted that the City had a wind energy ordinance, and emphasizing that setbacks were the most important provision in governing wind turbines. He also noted that the City of DeKalb had no official position at this time regarding the proposed wind energy ordinance. Mr. Pietrowski inquired whether he had any ideas on what the setbacks from municipal boundaries should be, and he responded that he had no ideas as yet. Mr. Faivre also noted that the Committee would be revisiting this issue later in the meeting.

John Emerson, director of the Illinois Association of Drainage Districts, asked that the Committee include language in the proposed wind energy ordinance that if any drainage ditches are damaged during the construction, maintenance, or repair of a wind turbine, the company with compensate the local drainage district for any repairs that have to be made. Mr. Bunge noted that this would be a good idea.

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Art Bingham discussed the Enbridge pipeline and the affects it had, and expressed concerns about the potential affects the wind turbines might have on drainage and drain tiles.

Kaylyn Nick noted that she supported the request made by Kathy Stelford and re-emphasized the need to protect birds.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

None

#### **OTHER BUSINESS – WIND ENERGY ORDINANCE & DISCUSSION**

The Committee reopened the discussion regarding the elements of a proposed wind energy ordinance.

The first topic discussed was the minimum required setback from a municipality. Mr. Hiland displayed two digital maps produced in conjunction with the County's Information Management Office, one depicted what the area restricted by a 1.5 mile buffer around the County's forest preserves would look like, and the other depicted a 1.5 mile buffer around the local municipalities. Mr. Hiland then discussed the 1.5 mile planning jurisdiction that municipalities have around their boundaries and what that meant for the County.

*Mr. Jones moved to require that wind turbines be setback at least 3 miles from a municipal boundary, seconded by Mr. Pietrowski.*

The Committee discussed the matter, including taking input from Mayor Curt Lang of the City of Sycamore. After the discussion, Mr. Jones and Mr. Pietrowski agreed to change the previous motion.

*Mr. Jones moved to require that wind turbines be setback at least 1.5 miles from a municipal boundary, and wind turbines within 1.5 to 3 miles of a municipal boundary would be subject to formal input from said municipality, seconded by Mr. Pietrowski, and the motion carried 6 to 1 (Cribben).*

The Committee then addressed the minimum required setback from forest preserves. John Lyons informed the Committee that Terry Hannan, the DeKalb County Forest Preserve Supervisor, was currently in the hospital, but had asked him to relay that he would suggest a multi-mile setback.

*Mr. Bunge moved to require that wind turbines be setback at least 1.5 miles from a forest preserve, seconded by Mr. Jones, and the motion carried 6 to 1 (Cribben).*

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The Committee then began a discussion of whether to establish a buffer for eagle nesting sites and bats. It was noted that EDF had conducted some testing regarding bats within the area, and Ms. Montana was asked about the results of that test. She responded that the results had not come back yet, but that EDF would follow the guidelines established by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The Committee then discussed various methods that could be employed to drive bats away from the wind turbines, such as “Feathering”, and signal devices. Ms. Montana agreed to supply the Committee with samples of ordinance language used elsewhere regarding the issue. She was also asked whether she had any knowledge of the “Identiflight” system. She responded that she was aware that it was being researched, but did not have any information on it herself. The Committee decided to table further discussion on the matter until its next meeting.

The Committee then revisited the issue of the minimum setback from a property line, discussing changing previous adopted setback of 3,000 feet.

*Mr. Pietrowski moved to change the previously adopted minimum setback from a non-participating property line from 3,000 feet to six (6) times the height of the wind turbine, seconded by Mr. Jones, and the motion carried 6 to 1 (Cribben).*

The Committee then revisited the idea of including a property value guarantee in the proposed ordinance. The Committee examined the handout given to them by Ms. Bergeron, and discussed it. They also gathered input from Mr. Baker. After discussing the pros and cons of the idea, the Committee finished the discussion by deciding to forego including a property value guarantee into the ordinance.

Ms. Willis asked the Committee to revisit the issue of decommissioning, in particular, the requirement of full removal upon the decommissioning of a wind turbine. She suggested that it be changed to allow for negotiation between the landowner and the company.

*Ms. Willis moved to change the decommissioning plan requirements from “full removal” to “full removal of all materials, such as concrete, rebar, etc., but excluding fill, and making this requirement waivable by the landowner, with the provision that no less than five (5) feet must be removed, seconded by Mr. Cribben.*

Board member John Frieders noted that the negotiated depth in the AIMA agreements varied from one to another. After further discussion, the motion was amended to the following:

*Full removal of all materials (concrete, rebar, etc., but excluding fill), negotiable by landowner, with a minimum equal to the amount set in the signed AIMA agreement.*

*The motion carried 5 to 2 (Cribben, Pietrowski).*

Ms. Willis then revisited the issue of the sound limits, expressing that upon further reflection, she had serious concerns about some of the adopted language and elaborated on those concerns. After discussing

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the matter, the Committee decided to keep the language as adopted, but that they may change it depending on what Ms. Willis finds after further research.

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Mr. Pietrowski 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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