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DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

**Planning and Zoning Committee Minutes
(November 9, 2016)**

The Planning and Zoning Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on November 9, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the Conference Room East located in the DeKalb County Administration Building. In attendance were Committee Members Tim Bagby, Kevin Bunge, John Emerson, Steve Faivre, Tracy Jones, Anita Turner, and Suzanne Willis. Also in attendance were Ronald Dibble, David Bzdill, Jay Heap, Greg Milburg, Roger Craigmile, Donna Prain, Gary Hanson, Mark Pietrowski, Dianne Leifheit, John Frieders, Jeff Whelan, Roy Plote, and staff members Kevin Hickey and Marcellus Anderson.

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Turner moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Willis. The motion to approve the amended agenda carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Bagby moved to approve the minutes of October 26, 2016 meeting of the Planning and Zoning Committee, seconded by Mr. Faivre. The motion to approve the minutes carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments were offered.

SPECIAL USE - Dibble Family, LLC

Mr. Hickey informed the Committee that Dibble Family LLC had filed a petition for a Special Use Permit in order to allow an agribusiness in the form of a propane storage and distribution facility at property located at 25330 Five Points Road. The subject property being located at the northeast corner of State Rt. 64 and Five Points Road in unincorporated Mayfield Township. The 2.77-acre parcel is zoned A-1, Agricultural.

The required public hearing was held on August 4, 2016 by DeKalb County Hearing Officer Ron Klein. Eight (8) members of the public spoke and a petition was received in opposition to the request, and one (1) member of the public spoke in favor of the petition. The Hearing Officer

submitted his findings and recommended denial of the Special Use Permit. The Planning & Zoning Committee reviewed the application and the Findings of Fact and recommendation of the Hearing Officer, and forwarded a recommendation that the Special Use Permit be approved with conditions. The DeKalb County Board reviewed the application at its September 21, 2016 meeting, and directed that the matter be returned to the Hearing Officer for further testimony. The public hearing was re-opened on October 25, 2016. The petitioner provided additional testimony and exhibits. Seventeen members of the public spoke and a petition and two reports were received in opposition to the request, and two members of the public spoke in favor of the request.

Mr. Hickey concluded by saying that the Hearing Officer reiterated his original recommendation of denial of the request, and stated that the Planning & Zoning Committee was requested to review the entire record of the Special Use Permit request, and forward a recommendation to the full County Board on the requested Special Use in the form of an ordinance. The Committee may recommend approval, approval with conditions, or denial of the request.

Mr. Jones moved to recommend approval of the Special Use, with conditions, seconded by Mr. Faivre.

Mr. Jones inquired as to the other committee member's views regarding the concerns voiced by the neighboring property owners regarding the safety of the proposed facility. All of the Committee members voiced that nothing had been presented at the re-opened hearing to change their respective positions on the voiced safety concerns. Ms. Willis, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Bagby all stated they had researched the matter and did not find that the storage tanks would be a safety risk.

Mr. Jones stated that the information presented at the re-opened hearing had proved that the facility would not adversely affect the property values of the neighboring properties, and that the concern about the property values was primarily based on the concern about the safety of the facility, which he stated had been established was not an issue. Mr. Bunge disagreed with the Hearing Officer's judgement regarding the potential effect on a person's ability to sell their house. Ms. Willis explained that evaluating property values is a complex and very subjective issue; judgement calls that are often not based on the actual "facts" of the situation, but on the subject's perceptions, right or wrong. Ms. Turner agreed with Ms. Willis. Mr. Faivre noted that "perception" is a poor counter to facts, and should not be a basis by which the Committee should make its judgements.

Mr. Jones stated that his research into the proposal had convinced him that traffic would not be adversely affected by the facility.

Ms. Willis noted that no one expressed any objection to the idea of the facility or to Mr. Dibble's ability to run such a facility, but that it was the proximity to their neighborhood that was the issue. She explained that she had been studying the County's Unified Comprehensive Plan, and noted that it discourages the placement of residential areas surrounded by farmland, precisely because issues like this arise. She added that trying to balance the competing uses is difficult.

Ms. Turner reiterated that her position had not changed and that since the entire neighborhood was against the proposal, she would be voting no.

The motion to approve with conditions was carried, four (4) yes (Bagby, Bunge, Emerson, and Faivre) to two (2) no (Turner and Willis).

COUNTY BUILDING INSPECTOR DISCUSSION

Mr. Hickey asked the Committee to allow staff to explore options with Derek Hiland, the incoming Planning Director, to fill the position of Building Inspector. He described the costs the Planning, Zoning, and Building Department had incurred by using B&F Construction Code for plan reviews and building code inspections, and elaborated on the benefits of having an on-staff Building Inspector.

Mr. Bunge noted that having an on-staff Building Inspector is a very good idea.

Mr. Jones moved to direct staff to post for applicants to fill the vacant Building Inspector position, seconded by Mr. Bagby, and the motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

No comments were offered.

ADJOURNMENT

The Planning and Zoning Committee is next scheduled to meet Wednesday, January 25, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room East.

Mr. Jones moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Turner, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,


John Emerson / *STEPHEN M FAIVRE*
Planning and Zoning Committee Chairman

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