

# DRAFT

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 28, 2012**

The Planning and Zoning Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on November 28, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room East located in the DeKalb County Administration Building. In attendance were Committee Members Ken Andersen, John Hulseberg, Ruth Anne Tobias, John Emerson, Jeff Whelan, Dan Cribben, and Pat Vary. Also in attendance were Roger Craigmile, Donald Willrett, Gary Lohtsen, and Planning, Zoning and Building Department staff members Paul Miller and Rebecca Von Drasek.

Ken Andersen, Planning and Zoning Committee Chairman, called the meeting to order and noted all members were present.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Andersen asked that Committee comments be included with Public Comments on the agenda.

*Mr. Whelan moved to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Ms. Vary, and the motion carried unanimously.*

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Andersen noted one correction to the minutes of the October 24, 2012 Planning and Zoning Committee minutes, clarifying that he has a business relations with Dean Johnson of the DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District, but that he does not perform inspections for that organization.

*Mr. Emerson moved to approve the amended minutes of the October 24, 2012 meeting of the Planning and Zoning Committee, seconded by Mr. Hulseberg, and the motion carried unanimously.*

### **SPECIAL USE PERMIT**

Mr. Miller explained that Donald R. Willrett, the property owner, has filed a petition for approval of a Special Use Permit. He detailed the request is to allow the sale of new and used farm equipment on portions of the property located at 7353 Somonauk Road in Squaw Grove Township. He explained that the required public hearing was held on October 18, 2012 by DeKalb County Hearing Officer Dave Dockus. The petitioner provided testimony and exhibits in support of the requested Special Use, explaining that the farm currently includes seed sales, and will be adding agricultural trailer and equipment sales. The proposed Special Use is an agribusiness because the customers are mostly those engaged in agriculture. A portion of an existing building will be converted into an office and showroom associated with the business. There will be some outside display of trailers for sale, and a sign for the business will be

installed along Somonauk Road. Five members of the public spoke in favor of the request and no one spoke in opposition.

Mr. Miller reported that the Hearing Officer has submitted his findings, and recommends approval of the Special Use Permit with conditions.

Mr. Whelan confirmed the applicant intended to only store equipment on the locations depicted on the Site Plan. Mr. Willrett agreed.

Ms. Tobias inquired as to the type of equipment and trailers that would be offered for sale. Mr. Willrett listed detached, step-deck, grain hopper, and livestock trailers, as well as agricultural tractors. Mr. Miller emphasized for the Committee that the language within an Ordinance approving the use would be vague to be permissive and not limit the business owner to specific types of equipment.

Ms. Vary noted that the Hearing Officer had requested apron improvements, which included paving a portion of the entrance to the subject property.

Mr. Cribben agreed with the Hearing Officer's findings. He noted the similarity of the proposal to the R-Equipment application.

Mr. Miller agreed that the uses were similar. However, he observed a difference in the intensity of the operations, noting the Willrett property would continue to be a farm and included a dwelling, whereas the R-Equipment property is dedicated entirely to equipment sales.

Mr. Whelan inquired if Somonauk Road was adequate to accommodate the business. Mr. Willrett asserted it was adequate.

Mr. Emerson stated that along with staff's assistance he was confident that the business would work well.

*Ms. Tobias recommended approval of the Special Use Permit with conditions, seconded by Ms. Vary, and the motion carried unanimously.*

## **MONTHLY REPORT**

The Committee briefly discussed the Monthly Report, noting the increased number of permit applications.

Ms. Vary appreciated the addition of the legend to the Building Report.

## **PUBLIC and COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

There was a brief conversation regarding the status of the Evergreen Village mitigation project. Mr. Miller explained that once the mobile home park was removed, the Federal government requires that the property be maintained as open space in perpetuity.

The Committee members offered to reach out to legislators and IEMA to encourage finalized funding of the project. Mr. Miller agreed to forward his contact information at IEMA.

A member of the public asked about the relocation of the residents. Mr. Miller explained that his understanding of the program is that it provides for up to 42 months of relocation assistance for residents, and that the DeKalb County Housing Authority would be actively involved with the program.

The Committee briefly discussed options for low-income housing in the County.

Ms. Vary noted she had been on the Committee for ten years. She stated that the Committee handles some fascinating issues. She noted that the 40 acre rule had not been challenged in the last couple of years and suggested that it may be time to close remaining exemptions. She suggested that the 40 acre requirement was vitally important to the continued successful development of the County. She encouraged members to consider future applications in light of the Comprehensive Plan. She concluded by thanking the Committee and noting her enjoyment of her time on the Committee.

Ms. Tobias agreed with Ms. Vary's statements and indicated that she felt that the Planning and Zoning Committee might do some of the most important work of the County Board.

Mr. Andersen agreed that the Committee handles a variety of interesting projects.

Mr. Hulseberg thanked Mr. Andersen for his chairmanship of the Committee and thanked staff for their efforts.

The Committee recognized and appreciated the work by Ms. Vary and Mr. Hulseberg.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Planning and Zoning Committee is next scheduled to meet January 23, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room East. The Committee cancelled the regularly scheduled December meeting.

*Ms. Vary moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Tobias, and the motion carried unanimously.*

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Ken Andersen**  
**Planning and Zoning Committee Chairman**