

DeKalb County Government
Sycamore, Illinois

Planning, Zoning and Development Committee Meeting
(August 27, 2025)

The Planning, Zoning, & Development Committee of the DeKalb County Board met on August 27, 2025 at 6:30 pm in the DeKalb County Legislative Center, Gathertorium, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were: Committee Members: Tim Bagby, Patrick Deutsch, Rhonda Henke, Laura Hoffman, Rebecca Johnson, Terri Mann-Lamb, and Chris Porterfield; and Community Development Department staff: Derek Hiland and Marcellus Anderson. Also, in attendance were: Scott Osborn, representing TPE IL DE447; Att. Kyle Barry, Kevin Adelman, Chase Lyon, Chris Wilson, and John Gross, representing Burr Oak Solar; Patrick Dalfeth, representing SunVest Solar; Joanna Coch; Lynn Mullen; Brad James; Matt Deitch; Ron Ness; John & Melody Aspinwall; Gene Nehring; Carol James; Dick Larson; Andrew Wanek; Barry Mandel; Gary Klich; Teresa Richmond; Fred Barhnard; Pat Vary; and, John Lyon.

Call to Order / Roll Call

Mr. Bagby, the Planning, Zoning, & Development Committee Chair, called the meeting to order.

Committee Action: Mr. Porterfield moved to acknowledge and approve of Ms. Mann-Lamb attending the meeting via phone, seconded by Mr. Deutsch, and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Mann-Lamb attended via phone.

Approval of Agenda

Committee Action: Ms. Hoffman moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Johnson, and the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes of the July 30, 2025 Planning, Zoning, & Development Meeting

Committee Action: Mr. Porterfield moved to approve the minutes of the July 30, 2025 meeting, seconded by Ms. Henke, and the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments

(Note: Normally, the Public Comments portion of the agenda is limited to thirty (30) minutes. However, due to the large number of people wishing to speak, the Committee took the following action after the thirty-minute time limit had been reached:

Committee Action: Mr. Porterfield moved to extend the Public Comments section of the agenda an additional fifteen (15) minutes, seconded by Mr. Deutsch, and the motion carried unanimously.)

Fred Barhnard, Joanna Coch, Dick Larson, Lynn Mullen, Pat Vary, and Andrew Wanek all gave statements in support of the Burr Oak Solar project.

John & Melody Aspinwall; Brad & Carol James; Gary Klich; Barry Mandel; Gene Nehring; Ron Ness; and Teresa Richmond all gave statements in opposition to the Burr Oak Solar project.

Chase Lyon, representing Burr Oak Solar, noted that he and several other members of his team were in attendance to answer any questions the Committee had. He also requested an extension in the amount of time they would be allowed to complete construction of the project, and gave a brief explanation of why they were making the request.

Matt Deitch, Director of the Northern Illinois Center for Community Sustainability, described ways in which he felt agriculture and solar can work together.

Ordinances

Ordinance O2025-16 — An ordinance approving a Special Use Permit for a 4.5-Megawatt Commercial Solar Energy System located at 6236 State Route 38, in DeKalb Township. (Petition DK-25-11)

Mr. Hiland informed the Committee that County has previously granted approval to TurningPoint Energy, LLC (TPE) for the establishment and operation of a 4.5-megawatt commercial solar facility on the former golf course property located 6236 State Route 38, in DeKalb Township. He explained that approval of this Special Use was subject a condition which required that permits be sought within eighteen (18) months of the approval date of the Ordinance; however, TPE was unable to meet this requirement and the Ordinance expired. He noted that TPE still desired to move forward with the project, and thus were seeking approval of a new Special Use Permit for it. Mr. Hiland reported that the Hearing Officer conducted the public hearing on July 17, 2025, and had recommended approval, with conditions, of the petition.

Committee Action: Mr. Portfield moved to recommend approval of the petition, with conditions, seconded by Ms. Mann-Lamb.

A brief discussion was had about drainage issues on the project site, with Scott Osborn, representing TPE, provided an explanation of drainage issues on the site and how they were to be addressed.

Committee Action: A roll call vote was had on the motion to recommend approval, with conditions, of the petition, and the vote passed unanimously.

Ordinance O2025-17 — An ordinance approving special use permits to Burr Oak Solar, LLC, for a Solar Farm located on various properties in Afton, Pierce and Squaw Grove Townships. (Petitions: AF-25-12, PI-25-13, PI-25-14, PI-25-15, PI-25-16, SQ-25-17, PI-25-18, PI-25-19)

Mr. Hiland informed the Committee that Burr Oak Solar, LLC, a subsidiary of Leeward Renewable Energy, has submitted applications to establish and operate a three-hundred-megawatt (300mw) CSES that would occupy approximately 1,984-acres of land in Afton, Pierce, and Squaw Grove Townships. Mr. Hiland reported that the Hearing Officer conducted two public hearings on this matter, with the first on July 17, 2025 and the second on July 24, 2025. He noted that the Hearing Officer had recommended approval, with conditions, of the petition.

Committee Action: Ms. Hoffman moved to recommend approval of the petition, with conditions, seconded by Mr. Porterfield.

The Committee had a lengthy discussion with Mr. Hiland and the applicants about the proposed project. The Committee received additional clarification on various issues such as screening, setbacks, noise, road maintenance/remediation, and the impact of the State mandated requirements on the County's regulations.

The petitioners reiterated their request that the period of time between when the building permits for the project are issued and the project is to be completed be extended from one (1) year to thirty-six (36) months, asserting that a project of this size could not be completed in one year. Mr. Hiland explained that current County practice regarding the administration of building permits for such large/lengthy projects would accommodate for completion of the project. The petitioners explained that their financiers needed worded certainty that there would be sufficient time to complete the project. After further discussion, Mr. Hiland recommended that if the Committee was inclined to add such wording, that the time be extended to no more than twenty-four (24) months, explaining that this would better reflect current County practice, while thirty-six (36) months would be setting new precedent.

Committee Action: Ms. Hoffman moved to amend the motion of approval to add the following as an additional condition of approval #44, seconded by Mr. Porterfield.

44. Upon commencement or issuance of a building permit, the developer will have twenty-four (24) months to complete construction of the project.

Committee Action: A roll call vote was had on the motion to amend the motion of approval, and the motion failed three yes (3: LH, TML, CP) to four no (4: TB, PD, RH, RJ).

Committee Action: Mr. Bagby moved to amend the previous motion to say eighteen (18) months instead of twenty-four (24), the motion failed due to lack of a second.

The Committee had further discussion on the matter of the time to complete construction with Mr. Hiland.

Committee Action: Mr. Bagby moved to reconsider the failed amendment previously proposed by Ms. Hoffman, seconded by Mr. Porterfield, and the motion carried six (6) yes to one (1: RJ).

The Committee had further discussion on the matter of time to complete construction with Mr. Hiland.

Committee Action: A roll call vote was had on the reconsidered amendment to the motion of approval proposed by Ms. Hoffman (as previously noted above), and the motion carried six yes to one no (1: RJ).

Committee Action: A roll call vote was had on the amended motion to recommend approval, with conditions, of the petition, and the vote carried five yes (5) to two no (2: RH, RJ).

Ordinance O2025-18 — An ordinance approving an amendment to a Special Use Permit for a concrete business located at 1275 E State Street in Sycamore Township. (Petition SY-25-20)

Mr. Hiland informed the Committee that Doty & Sons Concrete Products had submitted an application to expand their business operation located at 1275 E. State Street, in Sycamore Township. He explained that the applicants had come before the Committee a few years prior and had received approval for a special use permit that would have allowed them to expand their business with the construction of a new storage building. However, the applicants later found those plans proved to be unfeasible, and the proposed storage building was never built. He noted that the applicants were now submitting an amendment to the special use permit, wherein they were proposing to build an addition onto the existing building instead of a separate structure. Mr. Hiland reported that the Hearing Officer conducted the public hearing on July 24, 2025, and had recommended approval, with conditions, of the petition.

Committee Action: Ms. Hoffman moved to recommend approval of the petition, with conditions, seconded by Ms. Henke.

The Committee had Mr. Hiland elaborate on the proposed addition and how it differed from the previously proposed storage building.

Committee Action: A roll call vote was had on the motion to recommend approval, with conditions, of the petition, and the vote passed unanimously.

Ordinance O2025-19 — An ordinance approving a Special Use Permit for a 5-Megawatt Commercial Solar Energy System located on the southeast corner of State Route 72 and Pleasant Hill Road, in Kingston Township. (Petition KI-25-21)

Mr. Hiland informed the Committee that SunVest Solar was requesting approval for the construction and operation of a 5-megawatt Commercial Solar Energy System (CSES) on the property located on the southeast corner of State Route 72 and Pleasant Hill Road, in Kingston Township. He explained that SunVest Solar had previously received approved for special use permits to build two 2-megawatt solar facilities on the property, in anticipation of being selected to participate in the Illinois Community Solar Program, but those projects never happened. He noted that the change in the project size reflected the changes in the state solar program. Mr. Hiland reported that the Hearing Officer conducted two public hearings on this matter, with the first on July 24, 2025 and the second on August 14, 2025. He noted that the Hearing Officer had recommended approval, with conditions, of the petition

Committee Action: Ms. Johnson moved to recommend approval of the petition, with conditions, seconded by Mr. Bagby.

Mr. Hiland was asked to elaborate on the history of the proposed project, and he did so.

The Committee asked whether the project was located next to a forest preserve and he confirmed that it was and that the petitioners were working with the County Forest Preserve on developing the screening between the project site and the forest preserve.

Committee Action: A roll call vote was had on the motion to recommend approval, with conditions, of the petition, and the vote passed unanimously.

Resolutions

(None)

Old Business

(None)

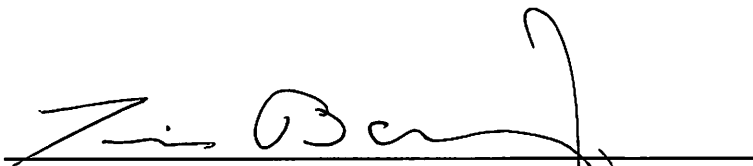
New Business

(None)

Adjournment

Ms. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Deutsch, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Bagby', is written over a horizontal line.

Tim Bagby
Chair, Planning, Zoning, & Development Committee

MOA:moa