

LIVINGSTON COUNTY BOARD
AGRICULTURE AND ZONING COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE JULY 5, 2011 MEETING

The committee chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., at the Livingston County Courthouse, 112 W. Madison St., Pontiac, Illinois and roll call was taken.

Present: Eldon Ruff, Dee Woodburn, Bill Flott, Daryl Holt, Bruce Koerner,
and Bob Young.

Absent: Tim Shafer

Others

Present: Livingston County Board Chairman Bill Fairfield, Non committee County Board member John Yoder, County Planning Commission Office Representative Chuck Schopp, Dan Faust of the LCEA, Bob Bradford, President of the Village of Saunemin and interested citizens Rich and Julie Fox and Mr. & Mrs. James Horrie.

Mr. Ruff noted the agenda, and Bob Young then moved, seconded by Bill Flott, that the agenda for this meeting be approved as amended. This motion was approved by a voice vote of all ayes.

Minutes of the June 7, 2011 committee meeting were referred to the committee. Daryl Holt moved, seconded by Bill Flott, that these meeting minutes be approved as presented. This motion was approved by a voice vote of all ayes.

Vermilion River Clean-Up Event:

Dan Faust addressed the committee about the Livingston County Environmental Association's first annual Vermilion River clean up project. This project is scheduled to take place on Saturday September 17, 2011 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The Livingston County Environmental Association is seeking volunteers to participate in this clean up. Flier information about this river clean up project was distributed. Mr. Faust explained that this project is being done on conjunction with "It is our river day." This years river clean up is to focus on the section of the Vermilion River between the McDowell Bridge and Play Park in Pontiac. Volunteers will be provided with a lunch at the conclusion of this clean up project. Mr. Faust discussed on how people and their actions have an impact on the river, and he discussed his involvement with the LCEA in organizing this river clean up project.

Solid Waste Issues:

A monthly synopsis of landfill information and correspondence was presented to the committee members. The monthly information synopsis relating to Livingston Landfill report focused on well sampling events, the gas management system, the consideration of recirculation of leachate.

The synopsis also covered NPDES and CAAPP report information.

Pertaining to the Streator Area Landfill, gas monitoring and groundwater monitoring reports were noted. The closing of Streator Area Landfill is continuing, and erosion issues at this landfill are being mitigated. Current host fee information was also made available to the committee members.

Wind Energy Projects Update:

Wind energy companies are still expressing interest in developing projects in Livingston County; however no specific time table is being presented in regards to proceeding with these plans.

Recycling Projects:

The committee was informed that the county is considering, in cooperation with Advanced Technology Recycling, two days for electronic recycling events, one Saturday in September and one in October. Electronics are not to be placed in landfills after December 31st of this year, so this service will allow for an opportunity for electronics to be properly recycled prior to this going into effect.

Solar Energy Regulations:

The committee members were provided copies of draft solar farm regulations from Grundy County. The committee was asked to review these regulations with plans to discuss this matter at next months meeting in relation to determining as to if these or similar regulations would be appropriate for Livingston County.

Other Issues to Come Before the Committee:

The zoning administrator reviewed with the committee members the zoning cases to be reviewed by the Livingston County Zoning Board of Appeals at their scheduled July 7, 2011 meeting.

Richard and Julie Fox addressed the committee requesting that the County Board request a public information hearing, as it relates to Patrick Harms notice of intent to construct swine facility(s), as outlined in the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Livestock Management Facilities Act. Mr. Fox then commented on Illinois Department of Agriculture definitions of animal units versus number of actual animals. (In this case 1800 animal units would be equal to 4500 heads of swine.) Mr. Fox explained that one of the proposed facilities would be approximately 2000 feet from his property. Mr. Fox expressed his concerns with the size of the proposed swine facility and the odors that this facility would generate. Julie Fox commented about how she had submitted a Freedom of Information Request with the Illinois Department of Agriculture, pertaining to this livestock building proposal. Mrs. Fox related about how they would like to see a livestock waste management plan, and she was unsure when a copy of that plan would be available to the public.

Mrs. Fox then expressed her concerns as to how this proposed livestock building development would affect her water well. Mrs. Fox also expressed her concern as to how area property values would be affected, in part because they just re-modeled their house. Mrs. Fox related to the family history of the property and how they would like to pass on their home to their own children. Mr. Fox expressed his opinion of the reasoning of proposing the placement of this building, in relation to the application of the livestock waste to near by farm land. Mr. Fox commented how he believes this is a commercial/industrial operation (not an agricultural operation) since the hogs to be placed in the proposed building will be contract hogs. Environmental responsibilities were then mentioned. Mr. Fox then asked that the county request a department of agriculture hearing and that the county request a waste management plan. Mr. Fox then commented about how he believes that once the department of agriculture approves one building, the sites can be expanded with additional building with a lesser amount of review by the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Mrs. James Horrie commented about a second proposed swine confinement building to be located near her property, and about how she opposes that building placement. Mrs. Horrie is concerned about the potential odor and the increase of flies (disease carrying) in the area. Bob Bradford the president for the Village of Saunemin, stated that he is concerned how odors from this proposed facility(s), approximately three miles south of the Village of Saunemin, and how village could be negatively affected in making it more difficult to keep the village thriving, in that currently has approximately 20 vacant properties and they would like these properties occupied, and would prefer not to deal with a real or perceived issue of hog building odors affecting the village. A concern about what happens to the livestock buildings when they no longer are useful as livestock confinement buildings. It was the consensus of the committee to present to the entire Livingston County Board the Fox's request to for the county board to request an Illinois Department of Agriculture public informational hearing(s) in regards to Patrick Harms notices of intent to construct two new livestock waste management facilities.

Public Comment:

No additional public comments were made.

There were no bills for the committee to review.

The committee agreed to move the closed session portion placed on the agenda of this meeting to the agenda of the next committee meeting.

Then Daryl Holt moved, seconded by Bill Flott, that the meeting be adjourned. This motion was approved unanimously.

This meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Charles T. Schopp, Administrator
Livingston County Regional
Planning Commission