



**Champaign County Board
Environment and Land Use Committee (ELUC)
County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois**

MINUTES – Approved as Corrected November 3, 2022

DATE: Thursday, October 6, 2022
TIME: 6:30 p.m.
PLACE: Shields-Carter Meeting Room
Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E Washington, Urbana, IL 61802

Committee Members

Present	Absent
	Aaron Esry (Vice-Chair)
Stephanie Fortado	
Mary King	
Kyle Patterson	
	Jacob Paul
Chris Stohr	
Eric Thorsland (Chair)	

County Staff: John Hall (Zoning Administrator) and Mary Ward (Recording Secretary)

Others Present: None

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Committee Thorsland called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

II. Roll Call

A verbal roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

III. Approval of Agenda/Addendum

MOTION by Mr. Patterson to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. King. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously to approve the agenda.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. September 8, 2022 – Regular Meeting

MOTION by Mr. Stohr to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2022, regular meeting, seconded by Ms. Fortado. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

V. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

VI. Communications

There were no communications for the committee.

VII. New Business: For Information Only

A. Online Registration Still Open for October 15, 2022, Residential Electronics Collection

There are still openings for the recycling event. There are still about 500 spots open. Registration will stay open until the event as long as there are slots available. Mr. Stohr added that this was one of the last events organized by Susan Monte and mentioned the nice article in the paper about her.

VIII. New Business: Items to be Approved by ELUC

A. Authorization for a Public Hearing on Proposed Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to revise select wind farm ordinance sections as follows:

1. Revise Section 6.1.4C.2. to increase the minimum required separation to principal structures.
2. Revise Section 6.1.4D.5. to increase the maximum allowed height.
3. Revise Section 6.1.4I. to lower the Allowable Noise Level
4. Revise Section 9.33B.(6) to add a fee to pay for a post-construction noise study.

MOTION by Ms. Fortado to consider numbers 1 through 3 as an omnibus and consider number 4 separately; seconded by Mr. Patterson. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

Discussion was held on numbers 1 through 3. Mr. Hall had a handout for the committee. He had reached out to Mike Hankard with Hankard Environmental regarding the cost of the post-construction wind farm noise study. Mr. Hankard recommends the fee for the noise study be \$50,000. He also reviewed and made a mark-up of the amendment. Mr. Hall recommends that if you approve any part of the proposed amendment to go to public hearing to include it with changes or comments with coming changes recommended by Mr. Hankard and his mark-up. He did not change anything that was proposed but pointed out where maybe we had overlooked some provisions and added those. Mr. Hall would like the flexibility to take to the public hearing changes that support his comments. Those would be made available to the committee.

An **AMENDMENT** was made to the **MOTION** by Ms. Fortado and accepted by Mr. Stohr to consider items 1, 2 and 3 and item 3 be edited to 6.1.4I. 1-5 and 7 and **MOVE** that 4 be considered separately as written plus 6.1.4I. 6.

Discussion continued on the items being considered as omnibus. Mr. Thorsland started the discussion to answer the question about why we decided to make the setbacks what they are and the science behind them. He discussed sound pressure and the attenuation of sound over distance. The basic formula is for every doubling of distance the sound level reduces by 6 decibels. He cited a couple of analogies to show how it works. We have lowered the sound pressure by moving them farther away.

As to height, we are considering raising our limit to 600 feet. Anything taller than that would require a waiver. The current technology is for taller towers. We have addressed how to light these towers with the ADLS system. The noise level has changed from the IPBC requirements to 45 Dba. We currently use a complaint-based system for issues that may arise. There is a phone number displayed at every wind tower. It is checked and there have been no complaints.

Mr. Stohr asked about the hard number for the fee for the post-construction study. What happens if costs go up in the future? There is a provision included that the wind farm developer would have to pay extra if it is more than the fee and we would refund it if it were less than the fee.

Ms. Fortado wanted to clarify that if we wanted to follow the science, we would adopt the policies of the Pollution Control Board. This is our attempt to respond to the concerns of the ZBA and community concerns. Mr. Thorsland added that the IPCB do update and study these noise levels. They are also recognized as the authority to handle this. What we are doing is becoming the authority in the county.

MOTION by Ms. Fortado to vote to authorize a public hearing for items 1, 2 and 3 from the omnibus discussion, including some parts to be fleshed out; seconded by Ms. King. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

Discussion then moved on to the post-construction noise study. Most of the information for this section is based on information from Minnesota. Mr. Stohr thanked Mr. Hall for pulling this together. It was much more detailed than what he thought. It should help address a lot of the concerns of people who live nearby. Ms. Fortado had concerns that the noise study fee was higher than the permitting fee and that it may disincentivize small-scale wind investment. Discussion was then held on costs of what it takes to build a wind-turbine. The current installation was about \$1.2 million per tower to build. Plus, the ADLS requires a radar installation. Doing some quick math, for ten wind turbines, \$50,000 would be 0.004% of the total project investment.

Mr. Thorsland said that this is the only special use permit where we make them prove after-the-fact that they did what they told us they were going to do that wasn't complaint based. We have a complaint-based system in place. He is reluctant to have a post-construction study. Do we need to put this in the ordinance since we have the complaint-based system? What is our enforcement mechanism?

Mr. Stohr felt it would reassure those in the area that wind turbines are not exceeding the limits. It is an exceptional thing that we're asking but thinks it's something that needed and will reassure the residents. He thinks it's a good thing and that costs are minimal. He will support this. Mr. Patterson added that we've established it is not a burden, even for small wind farms. The cost is not large and having transparency is huge.

Mr. Hall was asked if they had a mechanism in Minnesota if the post-construction noise study failed. The Minnesota study did not address this. Regardless, if there is a violation of the special use permit, it would need to be corrected if it didn't meet our standard.

Ms. Fortado wanted to be clear that what is being voted on is reducing the amount of sound by 5 decibels and making them prove that with a \$50,000 study. If the ZBA votes this down, the levels will be higher as we will be using the Illinois Pollution Control Board limits. Mr. Hall pointed out that the IPCB limits when reduced to a single number is 51. Mr. Hankard pointed out in his letter that wind farms rarely get above 47. We might be spending money on a post-construction study for no satisfaction.

Mr. Thorsland called for a voice vote on item 4 plus 6.1.4I.6 to authorize a public hearing. The item **PASSED** unanimously.

IX. Other Business

Ms. Fortado asked if we could get an update from the Champaign County Environmental Stewards on progress of the Hazardous Waste Recycling Center that received ARPA funds. Mr. Stohr said that he know some people with that group and they are actively searching for additional funding.

X. Chair's Report

There was no chair's report.

XI. Designation of Items to be Placed on the Consent Agenda

There were no items to place on the Consent Agenda.

XII. Adjournment

Mr. Thorsland adjourned the meeting at 7:33 p.m.

Please note the minutes reflect the order of the agenda and may not necessarily reflect the order of business conducted at the meeting.