



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

**MINUTES – Approved as Distributed May 4, 2023**

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DATE: Thursday, April 6, 2023  
TIME: 6:30 p.m.  
PLACE: Shields-Carter Meeting Room  
Brookens Administrative Center  
1776 E Washington, Urbana, IL 61802

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**Committee Members**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Aaron Esry (Vice-Chair)	
Jim Goss	
Kyle Patterson	
	Emily Rodriguez
	Jilmala Rogers
Chris Stohr	
Eric Thorsland (Chair)	

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

**Others Present:** Stan Harper, County Board Member

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**MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order**

Committee Chair Thorsland called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

**III. Approval of Agenda/Addendum**

**MOTION** by Mr. Goss to approve the agenda and addendum, seconded by Mr. Stohr. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously to approve the agenda and addendum.

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

A. March 9, 2023 – Regular Meeting

**MOTION** by Mr. Esry to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2023 regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Goss. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously to approve the minutes.

## V. Public Participation

Peggy Huson, Urbana, spoke regarding some properties with nuisance lawns in the Edgewood subdivision. There are thistles and other weeds that grow extremely tall and, in some cases, overtake the sidewalk making it impassable. They also pose a safety problem at an intersection as the weeds are so big it's hard to see.

Tony Grilo with IAG Investments LLC was here in support of Zoning Case 080-S-22. He will be available to answer any questions the committee may have.

Steve Schmall, Urbana, Edgewood subdivision. Mr. Schmall spoke on the issues with some properties in the Subdivision. He is asking for amendment to the nuisance ordinance and that it match the City of Urbana and that of Champaign that grass may not be more than 8-inches tall.

Tom Smith, Homer, spoke on the Medanos Solar project. He wanted to thank the ZBA for all their work on the solar farm case. He had a concern that the Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan was not presented to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Kiera Gavin, Chicago, - Agent for Medanos Solar – pointed out several changes that had been made between the time the original plan was presented and what it looks like now. Drainage was a big point of concern for the Village as a tile runs through the property that drains the northeast part of Homer. Changes have been made and a dedicated corridor for the tile will be mapped out in the final plan. She also addressed the concerns the Village had made in their resolution and changes they had made to address those concerns.

Jim White, Homer – Mayor of Homer – Appreciates the ZBA and that they were not willing to grant the waiver and understands that the State is taking control of zoning in these cases. There are concerns if they sell to another developer that they should have to follow all the same covenants. The citizens of Homer are against this. It does not benefit Homer. They get no money off of this and does not bring in any jobs.

## VI. Communications

Mr. Stohr reminded the Committee that the Household Hazardous Waste collection is coming up. There are still openings to sign up. The Urbana Sustainability Committee heard a preliminary report on the Aquifer Mapping project. The researcher working on this will come to the County Board sometime in June.

Mr. Harper, Ogden, County Board District 3 member – disappointed that this Committee didn't take action when they had the opportunity on Wind Farm zoning. A 7-0 vote came from the ZBA on the Wind Farm zoning ordinance. People don't want the Wind Farm by Philo. Also, regarding aerial application on farms, some companies won't fly in wind farm areas and those that do, it will cost you a lot more. We had a chance to do something regardless of what the State says. He shared articles on wind turbines that have fallen over and ones that have caught fire. He feels prime farmland should not be taken out of production; projects should be put on marginal land. His job is to grow food. We will need to feed 10 billion people by 2050. Hopes Champaign County has the guts to fight the State on this issue.

## VII. New Business: Items for Information Only

- A. Online registration still open for April 15, 2023, Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event at State Farm Center

There are still hundreds of slots open to register for this event.

**VIII. New Business: Items to Receive and Place on File by ELUC to Allow a 30-Day Review Period**

A. **Zoning Case 074-S-22.** A request by Medanos Solar LLC, PO Box 14055 Chicago, IL 60614, a subsidiary of Cultivate Power, LLC, owned by Brian Matthay, 2819 Buchanan St, San Francisco, CA 94123 and Noah HYTE, 321 Beloit Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90049; via agent Kiera Gavin, and participating landowner Terry Wolf, 1409 W Bridalveil Pl, Oro Valley, AZ 85737, to authorize a Community PV Solar Farm with a total nameplate capacity of 5 megawatts (MW), including access roads and wiring, in the AG-1 and AG-2 Agriculture Zoning Districts, on a 48.64-acre tract

in the Southeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter and the Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter and part of a 197.02-acre tract in the east half of Section 4, Township 18 North, Range 14 West of the Second Principal Meridian in South Homer Township, and commonly known as farmland owned by Terry Wolf on the north side of CR 1100N (County Highway 15) northeast of the Village of Homer, Illinois, and including the following waivers of standard conditions:

Part A: A waiver for a distance of 0 feet between a PV Solar Farm and a municipal boundary in lieu of the minimum required one-half mile (2,640 feet), per Section 6.1.5 B.(2)a. of the Zoning Ordinance.

Part B: A waiver for not providing a Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan that includes cost estimates prepared by an Illinois Licensed Professional Engineer prior to consideration of the Special Use Permit by the Board, per Section 6.1.1 A.3. of the Zoning Ordinance.

Part C: A waiver for not entering into a Roadway Upgrade and Maintenance Agreement or waiver therefrom with the relevant local highway authority prior to consideration of the Special Use Permit by the Board, per Section 6.1.5 G. of the Zoning Ordinance.

Part D: A waiver for not completing consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources prior to consideration of the Special Use Permit by the Board, per Section 6.1.5 K. of the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Hall stated that Part B, the waiver for the Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan, we now have that plan, and it is on the agenda. There is a condition that the State Historic Preservation review will happen before the Special Use Permit is granted. This is to sit at ELUC for a month, so residents will have time to look at and study the Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan. The Village of Homer is opposed to the Special Use Permit.

Mr. Stohr asked about inverter placement and if there is a substation. Ms. Gavin explained the placement and said that the project does not have a dedicated substation and will interconnect to the existing overhead distribution scale line and then interconnect through the substation on the west side of Homer. There is capacity in the line to take that.

Mr. Esry shared that there is another company looking to put in a large solar farm near Myra. They are looking to tie directly into a high voltage powerline that runs in that area. They call it a line-break and can do this if there is capacity.

Mr. Goss is against this. The Village and people out there don't want it. Feels the State has disrespected the mile and a half and doesn't want that to become the norm. These projects do not belong on prime farmland.

Mr. Thorsland addressed the changes in the site plan and that there was an effort to make changes to push everything back from the town hall and Ameren is going to move where the poles were. The

landowner has the right to use his land as he sees fit. He agrees that these should not be on prime farm ground. The ZBA was not unanimous in their vote to not recommend. Plus, we have lost control of this due to the new State regulations.

Mayor White, of Homer, was asked if the developers were accommodating in making changes and if they were happy with the changes made. Most of the changes made were common sense changes, like not building over the drainage tile. The main objection is the proximity to the Village. It could have been put farther away, but it all boils down to money. The previous zoning ordinance was a half-mile from the Village and if that were the case, they wouldn't have an objection to it at all.

This was received and placed on file with the Committee for 30 days.

- B. Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan for Zoning Case 074-S-22.** A request by Medanos Solar LLC, PO Box 14055, Chicago, IL 60614, a subsidiary of Cultivate Power, LLC, owned by Brian Matthay, 2819 Buchanan St, San Francisco, CA 94123 and Noah Hyte, 321 Beloit Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90049; via agent Kiera Gavin, and participating landowner Terry Wolf, 1409 W Bridalveil Pl, Oro Valley, AZ 85737, to approve the Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan for the PV Solar Farm in Zoning Case 074-S-22 with a total nameplate capacity of 5 megawatts (MW), including access roads and wiring, in the AG-1 and AG-2 Agriculture Zoning Districts, on a 48.64-acre tract in the Southeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter and the Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter and part of a 197.02-acre tract in the east half of Section 4, Township 18 North, Range 14 West of the Second Principal Meridian in South Homer Township, and commonly known as farmland owned by Terry Wolf on the north side of CR 1100N (County Highway 15) northeast of the Village of Homer, Illinois.

Mr. Hall stated that this plan is in line with other Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plans. There is a concern when Decommissioning plans are not released for the public hearings and would always recommend that this Committee give the public as much time as they need to review the plans and there is still time to ask and research questions.

The plan was received and placed on file with the Committee for 30 days.

**IX. New Business: Items to be Recommended to the County Board**

- A. Zoning Case 080-S-22.** A request by Anthony Donato, d.b.a. IAG Investments LLC to authorize a Special Use Permit for a photovoltaic solar array with a total nameplate capacity of 6 megawatts (MW), including access roads and wiring, as a County Board Special Use Permit and as a second principal use in addition to a data center authorized by the ZBA in related Case 079-S-22, in the AG-2 Agriculture Zoning District on a 21-acre tract in the North Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 27, Township 19 North, Range 9 East of the Third Principal Meridian in Urbana Township that is located west of the veterinary clinic with an address of 3003 East Windsor Road, Urbana and including the following waivers of standard conditions:

Part A: A waiver from providing a Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan that includes cost estimates prepared by an Illinois Licensed Professional Engineer prior to consideration of the Special Use Permit by the Board, per Section 6.1.1 A.3.

Part B: A waiver from locating the PV Solar Array less than one-half mile from an incorporated municipality with a zoning ordinance and within the contiguous urban growth area of a municipality per Section 6.1.5 B.(2)a.

Part C: A waiver for locating 32 feet from a non-participating existing dwelling on a lot that is 10 acres or less in area in lieu of the minimum required separation of 240 feet between the solar farm fencing and the property line, per Section 6.1.5 D.(3)a.

Part D: A waiver from submitting a Roadway Upgrade and Maintenance Agreement prior to consideration of the Special Use Permit by the Board, per Section 6.1.5 G.(1).

Mr. Hall said this is very close to the Veterinary Clinic and a rental house. The ZBA received a revised site plan the last night of the hearing. A berm has been added on the west and south sides. There is a unique condition in the Special Use Permit that requires the developer and the owner of the property to come to agreement on what the noise limit will be on that property. If the agreement isn't received, there will be no special use permit. Also, there will be annual studies to confirm that the noise limit is being followed. This is an unanimously recommended approval from ZBA, and the City of Urbana waived the need for having to be at two ELUC meetings.

Mr. Goss recused himself due to a conflict of interest. Mr. Stohr asked if we should hold this over until the next meeting. Mr. Hall said that the ZBA passed unanimously, the adjacent owner is happy with the special condition and the City of Urbana waived the need for this. From a staff perspective, there is no need to hold this over. Mr. Esry asked if anyone else objected to this at the ZBA hearings. There were none.

**MOTION** by Mr. Esry to approve Zoning Case 080-S-22. Seconded by Mr. Patterson. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously with one abstention by Mr. Goss.

- B. **Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan for Zoning Case 080-S-22.** A request by Anthony Donato, via IAG Investments LLC, to approve the Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan for the PV SOLAR ARRAY in Zoning Case 080-S-22 with a total nameplate capacity of 6 megawatts (MW), including access roads and wiring, on a 21-acre tract in the North Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 27, Township 19 North, Range 9 East of the Third Principal Meridian in Urbana Township that is located west of the veterinary clinic with an address of 3003 East Windsor Road, Urbana.

Mr. Hall stated this is in line with the others; the costs are 8.5% less than previous projects.

**MOTION** by Mr. Esry and seconded by Mr. Patterson to approve the Decommissioning and Site Reclamation Plan for Zoning Case 080-S-22. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously with an abstention by Mr. Goss

- C. **Zoning Case 087-AM-22.** A request by Brian and Lana Krutsinger to amend the Zoning Map to change the zoning district designation for approximately 18 acres of the 30.37-acre subject property from the CR Conservation Recreation Zoning District to the AG-2 Agriculture Zoning District on a 30.37-acre tract in the East Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 10, Township 18N, Range 10 East of the Third Principal Meridian in Sidney Township and commonly known as the Krutsinger residence located at 2197 CR 1100N, Sidney.

Mr. Hall said that this was recommended unanimously by the ZBA. The only comments received were not against the rezoning but against a possible events center at this location once rezoned. The Village has approved the division of the property. Mr. Esry said in the event an events center goes in, it will create more traffic on Windsor Road extended. Mr. Stohr said he drove by the site and wondered if the road is up to very much traffic.

**MOTION** by Mr. Goss and seconded by Mr. Stohr to approve Zoning Case 087-AM-22. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

**D. County Board Resolution Authorizing Signature of County Executive for Extension of IHDA Strong Communities Program Grant.**

We just received the information on Tuesday of what they wanted to the resolution to look like. They are working with us to give us time to get it approved by the County Board.

**MOTION** by Mr. Esry and seconded by Mr. Patterson to approve the resolution. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

- X. Other Business**
  - A. Monthly Reports
    - i. January 2023
    - ii. February 2023

The reports were received and placed on file.

**XI. Chair's Report**

There was no chair's report

**XII. Designation of Items to be Placed on the Consent Agenda**

Items to be placed on the Consent Agenda include items 9. A., B., C., and D.

**XIII. Adjournment**

Chair Thorsland adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.