

BOONE COUNTY PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION WORK SESSION
BOONE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER, CONFERENCE ROOM 301
801 E. WALNUT, COLUMBIA, MISSOURI
(573) 886-4330

Minutes

5:30 P.M.

Thursday, April 30, 2019

Commissioners present: Boyd Harris, Rhonda Proctor, Jeff McCann, Greg Martin, Loyd Wilson, Fred Furlong, Steve Koirtyohann, Loyd Wilson

Energy & Environment Members present: Joe LaRose, Jean Sax, Eric Lidholm, Ken Midkiff

Staff: Stan Shawver, Bill Florea, Thad Yonke, Uriah Mach, Paula Evans

Introductions were made and Stan Shawver gave a brief summary of the Wind Farm proposed regulations, what the Planning and Zoning Commissioners have decided thus far, what they still need to work on, and why the Planning and Zoning Commission would like to see wind farms have a conditional use permit rather than rezoning land to industrial use. Mr. Shawver informed the Energy and Environment Commission that the Planning and Zoning Commission has directed staff to draft regulations using regulations found from other counties and states. Stan Shawver stated that Resource Management has not received a proposal or application for a Wind Farm but are being proactive in creating regulations. Under Missouri law counties cannot ban wind farms because it is overreach so we need to create rational and reasonable regulations.

Eric Lidholm stated that E.On had a meeting in Harrisburg where they presented videos of wind farms and passed out a map (attached at the end of these notes). They proposed a 1000 foot setback from any residential structure and 500 feet from any property line. E.On indicated that they would pay a minimum of \$10,000 to \$15,000 if they placed one on your property. There is a lot of reasonable stuff on the internet regarding setbacks, sound, and wildlife concerns then there are questions about whether there are health issues. Mr. Lidholm stated he read an article titled "A Method for Defining Wind Turbine Setback Standards" and the biggest wind turbine they looked at in this article was 431 feet tall and according to the article when there is a blade malfunction 20% fragment is 10 meters long and it can throw that blade 1968 feet; the failure rate is about 1 in 3000. I don't believe a 1000 foot setback is enough.

Stan Shawver stated that is similar to what staff has found in their research; one of the manufacturers had an evacuation zone of half a mile.

Eric Lidholm stated there is no way to make something completely safe, there are acceptable risks. With setbacks you can't go right up to the failure zone. Mr. Lidholm stated he does vibration studies as an engineer and doesn't believe it is a huge concern because there is enough dampening. The sound was something that seemed to be prominent.

Ken Midkiff stated he looked at the pros and cons of wind turbines as well as solar and nuclear; all of them have benefits and all have drawbacks. The pros with wind farms is that it is renewable energy but we want to make sure the cons are covered.

Stan Shawver stated the question of renewable energy of wind isn't something we need to focus on, it is well accepted. What we should focus on is the likelihood that any of the energy that is generated from this wind farm will derive directly into citizens of Boone County. We have to look at protecting our property owners the best we can.

Eric Lidholm stated he asked E.On what their backup plant was going to be and they stated they would do natural gas but later heard that they don't need it.

Stan Shawver stated that when a wind farm goes in it will be there a minimum of 20 years; the County needs to have a process for decommissioning. Other factors we are looking at is wear and tear on county roads.

Chairperson Harris stated there should be a process for decommissioning and reconditioning the land.

The group discussed setbacks from the property line versus setbacks from residences.

Commissioner Martin stated that if a property owner wanted a turbine on their own property and it met the required setback from the property lines but was within 500 feet of his own home that is the property owners right.

Regarding wildlife issues, Stan Shawver stated that the US Forestry & Wildlife Services have tolerances built in; if you put up a tower or some type of device you are allowed so many bird kills per year. They have regulations on it and Boone County can't be more strenuous than that.

Eric Lidholm asked if the Planning and Zoning Commission has contacted the Department of Conservation to see if they have any rules or regulations.

Stan Shawver stated no; staff hoped that would be something the Energy & Environmental Commission could do. Mr. Lidholm stated he would reach out to them. Mr. Lidholm stated he also reached out to the Boone County House of Representatives and Senator just to ask if there was anything going on there but hasn't heard back.

Stan Shawver stated if you generate energy you still have to get it into the grid, since the company doesn't have electric lines they will have to negotiate access to one of the distribution lines and get it to a substation. Every tower will have to go through a grid which will mean lines crossing the property of people who are not participating so they will have to negotiate easements with those owners whether it is overhead or underground lines and the county will have no role in those negotiations.

Jean Sax asked what happens if they sell to another company like Ameren. Stan Shawver stated that it is free-trade; the county can only look at land use, not ownership.

Commissioner Furlong stated he read that about twenty communities had to go back and change their setback requirements because they realized the setbacks weren't enough. Stan Shawver stated it is better to have too much setback than not enough.

The group discussed the height of the towers and FCC as well as FAA regulations. Stan Shawver stated that he read a wind turbine could affect weather radar and cellular phones. Eric Lidholm stated if there is a 30,000 acre wind farm the flight for life wouldn't fly in so you wouldn't have that emergency care available. Commissioner Martin stated at night time they may restrict themselves but it is up to the individual pilot; they have parameters and if they don't meet the parameters they can't go but if they are in the parameters it is up to the pilot to decide whether he will go in to that situation. Chairperson Harris stated if there is a 30,000 acre wind farm that doesn't say that the pilot won't find a landing zone. Commissioner Martin stated they can land on a highway if they have to.

Commissioner Martin stated that if anyone has any information to share send Paula the website to forward to everyone.

Stan Shawver stated we want to make sure that everyone gets the information so anything that you want others to look at send it to Paula Evans and she'll make sure it gets out. The information out there can be, you can be halfway through reading the article before you find that there is a bent to that particular person. Be careful about where the information is coming from.

Ken Midkiff asked when the Planning and Zoning Commission would like feedback from the Energy & Environmental Commission.

Stan Shawver stated we don't have a time line but we would like to get it wrapped up but understands that both Commissions have other business.

Ken Midkiff stated that the EEC would try to have something to the P & Z Commission by the end of May.

The next regular work session is scheduled for Thursday, May 9, 2019 at 4:30 pm. This is the regular work session to discuss items on the agenda for the upcoming May 16th meeting. Due to the size of the agenda, wind farm regulations will not be discussed. The next work session to discuss wind farm regulations will be Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at 5:30 pm.

The work session adjourned at 5:58 pm

Meeting notes prepared by Paula Evans, Administrative Coordinator, Boone County Resource Management