

**MINUTES OF THE
LEE COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

Regular Meeting

Monday, February 7, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.

**Third Floor Meeting Room
Old Lee County Courthouse, Dixon, Illinois**

Zoom Video- & Tele-conferencing

Meeting ID: 988 4502 4438

Password: 043424

YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9zX2Ne5ia4&t=7s>

or search, "Lee County Regional Planning Commission – 02.07.2022" in YouTube

Board Members

Hon. Charles T. Beckman, Chair

Ellen Smith, Vice Chair

Ben Forster, Member

Emily Pratt, Member

*Member Vacancy

*Alternate Member Vacancy

Staff

Dee Duffy, Zoning Officer

Alice Henkel, Clerk/Renewable Energy Coordinator

Charley Boonstra, State's Attorney

Due to technical difficulties, Chair Charles T. Beckman called the meeting to order at 6:50 p.m.
Clerk Alice Henkel called roll:

Members present: Beckman, Smith, Forster, Pratt

Members absent: None

Staff present: Duffy, Henkel, Boonstra

Staff absent: None

The next order of business was the approval of the minutes from the January 3, 2022 meeting. The minutes will stand approved as submitted.

The next order of business was comments from the visitors' section. One visitor was present, Thomas Kapraun, but he had no comments at that time.

Under old business was the Lee County Greenways and Trails Plan updates. There were none.

Also under old business was the Lee County Comprehensive Plan – reviewing sections of the Plan for updates. This discussion was deferred until later in the meeting.

The first order of new business was guest speaker, Brenda Merriman, a Resource Conservationist with the Lee County Soil and Water Conservation District. She was present that evening to educate the board on Lee County's Land Evaluation and Site Assessment ("LESA"). Mrs. Merriman showed the board how she scores the land evaluation portion of the assessment and Zoning Administrator Dee Duffy showed the board how she scores the site assessment portion of the assessment, using the property that will be discussed in later in the meeting under a LESA appeal.

The next order of new business was a LESA Appeal by Roger Cardot, II. The property in question is PIN 22-18-01-300-001. The parcel is approximately 6.82 acres in size, is located in Wyoming Township, is zoned Ag-1, Rural/Agricultural District, and is triangular in shape. The LESA for the parcel is 258, exceeding the maximum score of 225 required for building a residence in an agricultural district.

Roger Cardot, II was sworn in. Mr. Cardot II explained the parcel is owned by his parents, who were also present along with him and his wife. His parents' residence is adjacent to this parcel. Mr. Cardot II and his wife would like to build a home on this parcel to be closer to his parents so they can assist them with the farm operations as his parents get older.

Mr. Cardot II explained the parcel has been in pasture since the late 1980s because it is not ideal for farming (pointed rows). Over 2 acres of the parcels is a former railroad bed and is not farmable due to tree and shrub overgrowth.

Mrs. Duffy explained that while Lee County discourages residential construction in agricultural areas, it has historically supported allowing active farmers to do so under certain circumstances and she feels his situation qualifies.

Ellen Smith made a motion to waive the LESA score for PIN 22-18-01-300-001 and a second was discerned. There was no debate. A vote was taken, and the ayes prevailed. Motion passed, 4-0.

The next order of new business was a public hearing on Petition No. 21-PC-66, a proposed Ordinance Regulating Development of Solar Energy Systems as an Accessory Use. Discussion was held by the board.

Thomas Kapraun was sworn in. Some solar energy systems as an accessory use can produce more electricity than the parcel can use. That electricity goes back into the grid and the owner will receive a credit on their statement. Mr. Kapraun wanted to confirm that this transaction of excess power would not be in violation of this ordinance. It would not be violation as owners will be allowed to produce up to 120% of the electricity needed.

There were no other visitors present.

Ben Forster made a motion to send Petition No. 21-PC-66 to the Lee County Board with a recommendation of approval. A second was discerned, and there was no debate. A vote was taken, and all were in favor. Motion passed, 4-0.

New business concluded and the board referred back to old business – the discussion regarding the Lee County Comprehensive Plan and reviewing sections of that Plan for updates. Instead of reviewing the Plan as a whole, the Lee County Board Chair would like this board to focus on updating the section that deals with renewable energy resources.

The board agreed that at the March 7, 2022 meeting, it will discuss and agree upon a position regarding solar energy systems in Lee County. Also, the Zoning Office will collect data on what surrounding counties have in their comprehensive plans with regard to solar energy and renewable energy resources, as well as the total number of acres of prime farmland that have already been approved for a special use permit for solar energy systems in Lee County.

There was no other business.

At 6:58 p.m., Ben Forster made a motion to adjourn and a second was discerned. There was no debate. A vote was taken, and all were in favor. Motion passed, 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Alice Henkel

Alice Henkel, Clerk