

# Minutes of the Land Use and Development Committee Meeting

The Land Use and Development Committee of the McLean County Board met on Thursday, May 7, 2020 at 3:30 p.m. in Room 404, Government Center, 115 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Chuck Erickson, Members Laurie Wollrab, George Wendt, Jacob Beard, Sharon Chung and Shayna Watchinski (All via remote attendance)

Members Absent: Member Lyndsay Bloomfield

Other Board Members Present:

Staff Present: Ms. Camille Rodriguez, County Administrator, Ms. Cassy Taylor, Assistant County Administrator, Mr. Trevor Sierra, Assistant State's Attorney Civil Division; Ms. Julie Morlock, Recording Secretary

Department Heads/  
Elected Officials Present: Mr. Phil Dick, Director of Building and Zoning

Others Present:

Chairman Erickson called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m., declared a quorum and presented the minutes from the March 5, 2020 regular meeting for approval.

Motion by Chung/Watchinski to approve the minutes from the March 5, 2020 regular meeting.  
Motion Carried.

Chairman Erickson presented bills that had been reviewed and recommended by the County Auditor with a prepaid and fund total of \$774.09.

## MCLEAN COUNTY BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

PAGE 1 OF 2

AS OF 4/30/2020

### EXPENDITURE SUMMARY BY FUND

#### Land Use Committee

FUND	FUND TITLE	PENDING TOTAL	PREPAID TOTAL	FUND TOTAL
0001	GENERAL FUND		\$774.09	\$774.09
			<hr/>	<hr/>
			\$774.09	\$774.09

  
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Motion by Wollrab/Watchinski to recommend approval of the Land Use and Development Committee bills prepaid total and fund total of \$774.09.  
Motion carried.

Chairman Erickson confirmed there were appearances by members of the public. Statements were read into the record from Julie Cotter, Lance Sleeter, Laurie Sleeter,

Lindsay Buchman and Jeff Powell by recording secretary Julie Morlock and are attached here to as Attachment A. (3:20 – 21:12) Mr. Erickson indicated he had asked Chairman McIntyre to attend and provide comment at the end regarding the efforts that have been made on this matter.

Chairman Erickson presented for action a request by Bryn and Kelly Holevoet for a waiver of preliminary plan requirements and approval of a two-lot subdivision final plat for the Holevoet Subdivision which is a re-subdivision of Lots 4 and 5 in Knob Hill Acres P.U.D. Mr. Dick went over the project and indicated that all requirements had been met for this proposal.

Motion by Chung/Wendt to recommend approval of a request by Bryn and Kelly Holevoet for a waiver of preliminary plan requirements and approval of a two-lot subdivision final plat for the Holevoet Subdivision which is a re-subdivision of Lots 4 and 5 in Knob Hill Acres P.U.D.

Motion Carried

Mr. Dick provided next steps for this proposal.

Mr. Phil Dick presented an update and photo of the collapsed building in the Village of Cropsey. He indicated he had spoken with owner on April 7<sup>th</sup> to get an update and was told he had hired someone to begin work to clean up the project. Mr. Dick indicated he called him back on April 27<sup>th</sup> and was informed the wall had been taken down. He indicated property has not been cleaned up much other than that, but he will stay on top of the matter. Ms. Metsker stated there was nothing taping off or preventing someone (including children) from entering and getting hurt. She asked if there is a requirement for landowners to post if the property is a hazard. Mr. Dick indicated there is nothing in our requirements that says they must do that. He stated if the Committee wanted, he would direct him to put up a fence. Ms. Metsker stated if that is the normal way, we would handle the situation then she felt we should ask him to do that. Mr. Wendt asked about a nuisance law and if it could be applied here. Mr. Dick indicated owner has been told this is a nuisance and he must clean this up. Mr. Dick indicated he could make request about fence and had already told landowner he is liable if someone is hurt on the property. Mr. Wendt stated maybe if we push for the fence, he might work to get the debris hauled away. Mr. Dick stated he felt if he continues to push him the owner will get it cleaned up.

Mr. Beard agreed we should continue to push him in this direction. He asked about the basement and if there is an open pit in the land. Mr. Dick indicated there is not an open pit but there are things that could injure people. Ms. Wollrab suggested start with fence and if he won't agree to fence tell him to at least put up warning tape. Ms. Metsker asked if Mr. Dick had been in touch with Mr. Byer from the Township. Mr. Dick indicated he had not been in communication with him since the wall had come down. Mr. Erickson asked if there were any other questions or comments, hearing nothing he moved forward.

Mr. Erickson indicated the next item on the agenda was the process for submitting a text amendment to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Mr. Erickson stated that they had recently amended the zoning ordinance to read: "Amendments may be proposed by the County

Board, the Land Use and Development Committee of the County Board, Regional Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, any property owner or a person or organization with a property interest in the subject property.”

He stated that he and Ms. Wollrab had discussed how to bring the Land Use Committee into this process. He stated that Ms. Woods stated we cannot make any applicant come to the Land Use Committee first. He stated they wanted to put a proposal in that they could come to the County Board for advice and recommendations. He stated he proposed the following language: “An applicant may first submit a proposed text amendment to the Land Use and Development Committee of the County Board for advice and recommendations prior to submission to the Zoning Board of Appeals”.

Ms. Woods indicated her concern is the statute is very broad and does not limit who can bring any text amendments to the Zoning Board of Appeals. She indicated that even though our list is extensive we limit it somewhat and was concerned that if we limit it even more by saying only those who come to the Land Use Committee first can submit an application, then they would be in violation of the statute. Ms. Woods said that adding suggestive language to the text should be fine because it is only a suggestion. Mr. Erickson asked Ms. Wollrab if she had anything to add. She stated that reason behind addition was they felt individuals or entities could benefit from hearing from the Board first before going to the Zoning Board of Appeals because application would ultimately come back to the County Board. Mr. Erickson stated if committee is ok then would send it back to Administration to come up with language to be approved at the meeting next month. Mr. Erickson did not see any objection and asked Administration to provide language as an action item next month.

Mr. Erickson asked Mr. McIntyre to come forward and speak to the Windmill issue and efforts we have been making. (42:40) Mr. McIntyre indicated about the end of March the issue was brought to his attention and there was a meeting with the County and Invenenergy to discuss the dust on the roads. He stated one of the roads that had initially been proposed for construction traffic was moved to a better road for construction, per the Road Agreement, but now goes by an additional five residences. He stated they recommended to the Company that they add more water trucks and Invenenergy said they would do. He indicated that Mr. Stokes and Mr. Dick have been out monitoring. Mr. McIntyre indicated he went to the area at the end of March and he went back out later in April and while it was some better on 2900 it was not on the other two roads. He indicated traffic is also an issue as vehicles are driving fast on roads that are barely wide enough for two vehicles. Mr. McIntyre indicated he had gone out again today and did not see evidence of extra water trucks and talked to Mr. Dick and Mr. Stokes about it again. He indicated the Company is going to be applying a substance called soil tack to hopefully hold down the dust. He recommended continuing to monitor through the month of May and if they do not see this rectified then follow up with the State’s Attorney and Corporate offices in Chicago about options. He stated that Mr. Dick and Mr. Stokes have done all they can within their authority in this matter. Ms. Wollrab asked how long construction is expected to continue. Mr. McIntyre indicated at least another 10 months. Mr. Beard said he was supportive of continuing to follow up and monitor the situation. He stated that there were similar issues with past windmill construction and those have been remedied so felt this situation could be rectified. Mr. Thompson agreed there

Minutes of the Land Use and Development Committee Meeting

May 7, 2020

Page 4 of 10

were issues with past windfarm projects at the beginning during the hauling in of equipment and gravel and figure this may get better once construction of the turbines starts. He also stated the end road will be a much better road. Mr. Thompson stated that slowing down will help with the dust that is generated and safety issue. Mr. McIntyre indicated this is a workable situation and he hoped he would not be back in front of the Committee. Mr. Erickson thanked him for coming in and providing an update. Ms. Metsker also thanked Chairman McIntyre for assisting in this matter.

Chairman Erickson indicated there were no positions filed under the purview of the Committee. He stated the next meeting would be on Thursday, June 4, 2020 at 3:30 p.m.

Chairman Erickson asked if there was anything else to come before the Committee, hearing nothing he adjourned the meeting at 4:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Julie A. Morlock*

Julie Morlock  
Recording Secretary

Attachment A – Statements from the Public  
(copy and pasted exactly as they were submitted)

Dear McLean County Land Use Committee,

I was hoping to be able to address this committee personally since this is an issue that I am very passionate about and it touches me and many others on a very personal level. My husband and I live at 23571 N 2900 East Rd, Lexington, IL 61753. As both of us had the privilege to grow up as farm kids we purchased 5 1/2 acres here so that we, our kids, and our grandchildren could enjoy the farm life. We wanted to enjoy the peace, tranquility, serenity and closeness to nature that only rural living can provide. We enjoy sunrise on one side of our home and can sit on the porch and enjoy the sunset on the other side. We chose to purchase RURAL property, not suburban, urban, or an industrial area!!! Now we will be looking in every direction and seeing a forest of wind turbines. Our life, as we have known it for 20 years has come to a complete end and will never be the same. This has been destroyed by McLean County allowing Invenenergy to put up a wind farm, an industrial wind farm!

Sadly, the worst part of all of this is yet to come. The construction work has just begun and our lives and that of our neighbors and many more rural lives has been turned upside down! The road that we live on, 2900 East Rd, has been designated as the road to be used in accessing 13 turbines. The first thing to change was their putting up signs indicating where overhead power lines are located. These signs are on the side of the road on our property. Now we can mow around them, except the road sides are such a total mess of mud, chunks of sod, gravel and ruts that it is impossible to mow and maintain. The first item for their construction was to grind up our very nice blacktop road. When they did this it pulverized the blacktop turning it into dirt and dust. The first two days of this I literally could not go outside my door without being blasted by the dirt and dust. In just walking to my mailbox I had dirt in my eyes and teeth. I called to ask about water trucks and was told that they would soon have gravel down and THEN there would be water trucks. Walking through the grass produces clouds of dust rising up around my feet! Next came the hundreds, yes hundreds, of loads of gravel passing the house. After making several phone calls concerning the dust and the speed that the trucks were traveling we do now have fairly consistent water trucks. They are only watering right in front of our homes though, not the entire road and as anyone who had traveled a gravel road would know, dust travels!!! We were told that in a few days there would be speed limit signs indicating the speed limit of 25 mph. Those have yet to arrive! In calling White Construction and Charles with Invenenergy numerous times the gravel trucks are now traveling at the 25 mph. There are however many different companies with many different products and a lot of them show absolutely no respect and fly past. It has become a daily chore to police these trucks and make phone calls to get them slowed down!!!

As soon as the road was graveled the other things began. Things like a vibrating roller. For 2 days, until I was literally in tears, my house was vibrating and I had to listen to the constant low hum produced by the roller. There are two access roads extremely close to my property line and house which is causing us considerable distress. There is constant traffic of semis, numerous different pieces of construction equipment, the constant noise of back up beepers. They went along the sides of the roads with some type of disc which made large chunks of

sod and dirt. Now, when trucks meet each other on the road, they get over into that area creating ruts and mud which then splatters the entire road. There are days that I am not even able to drive my car which sits low to the ground on the roads. I am very thankful that I have a pickup truck. Another obvious affect is the fact that keeping a vehicle clean is totally impossible. My neighbors, Lance and Laurie Sleeter have approached Invenergy to see about getting reimbursement for washing our vehicles. They have not hear back on that. We will soon have their shadows trespassing over our property, have the flicker inside our homes on our walls, have to listen to the constant hum of the generators and the sound produces by the wings and our landscape forever ruined. This is all not to mention the damage done to the birds, bats, and other species.

My hope is to bring awareness of the true destruction of land, roads, and the worst of it...lives that is being brought on by these wind farms. The gain of a few, by which I mean the farmers profiting from the turbines, is destroying the lives of many!!! It is proven that turbines are not an efficient means of producing energy, nor are they "Green" as they purport. Those of us living in their footprint are being forced to live with all of the negatives that they bring!!! Throughout this entire process there has been and still is a total disregard for humanity!!! All that seems to matter is the \$\$\$\$\$. We feel very disregarded. My hope with this is that maybe some of you can come out and travel our road and see this for yourself and I would appreciate your consideration of the other items that I have mentioned. I appreciate the time you have given me to address you and any consideration or suggestions you may have in the future.

Very respectfully yours,

Julie A Cotter

---

Lance Sleeter sent this text to Charles Shawley of Invenergy at 8:49 a.m. on Wednesday, May 6. (No response as of 2:00 p.m. May 6. )

Charles, This is Lance Sleeter, I live on 2900 East Rd. Since the recent road destruction in front of our house we have had some issues. The first is that our cars are constantly dirty. I would [like] some compensation for washing them on a regular basis. Also we have [a] mud hole in front of our mailbox that used to be pavement and grass. I would [like] some gravel put there to help keep our vehicles [clean] when I get the mail everyday. Also, large clumps of mud were left there and along our East ditch making it impossible to mow without damaging my equipment. Please respond with some solutions to these issues.

---

Land Use Committee Members and Staff,

I would like to address the Invenergy industrial project which is using our road, 2900 E in Lexington township, for a main route. We were under the impression the construction route

would be south of our home, from 2250 E going one mile north to the dirt road only, leaving the road from our house to County Route 8 unused. Boy, were we mis-informed.

I have taken several photos of the roads in the construction area and on my road, as a newspaper editor of both Lexington and Chenoa. A lot of the gravel roads I've driven on are narrow, remote, no homes or maybe one, and many have the 8" dangerous ledge.

I have found that most – if not all – of the roads are in much better shape than ours. Our road seems to have the most houses (4) in the project areas. Our road also leads to 4 residences south of us. Why would our road be used?

Many of our neighbors – and we're talking 1/2 mile to 2 miles – have not had these issues and are not affected at all. Lucky them!

Our road has been

1. Torn up
  2. Graveled (see photo) and beaten down (see photo)
  3. Widened to the west (see photo) 2 feet.
  4. Widened to the east FOUR feet. This is the land we've mowed for over 30 years. This was, by far, the most disruptive, and on OUR SIDE. The sod was chiseled. There is no way we will be able to mow our ditches. And no information given on if Beniach will repair.
- Our 2900 E road is muddy on the sides, has potholes, and just a mess.

There are no speed limit signs that I can see posted on our road. There is one "25mph on gravel" sign on the paved road, County Route 8, around the corner to our north. That road has a speed limit of 45 mph. Not sure why the 25 mph is posted there. My neighbor was told speed limit signs would be posted — a few weeks ago.

I continually see drivers surpassing the speed limit. Pick up trucks drivers don't seem to know they are under the same speed limit of 25 mph.

Charles Shawley has been helpful slowing these drivers down when I call him.

It's a curiosity seeing the trucks S-L-O-W D-O-W-N in front of my house. Many times, a pickup truck is there "tell them" that's where they should drive slowly.

I believe companies working in the project area should be required to communicate with residents about what's going to happen, and when, on a continuing basis. It shouldn't have to be my job, as a taxpayer, to find information online – and how would we even know where to look? This company is notorious for keeping us residents "out of the loop." I've reported last fall, Invenergy held a "Turbine Update" chicken dinner to all the landowners, without informing the residents in the project area one iota of information.

My concern is how current problems aren't being addressed, and the issues yet to come will be quite larger – no internet/phone/satellite service, and the biggest concern – shadow flicker. **Shadow flicker on our property is, I believe, called trespassing.** I am concerned we will have a MUCH greater total of the permissible 30 hours per year. Then what do we do?

I have found that the EDPR project in Chenoa did not place turbines directly to the west, like this Invenergy project has. (The EDPR rural residents I found with flicker owns the turbines.) To me, this shows great disrespect for rural residents. Invenergy knows exactly when, where, and for how long the shadow will be trespassing on our property. I am dreading sunsets – seeing the blades flick through the beautiful sunsets our farm used to have; this is the most sickening of all.

The list of issues and questions I sent to Mr. Dick and Mr. Erickson about car washes, etc. have not been answered.

I still have many, many questions about who to talk to and how to resolve current and coming issues. Please protect the residents and tax payers of Lexington-Lawndale-Yates-Chenoa-Gridley townships during this unpleasant industrial project which has been forced upon us.

1. We need laws or rules required information provided before the project starts, and on an ongoing basis.
2. We need a middle-man who can resolve issues in a timely manner – not as them “doing us a favor,” but rules and laws requiring resolutions. And we will not sign any contract with Invenergy, nor should be required to do so.
3. We need to feel we have some control over what happens to our roads and our land. We have been paying taxes for over 30 years. We take good care of the countryside and have pride in its appearance. We mow. We pick up trash. We drive on these roads daily.

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Sincerely,  
Laurie Sleeter  
[Lexingtonian@frontier.com](mailto:Lexingtonian@frontier.com)  
309-825-5187

---

Hello,

My name is Lindsay Bachman and my family lives at 23479 E 2700 N Road in Lexington. Our stretch of 2700 N (between 2350 E and 2225 E) was torn up for windmill construction on Monday, April 20th, with new gravel being spread that Thursday, April 23rd. This has given me two weeks to observe Invenergy's practices and it brings to light some concerns for what this summer brings. (Please note: I have not yet submitted any formal complaints and if my correspondence would be better directed to someone else, please send me that contact information.)

First of all, I want to make known that I have not seen a water truck pass our house since early last week (week of April 27th). I understand that we had a stretch of wet weather in which extra water was not necessary. However, Saturday, May 2nd was dry and significantly warmer with constant semi traffic (hauling gravel) in front of our home and the dust was awful. On days when construction traffic is constant in front of a home, it is fair to expect water trucks to also be

present, regardless of the day of the week. I hope it goes without saying that as we get more warm days, the need for water on our gravel roads will also greatly increase.

I have two children, ages 4 and 14 months. My youngest has chronic respiratory complications that require us to administer oxygen at home and have also required lengthy hospital stays in the last 6 months. Dust, even in small amounts, will be more than just an inconvenience for her, it will be a matter of her health. I understand that living rurally comes with some tolerance of dust, but what I'm referring to is easily preventable. I will not force her to be inside all summer to keep her away from construction dust and I am prepared to submit written documentation from her pulmonologist should the need arise.

I would also like to address speeds. It's my understanding that construction traffic is to be kept at 25 mph? For the most part, I have seen cooperation with that from Invenergy and anyone associated with them. My concern is for the general public traffic on this road. If you're unfamiliar with this stretch of 2700 N, it is a heavily-traveled, convenient route between Lexington and Gridley. Not only is there more traffic than a typical rural road, it tends to be at a higher rate of speed. I have witnessed some unnerving speeds from drivers that are absolutely inappropriate for a gravel road. The north side of our home, which includes bedrooms, sits less than 50 feet off 2700 N so, as you can imagine, this is a legitimate accident concern. I understand that the strict speed limits are only in place for construction traffic, but can anything be done for the public use the road? Signage, speed humps? I would be happy to allow a sign in my yard for this purpose.

I appreciate you taking the time to read my concerns. Please know that my main objective is not to complain, but to keep my children and my home safe, which I know any of you would expect as well. I know that the ability exists for everyone to live and use our roads in a way that is safe and realistic for all sides of the equation. I am happy to participate in any conversation to be had about how we can achieve this balance.

Thank you for your time,

Lindsay Bachman 23479 E 2700 N Road  
Lexington, IL 61753  
309-846-2396

---

I feel like I could go on and on about these projects and how they have effected those of us that live out here but I will try to keep it short. Dealing with the construction process has been extremely stressful for my family. Workers driving too fast on unsafe roads is now the daily norm, costing us a windshield in my wife's car. I have witnessed workers blow through stop signs regularly and even blindly when the corn is up. Dangerous intersections where people live and children play in their yards. I have complained countless times to wind company but feel like it falls on deaf ears everytime. The people who you complain to are not from here, as

are most of the workers out here. Just here for a paycheck temporarily then on to the next project, our complaints are nothing more than a nuisance to them.

I have just continued to loose faith in our county government as well. Watching this project forced on us from votes from outside the district. Complaints to the sheriff's department falls on deaf ears as well. False promises made of having intersections patrolled or radar signs put up. I feel there is no where to truly go with complaints. There is no accountability seen anywhere out here with these projects. I have heard countless stories of protocols not being followed during the construction process. I feel like the wind companys and their countless sub contractors have free reign out here. Truck drivers don't even stay on the designated roads and take alternate routes regularly because they know they can get away with it.

I know there's not much I can do about it. At the end of the day it just has me really questioning to continue living in McLean County. It's where I lived and worked my entire life but I'm not sure about raising my family here anymore. Uncertain about my real estate investment more and more. A constant reminder out my window. Noise like no other when I'm in my yard trying to enjoy nature. There are times and certain conditions where they are so loud I highly doubt they are staying under the noise limitations they said they would be. But hey, who's holding them accountable to that?

I hope this short letter of experiences helps those of you who do care about those effected very negatively by these projects.

Jeff Powell