

LINN COUNTY PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

MINUTES

Monday, September 19, 2022

The Linn County Planning and Zoning Commission meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair, Tina DuBois. The meeting was held in the Jean Oxley Public Service Center Formal Board Room, 935 2nd Street SW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

QUORUM DETERMINED:

PRESENT:	Tina DuBois, Chair	2025
	Brock Grenis, Vice-Chair	2023
	Griffin Kuntz	2026
	Allen Wagner	2024
	Diane Brecht	2025
	George Maxwell	2025

ABSENT:	Curt Eilers	2022
----------------	-------------	------

STAFF:	Charlie Nichols, Director
	Stephanie Lientz, Planning & Zoning Division Manager
	Mike Tertinger, Senior Planner
	Jessie Black, Recording Secretary

See attendance sheet for community sign in.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the July 28, 2022, and August 15, 2022, Planning & Zoning Commission meetings were approved as submitted.

DuBois amended the Regular Agenda so that staff could present case JA22-0004 first.

CONSENT AGENDA

JPS22-0015	Knight Farm First Addition	Residential Parcel Split
JPS22-0016	Whispering Winds Estate Addition	Residential Parcel Split

Motion by Maxwell to approve the consent agenda, subject to the conditions of the staff reports. Second by Grenis.

Eilers	Absent
Maxwell	Aye
Grenis	Aye
Kuntz	Aye
DuBois	Aye
Wagner	Aye
Brecht	Aye

REGULAR AGENDA

JA22-0004

UDC Text Amendment

Renewable Energy Overlay Moratorium

Charlie Nichols presented the staff report.

Linn County recently reviewed and approved applications to rezone properties associated with utility-scale solar facilities (applicants Coggon Solar LLC, Duane Arnold Solar I LLC, Duane Arnold Solar II LLC) to the Renewable Energy Overlay District. The Linn County Planning & Zoning Commission and the Board of Supervisors held several public meetings discussing the proposals, as well as conditions and requirements for utility-scale solar applications and rezonings. The Board of Supervisors and Linn County Planning & Development staff received a substantial volume of public input regarding utility-scale solar projects at the public meetings, as well as prior to the meetings in the form of emails, phone calls. Conditions above and beyond the basic requirements for utility-scale solar facilities contained within the Linn County Unified Development Code were recommended and enacted by both staff and Supervisors. Those conditions related to appropriate setback distances, adequate screening, vegetation management requirements, decommissioning plan requirements, and agricultural impact mitigation requirements, among others.

Staff is proposing a text amendment to the Linn County Unified Development Code (UDC) for the enactment of a 12-month moratorium on accepting rezoning applications for the Renewable Energy Overlay District. This proposed moratorium is intended to allow staff and the Board of Supervisors an opportunity to review existing ordinance language related to renewable energy and the Renewable Energy Overlay District, and to determine if updates to the ordinance are needed.

Kuntz asked if staff would take corn suitability rating (CSR) parameters into consideration when making code changes. Nichols said yes, CSR would be discussed, but he could not commit to putting a cap on it.

Brecht asked if staff would reconsider setback code requirements. Nichols said yes.

Motion by Kuntz to recommend approval of case JA22-0004 , subject to the conditions of the staff report . Second by Brecht.

Brecht	Aye
DuBois	Aye
Wagner	Aye
Grenis	Aye
Eilers	Absent
Maxwell	Aye
Kuntz	Aye

JA22-0003

UDC Text Amendment

**Use Table, Definitions, Animal Runs or
Exercise Areas**

Stephanie Lientz presented the staff report.

Staff is proposing several text amendments to the Unified Development Code (UDC) related to: measuring the rear yard setback on triangular lots; amending the distance between animal runs or exercise areas and property lines in some instances for the animal boarding/shelter/kennel use; and adding use categories for Historic Schoolhouses and Recreation Camps. The

Recreation Camp type use was allowed in Linn County prior to the adoption of the Unified Development Code in 2006, but it appears that a comparable use was not added at that time. Existing camps have continued to operate as an allowed grandfathered use, but this change would allow them to make changes to their use and could allow new camps in the future.

Kuntz asked, hypothetically, if there would be an option for administrative exception to move the Historical Schoolhouse, should this code amendment not be approved. Lientz said no.

Motion by Wagner to recommend approval of case JA22-0003 , subject to the conditions of the staff report . Second by Maxwell.

Maxwell	Aye
Wagner	Aye
Kuntz	Nay
Grenis	Aye
Eilers	Absent
Brecht	Aye
DuBois	Aye

OTHER BUSINESS

COMMISSION COMMENTS

STAFF COMMENTS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina DuBois, Chair

Jessie Black, Recording Secretary