



Planning & Zoning Commission

Meeting Minutes Monday, February 16, 2026

The Linn County Planning and Zoning Commission meeting was called to order at 6:02 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	2030
	Brock Grenis	2028 (via Teams)
	Diane Brecht	2030 (via Teams)
	Samuel Kratz	2029
ABSENT:	Griffin Kuntz	2026
	Mike Sadler II	2029
STAFF:	Charlie Nichols, Planning & Development Director	
	Stephanie Lientz, Planning & Zoning Division Manager	
	Sue Bennett, Recording Secretary	

See attendance sheet for community sign in

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of January 20, 2026, Planning & Zoning Commission meeting were approved as submitted.

CONSENT AGENDA:

REGULAR AGENDA:

PA26-0002

ORDINANCE AMENDMENT TO ADD GAS-FIRED ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITIES TO THE ALLOWED USES IN THE EXCLUSIVE USE-TWO (EU-2) ZONING DISTRICT.

Charlie Nichols presented the staff report.

The 2.25-mile setback from residential zoning within population centers reflects a conservative, planning-level buffer intended to provide additional separation between gas-fired electric generating facilities and areas of concentrated residential use. The setback is not intended to regulate emissions or substitute for air permitting requirements, but rather to reduce land use conflicts, account for uncertainty in site-specific conditions, and provide a consistent and predictable standard at the zoning stage of review. By limiting the setback to residential zoning

within defined population centers, the ordinance focuses on protecting areas of higher population density while maintaining flexibility in rural areas.

In addition to setback requirements, the proposed amendments include standards related to noise, infrastructure impacts, airport compatibility, emergency coordination, and host community agreements. Collectively, these provisions are intended to ensure that gas-fired electric generating facilities are sited in a manner that is compatible with surrounding land uses and the Comprehensive Plan, acknowledges the long-term service and infrastructure responsibilities assumed by the County, and provides a clear and transparent framework for applicants, decision-makers, and the public.

Staff recommends approval subject to the conditions of the staff report.

Nichols stated he would not go over the entire presentation that he presented last month, but presented setbacks from Kentucky, Ashe County, NC, and White Oak Township in Michigan. Those setbacks ranged between 1,000' to 2640' from population centers. Linn County's setback of 2.25 miles (11,880') is significantly higher.

Brecht stated she felt the setback of 2.25 miles was too much, and that 1000' to 1300' seems more reasonable.

Public Comment Taken:

Jeff Knier, Alliant Energy, 200 1st St SE, spoke in support of the ordinance. He stated that Alliant has already found a property that is 2.25 miles from a population center, and he urged Linn County to move forward with this ordinance.

Public Comment Closed.

Nichols reiterated the options in front of the Commission.

Brecht stated the setbacks of 1,000' to 1,300' made more sense to her. Kratz agreed.

Motion by Grenis to recommend approval of case PA26-0002, subject to the conditions of the staff report, with the recommendation to amend the setback distances to one (1) mile from population centers. Second by Kratz.

Kratz	Aye
Brecht	Aye
Sadler	Absent
Dubois	Aye
Kuntz	Absent
Grenis	Aye

OTHER BUSINESS:

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

935 2nd Street SW Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
Phone 319-892-5130

Plan_Dev@LinnCountyIowa.gov
LinnCountyIowa.gov/Planning

STAFF COMMENTS:

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Dubois, Chair

Sue Bennett, Recording Secretary