



**Champaign County Board
Environment and Land Use Committee (ELUC)
County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois**

MINUTES – Approved as Distributed January 9, 2025

DATE: Thursday, November 7, 2024
TIME: 6:30 p.m.
PLACE: Shields-Carter Meeting Room
Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E Washington, Urbana, IL 61802

Committee Members

Present	Absent
Aaron Esry (Vice-Chair)	
John Farney	
Donald Owen	
	Emily Rodriguez
	Jilmala Rogers
Chris Stohr	
Eric Thorsland (Chair)	

County Staff: John Hall (Zoning Administrator) and Liz Dillingham (Administrative Services)

Others Present: Susan Monte

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Committee Chair Thorsland called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

III. Approval of Agenda/Addendum

MOTION by Mr. Esry to approve the agenda and seconded by Mr. Owen.
Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously to approve the agenda.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. October 10, 2024 – Regular Meeting

MOTION by Mr. Farney to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2024, regular meeting, seconded by Mr. Stohr. Upon voice vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously to approve the minutes.

V. Public Participation

Norman Davis, Supervisor for Champaign Township, stated he has previously appeared before the ELUC Committee several times in the past few months, usually concerning the problems keeping farm animals in residential areas. He spoke about the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance concerning the keeping and housing of Urban Animals. He feels the proposed amendment is well constructed and thought out. He suggested a few improvements. He pointed out that no hooved animals would be permitted with the amendment. He feels it should be spelled out in detail in the amendment itself. He believes without it, someone in the public might perceive the omission as permission, leading to more problems in the future. He also noted there was no provision for exotic animals including poisonous snakes, crocodiles and alligators, other dangerous reptiles, tropical cats, scorpions, and tarantulas, etc. He added some of this is covered by state law, however, a reference and inclusion of the state law might be appropriate. Another area of concern is the composting section of the amendment, especially as it addresses the closeness to a perennial stream. He urges the inclusion of a grass buffer zone 25' within the proposed 50' of the stream. The grass would slow any runoff and help cleanse any inadvertent pollution from the composting. He also applauds the inclusion of plans for the housing of these Urban Animals. Knowing what is and is not permitted and having a way to monitor this is proper oversight for the county. The only other thing he suggests is to add a set of penalties for ignoring the ordinance. Of course, not knowing all the ins and outs of the zoning ordinance, this may be addressed elsewhere, but perhaps that section should be referenced. He urged the committee to listen to all the opinions that will be expressed this evening on this issue. He advised the committee they will hear some testimony that is very emotional, echoing testimony they have heard in the past. He asked the committee to ignore the emotion and look at this objectively. He reminded the committee that our duty is to the majority of the residents of the county, not individuals. He requested that the committee not be swayed by emotional appeals. He thanked the committee for their attention to his statements.

Alison Harper, resident of 2306 S. Mattis, stated she has not had time to read the proposed amendment. She stated her presentation is about the entire county, not just her. She feels it is important to know what products are going in your body. She stated Prairie Farm and Curtis Orchard are arguably closer to the lazy river and water slide at Sholem Pool. She is in support of agriculture on private property and defends Champaign County residents raising their own livestock for nutritious reasons. She stated it is relaxing and fun. She considers herself a farmer and she is thankful she has the time to invest in her animals. She thanked the committee for listening to her concerns the past few months and requested they take her perspective into consideration.

Terence Conlon stated he is present to discuss Zoning Case 150-AM-24 to change the zoning from I-2 to B-4. He would like to be able to allow retail sales of utility trailers and obtain a dealer license. There will be no building or construction to the land. He needs the zoning changed so the state will give him a dealer license. He will remain present to answer questions.

Mr. Thorsland asked if anyone else wanted to speak and no one did so he closed Public Participation.

VI. Communications

Mr. Stohr will give a presentation reviewing the activities within the Mahomet Aquifer & Carbon Dioxide Sequestration. There will be other experts in attendance as well. The event will be at the U.S. Geological Survey on Thursday, November 14, 2024, at 11:45 a.m.

Mr. Stohr also attended the Urbana-Champaign Sanitary District (UCSD) Board Meeting. They are discussing the nutrient assessment reduction plan for the sanitary district. The goals for further improvement will greatly reduce the amount of phosphorus being discharged into the Saline Branch and at the southwest Treatment Plant as well. They pointed out that the phosphorus and dissolved oxygen from non-point sources is very high heading into upstream of the discharge. It is reduced because of the efforts of the Urbana- Champaign Sanitary District. He encourages folks that are doing agriculture activities to consider what they can do to reduce the nitrates, phosphorus and other things that can lead to poor habitat and poor water that goes down stream. He closed by saying that someone downstream will rely on the water for their drinking water.

Mr. Owen thanked Ms. Harper. He remembers the first time she spoke at the County Board regarding the roosters. Mr. Owen didn't realize at the time because he was still new, he is the closest resident to her residence. It was many months after her initial talk that he heard a rooster. He indicated it did not bother him. He added that he has never seen undo emotion from Ms. Harper. He admires her and appreciates all the education he has received from her presentations.

Mr. Thorsland closed communications as no one else wished to speak.

VII. New Business: Items For Information Only

A. Champaign County Environmental Stewards (CCES) update regarding the CCES Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility project

Susan Monte, with the Champaign County Environmental Stewards (CCES), presented a PowerPoint on the progress of the CCES Household Hazardous Waste Collection facility project. CCES was founded in 2019 as a non-profit. Their mission is to support the ability of residents to responsibly manage their materials by advancing improved local and regional options for recycling, composting, food scrap collection, and safe disposal of household wastes. This includes single use plastics. They hope to support residents and businesses in these efforts. She spoke about hazardous waste materials and the threat to public health and the environment. Household hazardous waste is also a threat to the Mahomet Aquifer, pets, children, septic systems, and firefighters. EPA estimates there are 20 pounds of household hazardous waste generated per household annually and this equals to 824 tons of hazardous materials generated a year when considering the population of the Champaign County alone. There is a lack of collection option resources for residents of east central Illinois. The nearest collection facility is currently in Naperville and at least two and a half to three hours driving distance from Champaign County which is not convenient. ARPA funds were awarded in 2022 which enabled a site to be purchased for a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility. The location is on Saline Court on North Lincoln Avenue, Urbana. The UCSD has committed to donating \$25,000 annually to operating costs and contributing that amount to capital costs until the facility is established. She also presented the site plan and explained the geography and future of the project. Batteries will be

accepted at this site. The facility will be 5800 feet with two docks and serve all residents of Illinois. The Illinois EPA is invested in the operation as well. Contractors who paint will be able to utilize this facility to discard of their used paint once the program starts up. They are 40% of the way toward reaching their capital campaign goal. There is a public kickoff event scheduled for Wednesday, December 11, 2024. There will be more news in the media regarding the event.

There were questions from committee members regarding the cost of the Household Waste Events and clarification as to what happens to the materials once they are dropped at the facility. Susan explained the facility is like a transfer station. It holds the materials until enough quantities are collected to fill a semi-truck. The Illinois EPA is responsible to hire the contractor. The contractor will then respond to pick up the materials. The truck driver is mandated to follow protocol to dispose of the products minus incineration, which disqualifies them from applying for one grant.

Mr. Farney asked about the financial standpoint from the County. Specifically, he inquired if she would be looking for an annual contribution from the County. Susan explained this would depend on legislation, grants, and other variables. Susan will also be speaking to the U of I, smaller towns, and adjacent counties for funding assistance.

Mr. Norman Davis asked if tires could be dropped off at the facility. Susan stated they cannot.

Mr. Stohr stated he is intrigued by the drawing from the architect. He confirmed the plan had room for future expansion.

Mr. Esry also stated the plan looks great for expansion.

B. CCES Household Hazardous Waste Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation to be introduced to the Illinois General Assembly in early 2025.

Susan explained there is a chief sponsor for the bill which is already in the House & Senate. She expects to come back in January for a resolution to pass the bill. This bill would ultimately cover all collection costs.

Mr. Thorsland thanked Susan for her education on the topics.

VIII. New Business: Items to Receive and Place on File by ELUC to Allow a 60-Day Review Period

A. Proposed Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to regulate the keeping of animals within 1,000 feet of a home rule municipality

Mr. Hall stated this process began last August. It is based on the City of Champaign ordinance but provides for more animals on larger lots as well as a greater variety of animals. It is focused on the Livestock Facilities Management Act which provides for better management of livestock waste. Chickens, ducks, geese, and turkeys are all included in the act. Guinea, fowl, pigeons, and rabbits are not included. Mr. Hall used some of Kendall County's animal units for reference on pigeons, rabbits, and guinea fowl. Kendall County is like our own. A special use permit can be applied for if you have

a larger residential lot and feel you can justify more animals. Hooved animals are not allowed in the proposed text amendment.

Mr. Owen thanked Mr. Hall for the complicated task he completed. He asked what the process looks like after 60 days.

Mr. Hall is open to collecting any recommendations the committee makes. Once he has those, he brings those back to the committee in January. When the committee is ready to authorize something, it would go to the ZBA for a public hearing. It would be advertised in the paper and notice would be sent to all the municipalities. He does not know how long it will take to get to the ZBA once public hearings are conducted. Mr. Hall will send a copy to the Farm Bureau which will specify this only pertains to residential districts within 1000 ft. of a Home-Rule municipality. The ordinance has no effect on a property that is classified as a bona fide agriculture use.

Mr. Esry asked about possible penalties or fines in the ordinance, Section 10.

Mr. Hall stated fines will apply which can be up to \$500.00 a day but the courts assign the penalties.

Mr. Stohr asked about fence heights possibly conflicting with various municipalities.

Mr. Hall stated 6 ft. fences are already allowed in residential districts. He clarified this ordinance is not proposing to regulate cats or dogs. Pot belly pigs and pythons would be allowed the way the ordinance reads now. This does not pertain to the inside of the dwelling, only external. If the animal is not listed as being authorized, it is not. For example, you cannot have an ostrich or an Emu.

Mr. Esry clarified that normally this would fall under a 30-day review period. Because we do not have a December committee meeting, it falls to a 60-day review.

Mr. Thorsland mentioned making it a 90-day review period because there will be new committee members join in January. This would give new committee members time to review previous information relating to the proposed ordinance.

Mr. Esry stated he does not have a problem pushing it to the 90-day review. He would like to incorporate the topic to a discussion in the January meeting to bring the new committee members up to speed.

Mr. Hall suggested it can be an action item to keep it here another month.

Both Mr. Thorsland and Mr. Esry agreed there is no hurry to rush it. A decision was made that if the committee majority is not ready to pass on the ordinance in January, they can hold it another 30 days.

IX. New Business: Items to be Recommended to the County Board

A. Proposed amendment to increase the annual solid waste hauler fees from \$35 to \$50 per Vehicle

Mr. Hall advised the committee the State of Illinois limits the waste hauler fee to \$50.00 maximum per vehicle. Two counties (Sangamon and Rock Island) charge fees of \$152 and \$275 per vehicle, respectively. Staff contacted both counties but so far has been unable to find out how both counties have been able to charge fees that are that high.

Mr. Thorsland stated they use some of the waste hauler fee to help fund the waste collection event until something like the CCES comes online.

Mr. Stohr asked if the County Executive or the Director of Planning and Zoning can contact our legislators and let them know this is an impediment for our support of the CCES and annual household waste and electronic collection. Mr. Hall sent out letters to all the licensed waste hauler companies advising them this topic would be discussed this evening. If the County Board approves the increase, the law requires a legal ad must be posted 30 days ahead. Ideally, the new licensing needs to be in effect on January 1, 2025.

MOTION by Mr. Esry to increase the annual waste hauler fee from \$35 to \$50 per vehicle and seconded by Mr. Stohr. Upon voice vote, **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously to forward to the County Board.

- B. Zoning Case 150-AM-24.** A request by Terence Conlon to amend the Zoning Map by changing the zoning district designation from I-2 Heavy Industry to B-4 General Business on a 2.00-acre tract in the Southeast Quarter of Section 6, Township 19 North Range 9 East of the Third Principal Meridian in Urbana Township with an address of 2306 Oak St, Urbana.

Mr. Hall related there have not been any protests from the City of Urbana and he has contacted the City of Urbana twice. Mr. Conlon even spoke to the City of Urbana.

MOTION by Mr. Farney to change the zoning district designation from I-2 Heavy Industry to B-4 and seconded by Mr. Owen. Upon voice vote, **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously to forward Zoning Case 150-AM-24 to the County Board.

X. Other Business

A. Monthly Reports-None

B. Semi-Annual Review of Closed Session Minutes

MOTION by Mr. Esry to accept the State Attorney's office recommendation to keep all the closed session meeting minutes closed and seconded by Mr. Farney. Upon voice vote, **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

- XI. Chair's Report-** Mr. Thorsland thanked Mr. Owen for his service to ELUC. He also recognized the members of Public Participation for their valuable input and keeping the topics concise.

XII. Designation of Items to be Placed on the Consent Agenda-IX. A & B

XIII. Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.