

**Special Concurrent Meeting of the  
Menard Planning Commission and  
Menard County Zoning Board of Appeals**

**MINUTES  
November 6, 2025**

A Special concurrent meeting of the Menard County Planning Commission and the Menard County Zoning Board of Appeals was held on Thursday, November 6, 2025 at 6:25 p.m., at the Menard County Courthouse, Petersburg, Illinois. The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Dan Robertson, Chair of the Menard County Zoning Board of Appeals.

**A. THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**B. ROLL CALL**

MENARD COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Jack Knuppel, Julie Wankel, John Dixon, Dan Haynes

MENARD COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Robertson, Karen Stott, Steve Wilken, Steve Ozella, Chris Becker

MEMBERS ABSENT (note if excused): Chairman Rod Riech, Mark Churchill, Donnie Fritz absent.

OTHERS PRESENT: Zoning Administrator Joseph Crowe.

**C. MINUTES**

Minutes from the Tuesday October 28, 2025 Planning Commission meeting and Thursday, October 30, 2025 Zoning Board of Appeals meeting were presented for approval to the assembled boards.

MOTION: To approve the minutes as presented. Planning Commission Member Knuppel motion, Planning Commission Member Dixon second.

**ROLL CALL**

  4   in Favor: Jack Knuppel, Julie Wankel, John Dixon, Dan Haynes

  0   Opposed:

**MOTION CARRIED**

MOTION: To approve the minutes as presented. ZBA Member Stott motion, ZBA Member Becker second.

## ROLL CALL

  4   in Favor: Karen Stott, Steve Wilken, Steve Ozella, Chris Becker

  0   Opposed:

## MOTION CARRIED

### **D. LEGISLATIVE HEARING AND PUBLIC COMMENT**

Zoning Administrator Crowe introduced the case by discussing the 1999 Zoning Ordinance text and the proposed text amendments to the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance of Menard County of 2025. The proposed amendments are intended to establish updated regulations concerning land use, zoning classifications, permitted and special uses, setbacks, lot sizes, and other land development standards throughout Menard County, Illinois.

#### Public Hearing Opened

The board received extensive public comments addressing impacts to infrastructure, roadways, health and safety, short-term rentals, septic and well regulations, and zoning clarity. Board members emphasized that many of these issues were core drivers for updating the zoning ordinance, noting that prior ordinance language was often unclear or insufficient.

County staff noted that the highway engineer monitors county roads closely and collaborates regularly with planning personnel. Sangamon County continues to administer septic and well oversight under intergovernmental agreement, using more stringent standards.

Questions were raised regarding renewable energy regulations, including decommissioning bonds for solar and wind installations. County representatives clarified that current ordinances require full funding of a decommissioning bond by year 15 for commercial facilities, ensuring removal of equipment even if companies become insolvent.

Additional concerns included burning of trash, nuisance abatement, public health enforcement, and recent cases where EPA intervened in improper burning activity. Members clarified that burning violations fall under public health or EPA jurisdiction.

Chairman Robertson then closed the public discussion.

#### Menard County Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals Deliberation

Separate deliberation of case by members of the Menard County Planning Commission and Menard County Zoning Board of Appeals.

### **E. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING COMMISSION AND ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

Menard County Planning Commission and Menard County Zoning Board of Appeals members determined the following and published their findings.

MOTION: The Menard County Planning Commission recommends to approve and adopt this Comprehensive Text Amendment (25-01TA) to the Menard County Zoning Ordinance as determined in a public hearing held on Thursday November 6, 2025, to the Menard County Board of Commissioners.

Member Dixon motion, Member Knuppel second.

ROLL CALL

  4   in Favor: Jack Knuppel, Julie Wankel, John Dixon, Dan Haynes

  0   Opposed: none

  0   Abstain: none

MOTION CARRIED

The Menard County Zoning Board of Appeals recommends to approve and adopt this Comprehensive Text Amendment (25-01TA) to the Menard County Zoning Ordinance as determined in a public hearing held on Thursday November 6, 2025, to the Menard County Board of Commissioners.

Member Ozella motion, Member Wilken second.

ROLL CALL

  4   in Favor: Karen Stott, Steve Wilken, Steve Ozella, Chris Becker

  0   Opposed: none

  0   Abstain: none

MOTION CARRIED

**F. DETERMINATION OF FINDINGS OF FACT**

Menard County Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals members determined the following and published their findings.

**Case #: 25-01TA – MENARD COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE**

The Menard County Planning Commission and Menard County Zoning Board of Appeals conducted a legislative public hearing, Thursday November 6, 2025, to evaluate the proposed repeal of the 1999 Zoning Ordinance and adoption of the updated Menard County Zoning Ordinance. The updated ordinance incorporates expanded regulatory clarity, modernized land-use definitions, updated infrastructure protections, public health and safety considerations, and renewable energy decommissioning standards.:

- (i) Consistency: The amendment must be consistent with the county's comprehensive plan, goals, and objectives.

**Modern land uses—including short-term rentals, large-scale industrial operations, and renewable energy systems—are fully defined and regulated.**

- (ii) Public welfare: It should promote the public health, safety, and general welfare.

**Public health and safety concerns related to septic systems, wells, nuisances, and burning of waste are strengthened through coordination with Sangamon County and applicable state regulations.**

- (iii) Ordinance intent: It should align with the intent and purpose of the zoning ordinance, potentially correcting errors, adding clarity, or reflecting updated policy.

**The proposed ordinance addresses deficiencies and ambiguities present in the 1999 Zoning Ordinance.**

- (iv) Impact assessment: The potential impact on other properties, the community, and the county's resources should be considered.

**Infrastructure impacts, specifically on county roadways, have been evaluated in consultation with the county highway engineer. Renewable energy regulations include mandatory decommissioning bonds fully funded by year 15, ensuring environmental and landowner protection.**

- (v) Balancing interests: A balance must be struck between the relative gain to the public versus any hardship imposed on the applicant.

**The updated ordinance provides enhanced protections for residents and grants the Zoning Board authority to initiate future text amendments. Public comments were thoroughly reviewed and considered by the Board during deliberations.**

**G. OLD BUSINESS** – There was no old business to be discussed.

**H. NEW BUSINESS** – There was no new business to be discussed.

I. **PLANNING COMMISSION - ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
COMMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

Based on the testimony, public comment, and Board deliberation, the Menard County Planning Commission and the Menard County Zoning Board of Appeals finds that the updated Zoning Ordinance is consistent with the public health, safety, and welfare of Menard County residents. The Boards recommend approval of the updated Menard County Zoning Ordinance to the Menard County Board.

J. **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

The Zoning Administrator had nothing to report.

K. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.