

Piatt County
Zoning Board of Appeals

May 28, 2026

Minutes

The Piatt County Zoning Board of Appeals met at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 28, 2026 in Room 104 of the Piatt County Courthouse. Chairperson Loyd Wax called the meeting to order. The roll was read. Jim Harrington and Robert Chambers, and Keri Nusbaum attended. Dan Larson and Kyle Lovin were absent.

County Board members in attendance: William Chambers, Gail Jones.

The ZBA reviewed the minutes for April 23, 2026.

MOTION: Harrington made motion, seconded by Chambers, to approve the minutes from April 23, 2026 as written. On voice vote, all in favor and the minutes were approved

Public Comments: Jan Myers read a letter she had submitted opposing solar farms.

Old Business

There has been no progress on a road use agreement for the Mansfield gravel pit.

New Business

Rachel and Preston Schrader/Graceful Acres LLC applied for a Special Use Permit to operate an event venue on A-1 agriculture land located at 1183 E 1600 North Road, Monticello IL. Rachel and Preston Schrader were sworn in. They operate a flower farm on the property which will continue as the primary use. They would like to host weddings, receptions and related events on the property. They have been in contact with Eric Seibring the county engineer, to get a second entrance onto the property. Portable restrooms will be used during these events. They anticipate no more than 20 events per year. No new construction will be necessary. There were no objectors. Harrington noted that 1600 North Road can be busy at certain times of the day, and asked them to consider that when making a plan for entrance and exit of guests. The ZBA members considered the zoning factors.

ZONING FACTORS- Schrader

1. Does the current special use restriction promote the health, safety, morals, or general welfare of the public?
Yes. The ZBA agreed unanimously (3-0) that the current special use restrictions promotes the health, safety, morals or welfare of the public.
2. Will granting the SUP be detrimental to the safety, comfort, or general welfare of the community?
No. The ZBA agreed unanimously (3-0) that there is no evidence that the SUP would be detrimental to the safety, comfort, or general welfare of the community.
3. Will granting the special use be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property within the immediate vicinity?

No. The ZBA agreed unanimously (3-0) that granting the special use would not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property within the immediate vicinity,

4. Will granting the special use diminish property values of other property within the immediate vicinity?
No. The ZBA agreed unanimously (3-0) that granting the special use would not diminish the property values of other property within the immediate vicinity.
5. Is there adequate infrastructure to accommodate the special use, if granted (i.e. roads, utilities, drainage)?
Yes. The ZBA agreed unanimously (3-0) that there is adequate infrastructure to accommodate the special use.
6. Are there adequate measures to provide ingress and egress to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets if the SUP is granted?
Yes. The ZBA agreed unanimously (3-0) that there are adequate measures for ingress and egress.
7. Would the special use, if granted, be in harmony with the overall comprehensive plan of the county?
Yes. The ZBA agreed unanimously (3-0) that the special use would be in harmony with the overall comprehensive plan.
8. Would the special use, if granted, compete with or impede the existing zoned uses of other property within the zone?
No. The ZBA agreed unanimously (3-0) that the special use would not compete with or impede existing zoned uses of other property within the zone.
9. Would the special use, if granted, create a hardship on other landowners within the zone?
No. The ZBA agreed unanimously (3-0) that granting the special use would not create a hardship on other landowners within the zone.
10. Would denying the special use create a hardship on the applicant?
No. The ZBA agreed (3-0) that denying the special use would not create a hardship, but it would be an inconvenience and source of irritation.
11. Is the subject land suitable for the special use and is the subject land suitable for the current zoned use?
Yes. The ZBA agreed (3-0) that the subject property is suitable for the current use and for the special use.
12. Is the applicant's property, as presently zoned, vacant? If so, how long has it been vacant?
No. The ZBA agreed unanimously (3-0) that the applicant's property is not vacant.
13. Would the special use, if granted, have a harmful impact upon the soil?
No. The ZBA agreed unanimously (3-0) that the special use would not have a harmful impact on the soil.

14. What is the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) rating for the subject land? N/A
15. Does the SUP conform to the regulations of the zoned district? The Zoning Board must find that there is a public necessity for the special use.
Yes. The ZBA agreed (3-0) that the SUP will conform to the regulations of the district, and there appears to be a need for the service, as they have had requests from the public.

Motion: Harrington made a motion to recommend approval of the Special Use Permit to the County Board. Seconded by Chambers. Roll was called, all in favor and the motion passed.

The county board will consider this at the regular meeting on June 10, 2026.

Tree Line Solar, LLC applied for a Special Use Permit for a 4.99 MW commercial solar energy facility Proposed for property zoned B-1 General Business located at 1991 N 1225 East Road, White Heath IL. Desiree Noisette representing Tree Line Solar was sworn in. She explained the plan for the 33.21-acre community solar farm. She presented the development process and timeline and reviewed the requirements of the AIMA agreement. Community members with Ameren electricity service can sign up to receive discounts on their electricity bill. The project could produce electricity for approximately 1000-1300 homes. She explained their opinion that although the property is zoned B-1 which is not an allowable zone for solar development in Piatt County, their attorneys believe the circumstances of the state siting law require it to be allowed.

ZBA member Jim Harrington asked for contact information for the company that did the drainage study included in Exhibit N. of the application. Noisette will provide that information.

Kathleen Piatt of Sangamon township board was sworn in. The township owns property adjacent and has future plans to develop that property. She also asked for additional money to equip emergency services.

Mary Alexander was sworn in. She lives ½ mile south of the subject property. She has concerns about field fires and possible toxins to livestock or ground. She said the neighbors can't benefit from the project because they are not Ameren customers.

John Foley was sworn in. He had questions regarding the company itself. The structure, the longevity, and the history of development in Illinois. He asked about storm damage, and how the equipment is rated for hail or wind. He also questioned the bond information.

Noisette suggested that conditions of the approval could include banning use of cadmium panels and adding vegetation screening where needed.

Mike Nolan of Sangamon township board was sworn in. He had questions about the tax numbers presented by Noisette. He said the dollars are not a good value. He wants a vegetation screen on the west side of the project. If a tree falls, he wants the solar company to be responsible for clean up and wants an agreement for storm cleanup. He wants the township to be notified when the project is being decommissioned.

Diana Orberson was sworn in. She lives adjacent to the East. They moved to the area for country life, and object to the solar farm. They want a tree buffer planted which is not currently shown on the site plan. She is concerned about wildlife in the area and cleanup in the event of a disaster. She believes the developer should have to pay money to the township and has concerns that the development is near a railroad.

Thereon Jones was sworn in. He says this is not a good use of farm ground. He is against any subsidies for green energy. He has concerns in the event of a natural disaster and asked what semi-conductor materials are used?

Leslie Heath was sworn in. She lives nearby. There is a drainage problem already in the area and she is concerned this development will add to those issues.

Steve Koester was sworn in. He is the owner of the land where the facility is proposed. He has tried other uses for the subject land, such as a subdivision, which was not approved, and this is the least offensive option to make the land profitable.

A letter from Amanda Pankau was put into the record.

Motion: Harrington made motion, seconded by Chambers to table the matter till the next regular meeting. Roll was called, all in favor and the motion passed.

Motion: Harrington made motion, seconded by Chambers to adjourn. On voice vote, all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Keri Nusbaum
Piatt County Zoning Officer