

Albany County Planning and Zoning Commission
Special and Regular Meetings
Wednesday, July 8, 2020
Special Meeting @ 9:00 AM
MINUTES

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Keith Kennedy moved excuse Miller/Spiegelberg
Shaun Moore seconded, motion carried

DISCLOSURES

None

1. Discussion of Albany County Wind Energy Regulations

a. Presentation by Brian Lovett, Administrator – Industrial Siting Division – Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality

Brian Lovett – county has been through this process several times. ISC takes input from affected parties during projects like these. If ISC puts conditions in a permit they are enforceable. Explained Industrial Siting Council approval process. Very similar to a NEPA siting process. Listed agencies that were required to respond to ISC inquiry.

Game and fish and state engineer’s office most likely to respond.

Radar detection lighting negates concerns with lighting on wind projects.

Cunningham – is there a cost benefit analysis for the host county?

Mr. Lovett explained how cost benefit analysis process works

Cunningham lamented PZC not having enough information to effectively evaluate wind projects

Peg – what can we regulate for wind and solar vs. mineral development?

Lovett – this is somewhat so that local government can’t “hold a project hostage”

Peg and Lovett discussed the relationship between local regs and state regs

b. Presentation by Brad Emmons, AICP, Planning and Development Director

Brad Emmons – gave brief history of wind projects in Laramie County. Started establishing regs in 2008. Explained process of developing regs. All projects have been accessed via WYDOT roads so haven’t had to worry about county roads yet. No zoning other than within around 4 miles of city limits.

Cunningham – what complaints have come in with noise/wind farms?

Emmons – there are strict noise regs so no memorable complaints.

Peg asked about specific requirements in regs w/roads and setbacks. Emmons addressed her concerns.

Peg asked about ISC enforcement and Emmons said it hasn't been an issue yet.

c. Presentation by Mitchell Edwards, Nicholas & Tangeman, LLC

Mitch – industrial siting process is completely separate. Property rights don't include future or contemplated uses. Wind execs want turbines in our backyard, not theirs. Ignorance is not an excuse. Preserve scenic vistas. Noise issues 24 hours a day.

Peg – confusing authority issues between state and local permitting.

Gertsch – asked about setbacks or noise issues with mining. Mitch addressed his concerns.

d. Presentation by Amanda MacDonald, ConnectGen

Amanda MacDonald – Connectgen supports revisions from Planning Dept but is concerned about Mitch's proposed regs. Connectgen has met with several agencies and NGOs to make sure that siting is properly done. Regs here are for the most part consistent across Wyoming. Peer reviewed studies list no negative connection between wind turbines and health.