

## Zoning Board Minutes

January 3, 2008  
7:00 pm

Chairman George Nodland called the meeting of the Stark County Zoning Board to order. Members present were George Nodland, Ron Hauck, Leo Kuntz, Duane Grundhauser, Frank Emch, Sue Larson, Russ Hoff, and Joe Frenzel. Also present were States Attorney, Tom Henning, Zoning Director, Diane Brines, and Auditor Alice Schulz.

Russ Hoff made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 3, 2007 meeting. Joe Frenzel seconded. All voted Aye. Motion carried.

George Nodland made some opening comments and thanked everyone for attending; he explained the procedure to follow and encouraged the public to express their opinions. Mr. Nodland then introduced the Zoning Board.

Mr. Nodland opened the public hearing.

A request was made by Neil Messer for Great Northern Power Development LP for a zoning change from Agricultural to Industrial for the purpose of operating a coal mine. This is a conditional use permit under the industrial zoning. The property is located in Township 139, Range 98, Section 9: South of RR, Section 10: SW4 South of RR, Section 13: SW4SW4, Section 14: W2W2, SE4SW4, S2SE4, Section 15: All, Section 16: All, Section 17: All, Section 20: N2N2, SE4NE4, E2SE4, Section 21: All, Section 22: All, Section 23: All, Section 24: W2NW4, Section 27: All, Section 28: N2NW4, E2, Section 29: NE4NE4, Section 33: NE4, E2SE4, Section 34: All. Township 138, Range 98, Section 3: N2N2.

Neil Messer gave a presentation on the potential for a coal mine in the South Heart area. The original in about 2001 was for a coal fired electric generating plant and now it is a gasification plant. This plant is proposed to basically produce one product which is natural gas. There will be other small by-products but 99.9% will be natural gas. The plant will be located in the south end of Section 34, Township 138, Range 98, and it will sit on 20 to 30 acres and proposed to cost 1.4 billion dollars, being possibly the largest in the state of ND. It will take 3 ½ to 4 million labor hours to build, which is approximately 2 ½ to 3 years. During peak hours it will take 600 to 800 construction workers, and when completed it will employ 200 to 250 people, 50% in the mine and 50% in the plant. It will be a very low profile state of the art plant.

Mr. Nodland asked for anyone to speak for the project. Galon Baker, Rich Wardner, Ron Lisko, and Kevin Thompson spoke in support of the project. They all felt it would be great for Stark County to give us more stability and make a stronger diversity. It would bring in more revenue to help lower taxes. It would offer more jobs and may help to keep our youth here.

Mr. Nodland asked for anyone to speak against the project. Derrick Braaten, Attorney for the Dakota Resource Council, presented a zoning application from The City of Iowa to show a comparison to the Stark County application; Mr. Braaten feels the Stark County application is not sufficient. Mary Hodell presented a petition of names to require Great Northern Power Development to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement prior to approval of any permits for mining or construction of a coal gasification plant or any other coal conversion facility in Stark County, Mark Trechock, Dakota Resource Council asked that the documentation presented be entered into the record, Neil Tangen, Myron Eberts, Jeremiah Wagner, Fran Hurt,

Laura Tangen, Gordon Krance, Alvin Binstock, , Jerry Steffan, Mrs. Glenn Wagner, and Wade Schaffer all spoke against the project. Some of the concerns were about the water, where it would come from and how it would be replaced, health concerns and closing of roads. They feel there should have been more public meetings to answer the questions that they have and they asked the board not to be in such a hurry to grant the zoning change, and give them a chance to address their concerns.

Mr. Nodland closed the public hearing.

After some discussion Ron Hauck made a motion to table the zoning change request to give them a chance to look at the documents presented. Frank Emch seconded. Roll call vote. Ron Hauck Aye, Leo Kuntz Aye, Frank Emch Aye, Duane Grundhauser Aye, Joe Frenzel Nay, Sue Larsen Aye, Russ Hoff Aye, and George Nodland Nay. Motion carried.

The board advised Mr. Messer and Great Northern Power to conduct more meetings with the public and the zoning board will meet again in either February or March for the next meeting.

Duane Grundhauser moved to adjourn. Frank Emch seconded.