

THE MORTON COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES
November 19, 2025

Chairman Kist called the Morton County Planning and Zoning Commission meeting to order at 5:31 P.M. November 19, 2025, in the Morton County Commission Room, 210 2nd Ave NW, Mandan, North Dakota. Commissioners present were Zachmeier, Buckley, Rohr, Tomac, Ell Jr., Braun, Berger and Wald. Also present were County Planner Natalie Pierce and Deputy Auditor Eckroth.

Rohr moved and Braun seconded to approve the agenda. All voting aye, motion carried.

Buckley moved and Braun seconded to approve the minutes from October 22, 2025. All voting aye, motion carried.

Chairman Kist opened the Public Hearing – request from Mikayla Schantz and Jeffrey Lennie for the final plat of a short-form subdivision known Schantz Subdivision, a zoning map amendment from Agricultural to Residential on approximately 4.96 acres in the NW ¼ of Section 22, Township 139N, Range 84W, Morton County.

Buckley moved and Tomac seconded to recommend approval of the final plat of the short-form subdivision known as Schantz Subdivision, and a zoning map amendment from Agricultural to Residential as the subdivision conforms to the regulations established in Article 7 of the Morton County Land Use Code and is in keeping with the land use priorities established in the 2045 Comprehensive Plan. All voting aye, motion carried.

Chairman Kist opened the Public Hearing – request from Dale Steckler for the preliminary plat of a long-form subdivision known as Solar Meadows Third Subdivision on 15.84 acres in the NE ¼ of Section 21 Township 139N Range 82W, Morton County.

Buckley moved and Braun seconded to recommend approval of the final plat of the long-form subdivision of Solar Meadows Third Subdivision and to accept the adjustments of the utility easements and to present to County Commission on November 25, 2025. All voting aye, motion carried.

Chairman Kist opened the Public Hearing - request from CF Properties LLC for the final plat of a long-form subdivision known as North Country Estates Third Subdivision on 79.84 acres in the SE ¼ of Section 24, Township 140N, Range 82W, Morton County.

Rohr moved and Berger second to recommend approval of the final plat of the long-form subdivision known as North Country Estates Third Subdivision, as the subdivision conforms to the regulations established in Article 7 of the Morton County Land Use Code and the change is in keeping with the established character of the subdivision. All voting aye, motion carried.

Chairman Kist opened the Public Hearing – request from Estate of Delmer Schlenker for the preliminary plat of a long-form subdivision known as Monte's Ranchero's Sixth Subdivision on 29.98 acres in NW ¼ of Section 8, Township 138N, Range 82W, Morton County.

Rohr moved and Tomac seconded to recommend conditional approval of the preliminary plat of the long-form subdivision known as Monte's Ranchero's Sixth Subdivision, only if the plat is

reconfigured with three lots or fewer. On roll call voting aye Rohr, Tomac, Wald, Berger, Buckley and Kist, voting nay Zachmeier, Braun and Ell Jr., motion carried.

Consideration of supplemental stormwater and drainage easement for Honey Hills Estates First Subdivision, Lots 4 & 5, Block 1.

Buckley moved and Braun seconded to recommend County Commission to accept the revised stormwater and drainage easement for Honey Hills Estates First Subdivision, Lots 4 & 5 Block 1 as presented. All voting aye, motion carried.

Chairman Kist opened the Public Hearing: request from Minnesota Power for a special use permit for a wind energy conversion facility known as the Longspur Wind Project, on approximately 26,000 acres in Section 13, 14, 24, Township 140N, Range 89W; Section 1-4, 9-26, 28-33, 36 Township 140N, Range 88W; Section 1, 4 & 5, Township 139N, Range 88W; Section 5-8, 17-20, 28-34, Township 140N Range 87W; Section 4-6, 9 Township 139N Range 87W.

Representatives of Longspur Wind Project spoke on behalf of the project.

Member of the public Chuck Gietzen is in support of the project he feels the positives outweigh the negative and will bring financial gain to him and his family.

Member of the public Jim Swenson is in support of the project; he already has wind turbines on his property they run cattle and have no issues.

Member of the public Richard Schirado in support of the wind project feels the benefits outweigh the negative, it is also a financial benefit for his family.

Member of the public Keith Gietzen, is not in support of the wind towers and asked this board denies this permit.

Member of the Public Dawn Shephard, not in support she has sent health studies to Planning & Zoning and hopes the board denies this project based on the criteria of the Morton County Land Use Code - Special Use Permitting District regulations.

Member of the public Mary Graner, indicated that there are studies indicating wind turbines have negative health effects and feel there will be more reports on negative health effects from wind turbines.

Member of the public Bill Duppong, in support of the Longspur Wind Project, he feels the Longspur Wind Project expansion will have a smaller impact on the land as there are existing turbines already present in the area. As a landowner he feels he has the right to allow wind turbines on his land if all of the requirements have been met with government entities.

Dr Chris Ollson of Environmental Health Management, retained by Allete, Inc. Dr Chris Ollson briefly spoke on sound, shadows, flicker and livestock, with 20 years of research he feels there will not be any impact on public health.

Member of the public Janel Morman, is in opposition to the project, resides in Morton County the proposed wind towers are in her back yard breaking up the beautiful viewshed that we all appreciate, she feels the money the project bring will not stay in the area, Morton County is a big county and money will be spread out, she is also questioning why the easement for land is for 55 years on a project that was stated to be 35 years.

Member of the public Matt Morman, supports the project, Mr. Morman is a Farmer, Rancher School Board Member and Fire Department Member, the project brings extra money to the community.

Member of the public Swenson supports the project it is a financial benefit for them.

Member of the public Cheryl Froehlich, resident of Morton County also is an employee of BNI Coal she is in support of the Longspur Wind Project she feels it is compatible with Morton County Ordinances.

Member of the public Dan Feser, he lives south of the project when looking out his window he sees about 30 blinking towers. He is a registered engineer in ND. The devaluation of the land outweighs the financial benefit he feels Minnesota is the only one winning. The construction workers will be gone when the project is completed. The wildlife that are here maybe migrating through quickly.

Attorney with Crowley Fleck, local attorney for Minnesota Power commented that Minnesota Power has complied with the Morton County Ordinances that relate to Wind.

Zachmeier moved and Buckley seconded to recommend to County Commission to approve the request from Minnesota Power for a special use permit for the wind energy conversion facility known as Longspur Wind Project on approximately 26,000 acres located in the varies Sections in Township 140N Range 88W; Township 139N Range 88W; Township 140N Range 87W; Township 139N Range 87W all in Morton County, as the project complies with the future Land Use Policy FLU 1.5 and Table 1 Zoning Compatibility Secondary compatible zoning districts all with in the Morton County 2045 Comprehensive Plan, also complies with Section 5-18 of the Morton County Land Use Code. With the following recommend conditions:

- 1) Wind project components may not be developed or installed on properties that lie within the Residential zoning district, even though such properties may lie within the proposed project boundary.
- 2) The applicant must solicit letters of acknowledgement from all parties that hold major infrastructure easements within the project boundary. Letters should state any concerns or special considerations regarding impacts of the project on existing infrastructure. These letters should be submitted to the Zoning Administrator as soon as practicable and at least 90 days prior to the start of construction.
- 3) All lighting shall be shielded to direct light toward the ground, unless otherwise required by another permitting authority. On roll call Zachmeier, Buckley, Ell Jr, Rohr, Tomac and Kist voting aye, Wald and Braun voting nay. Motion carried.

Public Comment period as required by NDCC 44-04-20.1 was opened at 7:48PM. There was no public comments and comment period was closed at 7:49PM.

Braun moved and Berger seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 pm. All voting aye, motion carried.