

THE MORTON COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES
October 22, 2025

Chairman Kist called the Morton County Planning and Zoning Commission meeting to order at 5:31 P.M. October 22, 2025, in the Morton County Commission Room, 210 2nd Ave NW, Mandan, North Dakota. Commissioners present were Zachmeier, Buckley, Tomac, Ell Jr., Braun and Wald. Also present were County Planner Natalie Pierce and Deputy Auditor Eckroth. Absent Berger.

Buckley moved and Rohr seconded to approve the agenda with amendments. All voting aye, motion carried.

Buckley moved and Braun seconded to approve the minutes from September 24, 2025. All voting aye, motion carried.

Chairman Kist opened the Public Hearing – request from Doran Stoltz for the final plat of a short-form subdivision known Stoltz Subdivision, a zoning map amendment from Commercial to Residential on approximately 4.99 acres in the SE ¼ of Section 9, Township 139N, Range 83W, Morton County.

Buckley moved and Tomac seconded recommend approval of the final plat of the short-form subdivision known Stoltz Subdivision a zoning map amendment from Commercial to Residential, as the subdivision conforms to the regulations established in Article 7 of the Morton County Land Use Code and brings the zoning of the property into alignment with the current use of the property. All voting aye, motion carried.

Chairman Kist opened the Public Hearing – request from CP Properties LLC for the preliminary 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 Braun seconded recommend approval of the preliminary 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.

Approval of 2026 Morton County Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Schedule.

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.

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

Members of the public Michael & Amanda Evinger voiced concern of living so close to the wind towers, they live with all the negatives of the wind tower and feel people should be compensated. They showed a video of shadow flicker in their home from the existing towers and stated their

children are affected, one who is seizure-prone.

Member of the public Mary Graner questioning the efficiency of wind towers and the amount of money spent, also if Minnesota wants the energy, then why are they not putting towers in Minnesota. Feels wind towers are an eyesore to the community.

Member of the public Mr. Gietzen feels wind towers are inefficient, affect the viewshed of North Dakota, and he is opposed to the wind towers.

Member of the public Janel Morman strongly opposes the proposed wind tower. MN Power would like to put up wind towers in our backyard, it takes away our beautiful scenery which North Dakotans have treasured and admired; they are eyesores. Morman stated they are the 4th generation rancher and plan to have a 5th, we are constantly fighting to defend our land. Morman hopes the Commission denies this project.

Member of the public Dawn Shepard feels the project is a nuisance for existing rural resident it is not in harmony of the comprehensive plan. Shepard is opposed to the project – the noise and constant red lights, it is unhealthy and destroying wildlife. The damage it is doing will be irreversible.

Member of the public Mervin Emeneth, is concerned about the waste that is generated by spent turbine blades. He has seen piles of the blades that don't seem to have a plan for how they will be taken care of.

Member of the public Bob Hoff stated that his wife is prone to migraines and her migraines are set off effects from the turbines. He is concerned about vibration, noise and loss of wildlife.

Member of the public Dale Hitchcock stated he is concerned about effects on wildlife and red lights flashing. He stated when the red lights start flashing, his horses take off. He is against the project.

Member of the public Melissa Friesz stated concern with the project being only a half mile from her home. The people of that area just want to be left alone.

Rohr moved and Wald second to deny the special use permit from Minnesota Power for a wind energy conversion facility known as Longspur Wind Project, based upon the testimony from a number of people residing in this particular area that the proposed use is detrimental to their well-being, and some issues associated with the proposed use have not been researched enough to validate that the use is safe.

Rohr moves and Wald seconds to amend the motion for a special use permit from Minnesota Power for a wind energy conversion facility: adding the denial is also based on Goals 1 and 2 of the Morton County Comprehensive Plan:

- Goal 1: Agricultural and ranch lands are preserved for those uses
- Goal 2: Rural character and scenic beauty continue to be defining features of the Morton County Landscape.

Roll call on the amended language: Buckley, Braun, Rohr, Tomac, Wald, Ell Jr. and Kist voting aye, Zachmeier voting nay. Motion carried

Roll call to deny the special use permit from Minnesota Power for a wind energy conversion facility know as Longspur Wind Project: Rohr, Tomac, Wald, Ell Jr., Braun and Kist voting aye, Zachmeier and Buckley voting nay. Motion carried.

Chairman Kist opened the Public Hearing: Draft Morton County Land Use Code Amendment Section 5-400 Solar Energy Generation Facility.

Buckley moved and Braun seconded to recommend Adoption of Land Use Code Amendment Section 5-400 Solar Energy Generation Facility

Rohr moved and Braun seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 pm. All voting aye, motion carried.