Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Planning and Zoning Board
Wednesday, May 27, 2026, at 7:00 pm
Braidwood City Hall, 141 W. Main Street, Braidwood, IL 60408

Call to Order: The Regular Meeting of the Braidwood Planning and Zoning Board was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman George Kocek in the Council Chambers of Braidwood City Hall.

Pledge of Allegiance: Chairman Kocek requested all present to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Upon roll call, the following officials answered "Here" or "Present."

Present: Wayne Kancler, Nick Stewart, Tyler Geis, George Kocek
Absent: Raymond McShane, Raymond Doogan, and Dave Slager

Quorum: Chairman Kocek announced that a quorum was present and the meeting was in order.

Also Present Were: City Management Consultant Steve Gulden and City Clerk Sarah Weaver.

Public Comment: Chairman Kocek opened the floor for public comment on non-agenda items. There being no public comments, public comment was closed.

Approval of Minutes: Chairman Kocek noted that the February 4, 2026 minutes included in the meeting packet were incorrect. The Commission agreed to defer approval of the March 2, 2026 meeting minutes until the next Planning and Zoning Board meeting so they can be reviewed.

Old Business: None.

Public Hearing

Mastodon Station Travel Center – Variance Request and Final Plan Approval
PINs: 02-24-06-200-003-0000, 02-24-06-200-004-0000, 02-24-06-200-011-0000, 02-24-06-200-012-010-0000, and 02-24-06-200-012-020-0000
Location: Corner of Division Street and Coal City Road

At approximately 7:02 pm, Chairman Kocek opened the public hearing regarding a variance request and final plan approval for the proposed Mastodon Station Travel Center.

Mr. Gulden provided a staff report outlining the history of the project and prior approvals associated with the annexation and rezoning of the property. He explained that the applicant was requesting approval of a variance for a second identification sign exceeding the maximum height and square footage permitted by the zoning ordinance. The request would allow a sign measuring approximately 28 feet 4.4 inches in height with a sign area of 150.6 square feet.

Mr. Gulden stated that larger signs are common for developments located along Interstate 55 corridors and that staff recommended approval. He further noted that the applicant had been cooperative throughout the development process and had accommodated a city easement area for a future “Welcome to Braidwood” sign.

Mr. Dave Smith, President of Ridgeway Petroleum, addressed the Commission and explained that the original concept included a digital sign. Due to the significantly higher cost of a digital sign, the project was modified to use a traditional identification sign consistent with ExxonMobil franchise standards.

Public Comment: None.

The public hearing was closed.

Commission Discussion:
Commissioners discussed the visibility and appropriateness of the proposed sign. Members noted that nearby fuel stations utilize large identification signs and agreed that the requested variance was reasonable given the location adjacent to Interstate 55.

Motion #1: Recommend approval of a variance request permitting a pole-mounted sign with a height of 28 feet 4.4 inches and a total sign area of 150.6 square feet at the corner of Division Street and Coal City Road.

Motion by Geiss, seconded by Stewart.
Motion carried with 4 ayes; 0 nays.
(Geiss, Stewart, Kancler, and Kocek)

Motion #2: Recommend approval of the previously approved variance permitting a pole-mounted sign not to exceed 125 feet above adjoining ground level with a collective sign façade not to exceed 1,414 square feet, as outlined in the annexation agreement.

Motion by Kocek, seconded by Geiss.
Motion carried with 4 ayes; 0 nays.
(Kocek, Geiss, Kancler, and Stewart)

Motion #3: Recommend approval of the Ridgeway Subdivision Final Plan dated April 29, 2026, prepared by M. Gingrich, Garver Associates, conditioned upon technical revisions prior to recording and finalization of the City sign easement provisions.

Motion by Stewart, seconded by Geiss.
Motion carried with 4 ayes; 0 nays.
(Stewart, Geiss, Kancler, and Kocek)

Public Hearing

Variance Request – 435 Enterprise Drive
PIN: 02-24-17-103-018-0000
Location: 435 Enterprise Drive
Zoning District: I-2

At approximately 7:14 pm, Chairman Kocek opened the public hearing regarding a variance request to permit a six-foot fence within the required front yard.

Mr. Gulden explained that the request was associated with an ongoing effort to improve the screening of truck parking visible from Illinois Route 53. The proposal includes relocating an existing berm to comply with Illinois Department of Transportation requirements, installing landscaping, and constructing a six-foot privacy fence where only a three-foot fence is otherwise permitted.

Mr. Gulden stated that the fence would span approximately 375 feet along the truck parking area and would provide additional screening of parked trailers. Staff recommended approval of the variance.

Public Comment:
Mr. Terry Bennett, 603 South Front Street, spoke in support of the property owner and stated that the owner had been a good neighbor. Mr. Bennett expressed his opinion that the existing berm already provides substantial screening and questioned the necessity of the fence.

Mr. Gulden clarified that the purpose of the fence was to fully screen the trailers, as portions remain visible above the existing berm.

The public hearing was closed.

Commission Discussion:
Commissioners discussed the relocation of the berm, IDOT requirements, the proposed location of the fence, and the history of the development. Staff explained that the proposed improvements were consistent with earlier representations made during prior project reviews and would be incorporated into a development agreement.

Motion: Recommend approval of a variance request permitting a six-foot fence within the required front yard at 435 Enterprise Drive in accordance with the submitted plans and public testimony.

Motion by Stewart, seconded by Geiss.
Motion carried with 4 ayes; 0 nays.
(Stewart, Geiss, Kancler, and Kocek)

Next Meeting:
The next Planning and Zoning Board meeting will be announced.

Adjournment:
A motion to adjourn was made by Geiss and seconded by Stewart. Motion carried with 4 ayes; 0 nays. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:24 pm.

Sarah Weaver
City Clerk