

CANTON DAILY LEDGER

Discussion continues on hog facility

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The Fulton County Board at its meeting Tuesday evening heard concerns from residents pertaining to a hog confinement facility proposed in Isabel Township.

The Fulton County Board at its meeting Tuesday evening heard concerns from residents pertaining to a hog confinement facility proposed in Isabel Township.

The proposed site is located 1.7 miles from Duncan Mills and would house a projected 3,606.48 animal units, which converts to over 20,000 swine. The Illinois Department of Agriculture's website lists the owner and facility name as Memory Lane Acres, LLC (formerly known as Cleer Farm, LLC).

Daran Deushane was the first to voice his concerns to board members about both Memory Lanes and Runway Ridge Farms, which is another hog farm of similar size proposed in Bernadotte Township near Ipava.

Deushane, who noted that he has a background in agriculture, said the hog farms establishment would have a negative impact on the environment and surrounding neighbors.

The location for Runway Ridge is reportedly situated near Tater Creek, which runs into the Spoon River. Deushane said the 147 mile long Spoon River would

suffer if swine manure or chemicals were to run off.

“I will not sit by and let Spoon River be degraded by a company’s wish to expand their portfolio,” he said.

Deushane also expressed concern about chemicals from swine manure and buildings being released into the air and leading to respiratory system issues in neighbors.

Additionally, Deushane commented that Runway Ridge had errors on its application, which include the failure to report Tater Creek and inaccurate setback numbers. He described these errors as a “lack of attention to detail” and “inept business practices.”

Greg Juergens told the board that, with information he received from the Fulton County Soil and Water Conservation, he believes Memory Lanes Acres’s location would compromise the wells of five families in Isabel Township.

Also speaking was Craig Porter, who serves as a trustee on the Isabel Township Board.

Porter said there is a one lane road that travels to the hog farm’s proposed location and he does not believe the road can hold up to the heavy traffic the hog farm would require.

Isabel Township does not have the funding to hire a road commissioner to or maintain that road, he noted, and it would cost \$7,000 to have an engineer evaluate the road to prove the road is not in good enough condition for heavy equipment.

“It would take major, major construction to make it a two lane road to carry

large equipment,” Porter said, adding that the tax dollars the township would get from the hog farm would not be enough to keep the road maintained.

“They’re trying to push this fast and hard,” he added. “There’s a lot of money behind this.”

Porter also said he believes there is an individual who is buying several acres of land in the Fulton County area for apparent hog farm use.

Richard Cleer of Cleer Farms also spoke as well.

Cleer said he has an established farming business in the area and wants the public to know that he is not associated with Memory Lane Acres or its plans to construct the hog farm.

Cleer said he has contacted his attorney about the hog farm developer using Cleer Farm in its name. Cleer added that he also opposes the hog farm in Bernadotte Township.

Chairman Bob Bucher said during the announcements portion of the meeting that there will be a public hearing held Jan. 25 at 5:30 p.m. at Lewistown High School in regards to Memory Lanes Acres’s plans for the hog farm.

In other business, the board approved two proclamations honoring former State’s Attorney John Clark and former employee Anita Mann for their service to the county.

Both Clark and Mann retired Dec. 31. Mann was employed in the treasurer’s office, where she had worked for 38 years.

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