

New public hearings on Liberty Green set July 14 before BZA and APC boards

Written by Marty Randall

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New public hearings have been scheduled for 6 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 14, regarding the controversial Scottsburg Renewable Energy Center proposed for property on the south edge of Scottsburg.

According to legal notices submitted to these newspapers, officials of the parent company, Liberty Green Renewables Indiana L.L.C., are requesting a modification to the variance granted to the applicant on August 12, 2009, by the Scott County Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

The notice for Case V-4-2010 advises that the proposed plant's configuration has now changed from what was submitted for the 2009 variance.

"Due to the site conditions and the efforts of Liberty Green Renewables Indiana L.L.C. to preserve and enhance jurisdictional wetlands on the city property, the plant configuration was changed to move the operations from the city property..." the document states. Now, plans call for the plant to be built on property owned by local farmer and businessman Tex Murphy and his wife Cora Jean.

The change increases the amount of property to 59.80 acres, a little over 11 acres more than what the previous variance covered.

Also, officials of Liberty Green have completed preliminary engineering of the boiler and turbine building. They are now seeking to amend the original variance from its original configuration of 100 feet to 80 feet.

Consequently, members of the BZA will take up these matters starting at 6 p.m. on July 14. Because a large group is expected to attend, the hearing will be held at the commons area of Scottsburg High School, the same site where two earlier hearings involving Liberty Green have been held by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC).

Decisions on issues brought before those two boards have not yet been reached, including operational permits to be issued by IDEM and the structure by which the Scottsburg Renewable Energy Center will be regulated as an energy source, the concern of the IURC.

Following the 6 p.m. BZA meeting, the Scott County APC will convene its meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the high school.

This hearing will cover the amended Development Plan for the biomass plant.

Both applications are now available to the public at the APC office, located in the Courthouse basement in downtown Scottsburg. Hours there are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Applications will be available until two days before the hearings.

Persons may also submit written statements or call the office with comments about the Development Plan. Written statements must be submitted to the APC Executive Director, Scott County Courthouse, Suite G40, 1 East McClain Avenue, Scottsburg, IN 47170. The office's phone number is 752-8445, ext. 1.