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SENTINEL-PRESS

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PUBLIC NOTICES

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Our public notices are also published on the web at:

<http://www.publicnoticeads.com/IA/search/searchnotice.asp>

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

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- City of Maquoketa
- City of Andrew
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- Maquoketa School District

Minor changes made to wind turbine ordinance

By DOUGLAS MELVOLD

Some minor changes will be made to Jackson County's proposed ordinance governing noncommercial wind generating units as the Board of Supervisors prepares to act on it.

The supervisors conducted a second public hearing Oct. 6 on the proposed one-page ordinance, which would regulate wind turbines designed to generate electricity for onsite homes and other facilities and not primarily to sell for offsite use.

The county Zoning Commission has recommended the measure for approval.

No comments from the public were received. Board members compared a model ordinance from the American Wind Energy Association, a trade group representing manufacturers of small-scale wind turbine generators, to the proposed county measure.

Board members appeared to agree that a proposed setback requirement from the nearest neighboring dwelling could be waived if the owner of that property agreed in writing.

That change would allow a wind turbine to be located nearer a neighboring home if that were the best location for the generator and if the neighboring property owner agreed.

Board members also said certification by an engineer for the manufacturer of the unit would meet a requirement that the tower and tower foundation design be certified by a licensed professional engineer.

Board members noted that the manufacturer of the unit also generally installs it.

"If they're going to install it, they're going to do it right," said Supervisor Jack Willey.

County Engineer Clark Schloz noted that the county doesn't inspect other structures, such as farm buildings or grain bins.

Board members agreed to leave unchanged a requirement that units not in use for 18 months be removed.

That provision was a concern expressed at the first public hearing, on Sept. 29. Joe Heinrich of rural Maquoketa said an owner could have trouble getting parts and suggested that the time limit be extended.

Board members said, however, they felt that parts should be available within 18 months.

"I just can't imagine that a manufacturer wouldn't have parts available to their customer," said Willey. "I would be livid."

"I can see it taking time to get parts, but I can't believe a year and a half isn't long enough to get parts," Supervisor Larry "Buck" Koos agreed.

Zoning Administrator David Manning said a wind turbine owner who would want an extension of the 18-month requirement could seek a variance from the county Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Manning also suggested including a provision holding the owner of a generator that is located near a business or other area frequented by the public liable for any damage caused by the unit in case of an accident, such as the unit collapsing or a part falling.

Corey Kuhlman of rural Maquoketa told the supervisors last week he is considering installing a wind turbine to serve the Bluff Lake Catfish Farm restaurant as well as his nearby home.

Koos added, however, that "I don't want to get to where we're the police on what you can and can't do."

Supervisors commended the Zoning Commission for doing a good job drafting the proposed ordinance.

The board directed Manning to make the changes suggested by the board, have county Attorney Chris Raker check it and bring it back to the board for action at the board's Tuesday, Oct. 13, meeting.

In other business, the board scheduled a public hearing for 9:30 a.m. Oct. 27 on a request from Joe Schaefer of 44180 17th St., Preston.

Schaefer is seeking to rezone one acre at the southeast edge of Preston from A-1, agricultural, to R-1, single family residential. Plans call for building a house on the property.

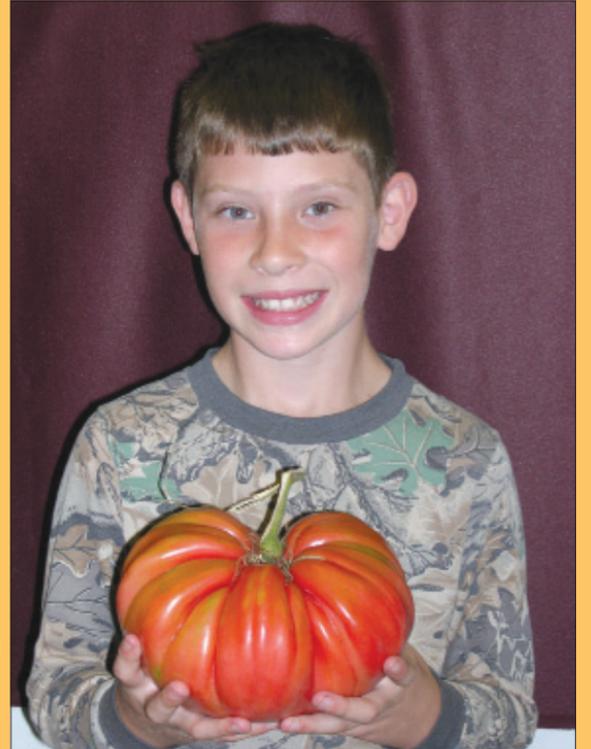
The county Zoning Commission has recommended approval.

The supervisors also approved a request from Toys for Tots to use the vacant former S&H Fabricating building in Maquoketa during the upcoming holiday season for storing donated items at no charge.

Gardeners reap 'big' rewards

Who says the harvest isn't good? Nathan Steines, son of Fred and Deb Steines of Maquoketa, clipped this 4.2-pound tomato out of his parents' garden before the frost hit. They purchased the tomato plants from the annual spring Master Gardener plant sale. The Steines family said they've had a lot of luck with the produce in their garden this year, canning plenty of onions, peppers, jalapenos and tomatoes for one of their favorite homemade dishes — salsa.

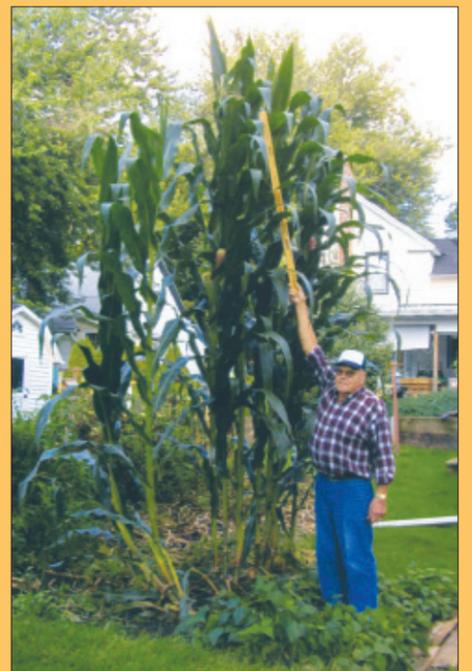
MSP photo by Rosie Morehead



A 400-pound pumpkin makes for some spooky decorating at Halloween. Alex Delong, left, and Kacie Varner stand with one of the 400-plus-pound pumpkins grown by Varner's father, Mark Varner, and Jim Francois. Mark Varner said this is the first year he and Francois purchased pumpkin seeds and planted them in a well-fertilized and watered field. They monitored the vines' progress and the resulting orange gourds but didn't do much of anything special. The men needed a hoist to lift and transport the pumpkins. Varner said he and Francois got seven or eight pumpkins weighing in at around the 400-pound mark this year and intend to plant even more seeds next year.

MSP photo by Kelly Gerlach

Marvin Jorgensen's yardstick couldn't even come close to the top of the corn stalks he grew in his garden plot this year. The Maquoketa man's extra-tall stalks were not to eat but were part of a promotion by "Our Iowa" magazine, an Ames-based publication. The magazine sent 50,000 packets of seed this spring in the Edward Jones Tall Corn Contest, which was not restricted to subscribers. The corn came from tropical varieties grown in Mexico and Brazil and grew to be well over 11 or 12 feet tall. The winner of the 2008 contest had a 16-foot-tall entry. This year's winner, who will be announced in the December-January issue of the magazine, receives a bushel basket full of prizes valued at \$500. Other prizes include certificates from the Iowa Beef Industry Council, Iowa Pork Producers and gasoline.



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