

Davison Co. residents push for one-mile wind setbacks

By [Evan Hendershot](#) on Mar 8, 2017 at 8:04 p.m.



Planning and Zoning Administrator Jeff Bathke answers questions at the Davison County Planning Commission on Wednesday at the Davison County Fairgrounds. (Evan Hendershot / Republic)

Ninety-seven items were discussed at the Davison County Fairgrounds on Wednesday, and Davison County residents were only focused on one.

Several residents spoke out against a 1,000-foot setback proposed as a buffer between a person's home and a wind tower, many citing potentially diminished property value and possible health effects the towers could cause.

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While the Davison County Planning Commission didn't make a formal recommendation to send the ordinance to the County Commission on Wednesday, some residents asked the board to consider proposing a one-mile setback rather than the 1,000-foot setback being discussed.

"So with all due respect, I would suggest that you do a lot more research and come up with a more feasible ordinance than what you are proposing," said county resident Harvey Kelly.

Another resident, Jerry Wadleigh, suggested a two-mile setback would be more appropriate for a "rather densely populated area," but Planning and Zoning Administrator Jeff Bathke said his department conducted extensive studies of wind ordinances in similar jurisdictions to establish the proposal.

Bathke also noted that the county doesn't have any wind regulations on the books, so the proposals would add stipulations to the existing ordinance. And, Bathke said, a one-mile setback would basically bar a large-scale wind energy system for being constructed in county limits.

"So one mile literally zones them out of the county," Bathke said.

The ordinance proposal had at least one backer in Doug Greenway, who suggested the commission visit a wind farm before recommending the ordinance.

"If you have not done that, I think it's a little unfair for you to try to judge what should be an ordinance and what's a good one."

Greenway also cautioned the commission against recommending an ordinance that would be "too restrictive" for the county.

Approximately 50 residents who attended the meeting will now have to wait until 7 p.m. on April 4 when the Planning Commission next meets to learn whether the ordinance proposal will take the next step to be considered by the Davison County Commission. The next meeting will be held at the Davison County North Offices building on North Main Street.