

filed: October 21, 2015 • Iowa

Black Hawk County wind project withdrawn

Credit: By Tim Jamison | Waterloo Cedar Falls Courier | October 21, 2015 | wcfcourier.com ~~

DUNKERTON | A Des Moines-based energy company has withdrawn its plans to build a three-turbine wind farm northeast of Dunkerton.

Optimum Renewables, on behalf of Mason Wind LLC, notified Black Hawk County zoning officials Tuesday it was permanently withdrawing its request for a special permit to develop the turbines.

The project, which faced heavy opposition from surrounding property owners at several other locations in Black Hawk, Buchanan and Fayette counties, had been expected to be up for a public hearing at Tuesday night's county Planning and Zoning Commission meeting.

County Zoning Administrator Shane Graham said company representatives provided no reason for pulling the request. Phone calls and emails seeking comments from the company were not immediately returned.

Optimum Renewables was seeking to erect the 444-foot-tall towers on farm land about 1.25 miles northeast of Dunkerton, near the intersection of East Bennington and Wheeler roads.

A similar request to develop the project near the Black Hawk-Buchanan County line was rejected by the county Board of Adjustment on Aug. 25 after more than 100 residents voiced concern.

Opponents said the turbines would take farm land out of production, lower surrounding property values, hinder farming operations and kill birds and other wildlife. Some were concerned about human health impacts.

The company was rejected at two sites in Fayette County and a site in Buchanan County before trying to win approval in Black Hawk.