

## Livestock expansion approved

By Alexa Zoellner Union staff writer | Posted: Tuesday, June 30, 2015 9:35 am

JEFFERSON — The Jefferson County Board of Supervisors Planning and Zoning Committee has approved a Town of Hebron farm's request to increase its operation to accommodate 4,766 cattle.

The conditional-use permit to "allow expansion of an existing intensive ag operation for up to 4,766 animal units" on a total of 83.52 acres was approved during the panel's Monday meeting.

Katzman Farms Inc., located at W3223 Hoffman Road in the Town of Hebron, is zoned A-1 Exclusive Agricultural zone and the farm's previously approved conditional-use permit, which was obtained among much controversy in October 2014, allows it to operate with 2,630 cattle.

Robert Klotz, director of planning and zoning, administered the hearing. The committee members are Supervisors Amy Rinard, Don Reese, Steve Nass, Greg David and George Jaeckel, who abstained to prevent any potential conflicts of interest.

"Under the statute (ATCP 51), worksheets are completed and found to be complete by Land and Water Conservation and by the county," Klotz said. "We (the county board) aren't given much latitude other than to approve the operation subject to the conditions of the worksheets."

The expansion plan was highly opposed at a public hearing held June 18. Several citizens spoke against the plan with none speaking in favor of it.

After that hearing, Klotz explained the ATCP 51 statute further.

"It's called the livestock siting law for intensive ag operations and there's several worksheets that a farmer has to complete," he said.

Klotz also explained that the farmer either has to hire an engineer or go through training in order to show that they will be able to handle the manure output, at least in part through a nutrient-management plan, and that buildings are going to be set back certain distances.

"Basically what the state law did is they took the local control out of it and said, 'if (an applicant) completes the worksheets, and they're deemed complete by the Land and Water Conservation, then (the zoning committee has) no choice but to issue the conditional-use permit,'" Klotz stated.

The Katzman farm expansion includes the addition of one free-stall barn, the expansion of another free-stall barn, the remodeling of two of the existing barns, remodeling of the parlor and the addition of a feed storage area in order to meet the needs of the additional cattle on the facility, as well as a 16-foot-deep, round concrete waste-storage facility for liquid waste.

The Planning and Zoning Committee Monday also approved nine other rezoning requests.