

Planned Unit Development (P.U.D.) Review Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2026, 2:00 PM
460 S. Illinois St., Coal City, IL

Call to order and roll call

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 PM.

Present: Bob Koerner (Claypool Drainage District, Chairman); Doug Boresi (Braceville Township Supervisor); Chris Spencer (Coal City School District Superintendent); Mark Heinle (Village of Coal City Attorney); Darrell Olson (Village of Coal City Director of Public Works); Walt Mahaffay (Village of Coal City Planning and Zoning Board); Matt Fritz (Village of Coal City Administrator); Mike Imhof (Coal City Chief of Police); Kyle Watson (Coal City Building Official); Ed Boik (HR Green, Village Planning Reviewer); Gary Grunauer (Resident); Terry Halliday (Resident); Ryan Hansen (Chamlin & Associates, Village Engineer); Bill Stahler (Maine Township Drainage District); Nick Doerfler (Coal City Fire District). Absent: Alec Macdonald (Grundy County Economic Development Director).

Members that left during the meeting: Bill Stahler @4:20pm, Doug Boresi @4:35pm, Chris Spencer @5:05pm and Nick Doerfler @5:10pm.

Approval of September 1, 2026 meeting minutes

The Secretary noted that the minutes from the September 1, 2026 meeting were not yet prepared, as the necessary materials had not been received prior to the meeting. The minutes will be provided at the next meeting for adoption. The Secretary also noted that written comments received from a committee member would be included as an exhibit with those minutes once finalized. No action was required from the committee.

Applicant Presentation – Addressing Round #1 Review Comments

The Chair indicated the applicant presentation and the subsequent application review discussion items would be considered together. The floor was turned over to the applicant team, which included representatives from Burns & McDonald (engineering), Christopher Burke (stormwater and drainage design), in-house legal counsel, economic development staff, and external affairs.

Application Review Discussion

ComEd Utilization of Lot #1

The applicant's project manager provided an overview of the proposed ComEd transmission switchyard on Lot 1. Key details presented included:

- The switchyard will occupy approximately 30 acres and is designed to support future regional grid growth and reliability.
- A single weather-protected, single-story equipment enclosure of approximately 3,000 square feet will be located in the southwest corner of Lot 1.
- Approximately 10 static mass poles (approximately 86 feet tall) with overhead electrical lines are planned.

- Perimeter fencing will be 11 feet in height with an additional 1 foot of barbed wire, featuring approximately 75% opacity mesh screening in gray to blend with equipment.
- The switchyard contains no transformers; it is a pure switching facility designed to receive and redistribute transmission-level power.
- The fence line is set approximately 310 feet back from Reed Road, with stormwater detention and green space occupying the buffer between the road and the fence. This setback also serves a security function by maintaining line-of-sight from the road.
- Two dedicated ingress and egress points are required for the ComEd parcel per applicable physical security standards.

Bob Koerner asked about the status of ICC (Illinois Commerce Commission) approvals. ComEd's legal counsel clarified that it is ComEd's position that a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) is not required for this facility because the substation is adjacent to an existing transmission right-of-way and will be located on land ComEd will own — a statutory exemption. This places the project within the second of three regulatory scenarios outlined. Counsel confirmed that ComEd will acquire Lot 1 outright and will own the land, the switchyard, and all equipment therein as part of the bulk electric system.

Terry Halliday questioned whether rate payers would bear costs if Aligned did not meet its projected load commitments. ComEd's legal counsel explained that the Transmission Service Agreement (TSA) includes a letter of credit mechanism requiring Aligned to pay for the full amount of transmission revenue it committed to, regardless of actual usage. However, Terry Halliday noted that FERC's published order (page 3, item 7) raised concerns about whether this protection was sufficiently clear, and asked whether the TSA had been modified in response. Counsel stated that the TSA approved by FERC was not modified during the review process and that it is ComEd's position that the agreement does provide the required guarantee. The committee member requested a follow-up response addressing this specific FERC commentary. An applicant representative further clarified that FERC and ICC regulate different aspects — FERC governs transmission, while the ICC governs distribution and retail tariffs — and that ComEd is obligated to comply with both.

Terry Halliday asked about the hierarchy of authority among the TSA, FERC, and ICC in terms of consumer protection. Counsel responded that both FERC and the ICC are focused on affordability and customer protection, and ComEd must comply with regulations from both bodies.

On the question of landscape screening along Reed Road, the Chair noted the desire for a reasonably consistent aesthetic along Reed Road between the data center property and the ComEd parcel, and asked whether single-stem trees (which would not create climbing opportunities or obstruct visibility) could be incorporated into the frontage. The applicant's engineer noted that trees or shrubs over approximately 10–12 feet in height cannot be placed on ComEd property due to potential interference with future transmission lines, and that the detention basin area precludes plantings in that zone. The Chair acknowledged these constraints and suggested that a possible solution could involve soil grids or similar surface treatments to accommodate maintenance vehicle access for the Maine Township Drainage District, and that this should be addressed in the next plan submission.

The Maine Township Drainage District representative raised concerns about access to the existing drainage ditch for maintenance purposes, including potential complications from beaver activity near any proposed vegetation. The applicant acknowledged the concern and noted that any access agreement for ComEd property would need to be worked out separately between the parties.

Traffic Impact

The applicant's general contractor (Arco/Murray) and traffic consultant (Kimley-Horn) presented an overview of the construction phasing and traffic impact study.

The construction manager noted that peak construction activity is projected to occur approximately three years into the project timeline, with roughly 900 workers on-site simultaneously across three buildings and a peak of approximately 80 trucks per day. Construction traffic for truck deliveries is proposed to be restricted to Interstate 55 and Reed Road, with the applicant working with Grundy County to enforce routing through the road use agreement and vendor contracts. Construction worker arrival times are proposed to be staggered (e.g., 6:00 AM and 7:00 AM shifts) to reduce peak hour congestion. Locally sourced materials — asphalt, stone, and concrete — are being considered to reduce long-haul truck trips, though suppliers have not yet been finalized.

The traffic consultant explained that the study was prepared in accordance with IDOT guidelines, using traffic count data collected in May 2026. All study intersections currently operate acceptably. Two future scenarios were analyzed: peak construction and full operational buildout. Key findings and proposed improvements included:

- Reed Road and Broadway Street: Stop sign control is currently east-west on Reed. Initial analysis proposed inverting stop signs to north-south on Broadway. However, following coordination with Grundy County, a temporary traffic signal is now the preferred improvement at this location. The committee supported the signal approach, with the Police Chief noting that changing stop sign configurations without signalization would likely result in violations due to driver habit, and requesting that Coal City Police Department be included in planning discussions.
- Reed Road and Site Access: Turn lanes (left and right) will be installed on Reed Road at the primary site entrance, which is centrally located along the Reed Road frontage between Carbon Hill Road and Broadway Street. The driveway will operate under stop sign control with dedicated deceleration and acceleration lanes.
- Interstate 55 and Reed Road Interchange: Current stop-controlled diamond interchange configuration is projected to continue functioning acceptably with development traffic, given the staggered shift approach. The recommendation is to monitor conditions as construction ramps up.

Several committee members and the public raised substantive concerns regarding truck traffic management. Bill Stahler, a committee member, expressed skepticism about the traffic model's assumptions regarding the volume and routing of workers coming from Morris and other western communities. He argued that Jugtown Road would likely see significant unauthorized use, and that its substandard construction (described as approximately one-quarter inch of tar and chip over gravel and dirt) cannot accommodate increased traffic without taxpayer-funded repairs. He also noted that the study contained directional and road classification errors (e.g., labeling roads as east-west vs. north-south) that have since been acknowledged by the consultant as typographical errors.

Additional concerns were raised about the practical enforceability of truck routing restrictions. Multiple committee members, including Walt Mahaffay noted that without formal no-truck signage on Carbon Hill Road, Broadway, and Jugtown Road, police officers have no legal basis to stop compliant vehicles. The Police Chief confirmed that selective enforcement is not legally permissible, and that designated routing must be accompanied by official signage to allow enforcement. The applicant acknowledged these concerns and indicated that signage

requirements would be addressed through the road use agreement with Grundy County and incorporated into the construction traffic control plan.

Mr. Stahler also noted the presence of ongoing road use agreement discussions among Braceville Township, Maine Township, and Grundy County, and that Officer Clampett from the Grundy County Sheriff's Department has been participating. He indicated that large, clearly marked construction traffic signage — similar to what was deployed near the Buffalo solar project on DuPont Road — is contemplated as part of that agreement.

Additional traffic concerns raised included:

- The need to consider seasonal agricultural traffic during harvest and field preparation when modeling background traffic volumes.
- The potential impact of school bus routes on Carbon Hill Road, which serves Coal City schools and has a railroad crossing.
- Whether a construction checkpoint approximately 300 feet inside the Reed Road site access point would be sufficient to prevent queuing onto Reed Road during peak arrival periods.
- A request that the traffic study be revised to address fall seasonal counts (harvest equipment, full school session) as a supplement to the May 2026 counts.
- A committee member noted that the study's year references of 2037–2038 are analysis years (existing data plus 5 years per IDOT guidelines), not projected completion dates; peak construction is expected around 2032, with first-phase occupancy in 2033.

The Chair requested that a written chronological construction sequencing plan be included in the resubmission, clearly documenting the order in which site preparation activities (including staging areas, parking, and access road improvements) will be completed prior to vertical construction.

Regarding annexation and road jurisdiction, Matt Fritz confirmed that when Coal City annexes property, it annexes to the far side of adjacent roadways, meaning Carbon Hill Road (on the west side of the development) and Reed Road (on the north) are currently under Coal City jurisdiction. The Secretary clarified which segments are jointly managed with Grundy County.

Stormwater Management Plan & Environmental Impacts

The applicant's civil engineer from Kimley-Horn presented the three components of the stormwater management plan.

On-Site Stormwater Management: The site drains in two directions — north toward Reed Road and south toward an off-site ditch. Both drainage sheds contain detention basins designed to capture and release the 100-year, 24-hour storm event at or below the Will County Stormwater Ordinance allowable release rates, which represent a significant reduction compared to existing site runoff. Existing depressional and floodplain storage is being compensated for within the proposed detention basins.

Maine Township Ditch (North): The widening of Reed Road for turn lanes requires a minor realignment of the Maine Township drainage ditch to the south. The applicant is using this as an opportunity to enlarge the ditch cross-section, providing greater conveyance and storage capacity than exists today. The existing culverts at Carbon Hill Road and Reed Road are undersized and currently cause roadway overtopping during large storm events per the FEMA flood insurance study. The proposed upsized culverts will eliminate this overtopping and reduce base flood elevations upstream, improving safety for vehicles and emergency

responders. A FEMA Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) will be required and will be pursued. No regulatory increases in base flood elevations are anticipated upstream or downstream.

South Ditch: A smaller, non-regulatory waterway to the south of the site will have its existing floodplain storage compensated for within the on-site detention basins.

Maine Township Drainage District Bill Stahler confirmed that any modifications to the Maine drainage ditch will be subject to review by the District's engineer and will require Grundy County court approval, providing an independent technical check. He also noted that the downstream ditch system, which flows into Claypool Drainage and ultimately the Mazon River, was originally designed for agricultural drainage and may need capacity upgrades to accommodate the long-term volume increases associated with a development of this scale — extending beyond the Carbon Hill/Reed Road intersection that was the boundary of the applicant's formal analysis.

Bob Koerner of Claypool Drainage District raised several broader stormwater concerns, including: the need for IDNR permitting given the drainage area served by the Maine Claypool system; the question of who is acting as a proactive coordinator for the south mutual drainage watershed, which lacks a unified oversight body; and the routing of a Maine Township drainage tile that crosses Broadway and the UP railroad through the Hoffman property detention basin. He expressed concern that utility construction running parallel to the railroad could disturb this tile, and that these downstream and cross-boundary drainage relationships need to be formally documented and addressed. He indicated he would provide a written summary of these concerns to the Secretary for inclusion in the record.

The committee also discussed the applicant's floodplain management approach. Ryan Hansen noted that no vertical construction may occur in the floodplain until the FEMA LOMR is finalized, and confirmed the applicant is aware of this constraint, noting it requires adjustments to the construction sequencing plan.

On environmental matters, the applicant's environmental consultant reported:

- A wetland delineation was completed. The Maine Township drainage ditch is the only likely Army Corps of Engineers jurisdictional waterway. Several isolated, farmed, low-quality on-site wetlands will be impacted by the development.
- An IPAC report was submitted for threatened and endangered species. No suitable habitat for listed species was found on the largely farmed site, with the exception of two bat species. A bat survey will be conducted for a row of trees on-site if tree removal occurs before October 15 (the close of the roosting window).
- A State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) review returned no restrictions.

The Chair suggested that the proposed dry detention basins, planted with native seed mixes, represent an opportunity to highlight superior design by restoring habitat value, given that no natural habitat exists on the currently farmed site. The applicant shall include a long-term maintenance plan for native basin plantings, noting they can become unmanageable and create an aesthetic problem if not actively managed, particularly given the basins' prominent location along Reed Road.

The applicant confirmed that stormwater basins on Lot 2 will be owned and maintained by Aligned, and the basin on Lot 1 will be owned and maintained by ComEd. No village involvement in stormwater basin maintenance is contemplated.

Public Comment

The Chair opened the public comment period, noting a 30-minute total allocation and requesting speakers limit remarks to approximately 3 minutes each.

Don Vilt expressed concern about whether residents would face higher electricity bills as a result of the data center's power demands. ComEd representatives responded that Aligned's use of the transmission system is covered by the TSA letter of credit and that rate payers are not paying for Aligned's private infrastructure. Mr. Vilt also noted that one of the hottest summers on record strained the grid, expressed concern about potential brownouts, raised skepticism about truck routing enforcement, and stated he is opposed to the data center. He suggested that a working subcommittee be formed to resolve the numerous issues raised at the meeting rather than continuing large-group debate.

Tina Johnson (Will Road resident) questioned why the data center is not generating its own power, noting that PJM issued a recommendation in August for data centers to do so. She expressed concern about the relationship between BlackRock (an investor in Aligned) and utility companies, and argued that power rate increases linked to data center demand are well-documented. She also raised concerns about: traffic accidents at the 55/Reed Road interchange, the adequacy of the traffic study given actual driver behavior on local roads such as Will Road; emergency diversion routing if 55 is closed, weight-limited roads such as Gorman Road, the Claypool drainage system's capacity, historical flooding events in the Diamond area, the lack of sidewalks near schools on Carbon Hill Road, anticipated larger storm events, and the presence of historic coal mines beneath properties in the area. She also sought clarification on the endangered species findings, noting that the submitted reports referenced six potentially impacted species including bats and eagles.

Deborah Walters (Diamond resident) thanked the committee for the depth of its review, noting that many community members are unable to attend due to the 2:00 PM weekday meeting time. She echoed concerns about Reed Road traffic, requested that turn lanes and road improvements be completed before construction begins, and noted ongoing impacts to businesses on Carbon Hill Road. She expressed concern about the ability of the village to absorb the costs associated with the development — including traffic signals, road maintenance, additional police, and fire services — and urged the committee to continue scrutinizing the application closely.

Tom Crawford raised general concerns about costs to the village related to public safety infrastructure (fire stations, vehicles, police), the adequacy of local fire departments to respond to a large lithium battery fire, and the presence of surveyors near a neighboring property. The applicant's representative responded that those surveys were not associated with Aligned. Mr. Crawford also commented on traffic safety on Carbon Hill Road near schools.

Committee Action, If Any (Motions, Votes, Direction To Consultants)

Following the public comment period, the committee discussed the establishment of a small technical subcommittee to facilitate clarification of outstanding review comments with the applicant, as provided for under Section 10 of the adopted PUD review rules.

Bob Koerner raised concerns about the procedural basis and transparency of such a group, questioning whether it would constitute a form of negotiation with the applicant and whether it was adequately rooted in the adopted policy. The Chair clarified that the intent was solely to allow the applicant to receive clarification on the meaning and intent of the committee's comments — not to negotiate outcomes or formulate submissions — and that any such interactions must be documented in writing and reported back to the full committee.

After discussion, the committee agreed that the subcommittee should function in a receiving and clarifying capacity — responding to specific questions posed by the applicant regarding the committee's comments — rather than offering guidance or steering the applicant's

resubmission. It was agreed that the subcommittee's activities would be documented pursuant to Section 10.5 of the adopted rules and reported to the full committee at the next meeting.

The proposed four-member subcommittee, as recommended by the Secretary, would consist of: Review committee members Ryan Hansen, Walt Mahaffay, Matt Fritz and Ed Boik.

A motion was made by Committee Member Mark Heinle to establish a technical breakout group to conduct a more granular question-and-answer and clarification process as provided in Section 10 of the adopted PUD review rules, composed of the four members identified by the Secretary. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Terry Halliday. The motion carried 10–1, with 5 members absent.

Tentative scheduling for the next meeting

The committee discussed scheduling for the next meeting. The Chair noted that no additional expert testimony from the applicant is anticipated before the next session, and that a meeting cannot be productively scheduled until the applicant provides its written response to the committee's round-one comments. The applicant's project manager indicated that the internal target for submitting a response to comments is September 18, 2026. The Secretary noted that any remaining first-round review comments from committee members and specialty consultants (including HR Green's noise and traffic reviews and the Sikich review of the Mangum report) would be provided to the applicant by Tuesday of the following week. The scheduling of the next full committee meeting was deferred pending receipt of the applicant's resubmission.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Committee Member Mark Heinle and seconded by Committee Member Walt Mahaffay. The motion carried by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned.


Matt Fritz, Recording Secretary