

**Enrolled Memorandum of the Meeting
Data Center Advisory Committee
Wednesday, November 21, 2024**

The Data Center Advisory Committee met on **Thursday, November 21, 2024**, at 6:00 P.M. in the Town Council study chambers, 7820 Broadway Avenue, Merrillville, Indiana. 46410

Attendance: Councilor Rick Bella, Town of Merrillville; Tim Fortier; Curt Hildebrand; Randy Palmateer, NWI Building Trades Council; Dan Brown, Merrillville Building Inspector; Joseph Pete, The TIMES of NWI; Stephen Muenstermann; and Tim Ramm, Province Group.

Content Manager/Media Officer Chas Reilly was present and memorialized the proceedings.

General Substance of Matters Discussed

1. **Province Group Proposal.** Mr. Tim Ramm offered an overview of the data center development his company proposes on 124 acres near Colorado Street and Harms Road. There could be as many as four buildings that are about 250,000 square feet each. Mr. Ramm explained that the Province Group has over 32 years of experience in this field. The company has an established working relationship with NIPSCO, and Province is seeking approval from the utility to supply power for the proposed data center development. NIPSCO has advised Province that a letter of support from the Town of Merrillville is necessary before the utility would complete a power study.

Councilor Rick Bella explained that in addition to NIPSCO approval, special exception approval from the Town of Merrillville would also be required for the proposed project. Mr. Randy Palmateer indicated that a project labor agreement would be necessary if any tax incentives were sought for the project.

Mr. Ramm explained the site selection process Province uses for data centers. He said the company focuses on areas away from residential properties, and the 124-acre site fits that criterion.

Access to the proposed data center was discussed. Mr. Ramm said the preference is to have access on Colorado Street. If that can't happen, access would be on Harms Road.

Mr. Ramm explained the benefits of data centers. He described data centers as an "economic development powerhouse" because they can provide a significant property tax resources with low impact on community services. Mr. Ramm estimated the project could offer a \$500 million investment in the construction of the buildings and create over 100 jobs.

There was discussion about the timeline for the development. Mr. Ramm said there is a purchase agreement in place to secure the land for the development. He indicated the NIPSCO power study could move slowly, and it could be two years out. Mr. Ramm said there is already interest from potential users, but nothing can move forward until all approvals are secured. Mr. Ramm said more design work for the proposed development will take place as more support is secured.

There was general discussion about the proposed development, including the cooling methods that would be used for the data center buildings. Mr. Ramm said it would be dependent on the user, but water cooling isn't in the plan.

During the discussion, there was a suggestion that a letter of support in the committee's name be drafted and sent to NIPSCO. There was no objection to this, and members agreed a data center development appears to be a good fit for the 124-acre site.

There being no further business necessary or desired to be discussed by the Data Center Advisory Committee of the Town of Merrillville, the regular meeting of the Committee on **Thursday, November 21, 2024**, was adjourned by the Town Council President at 6:55 p.m.

Chas Reilly
Content Manager/Media Officer

Approved by the proper body at its meeting of _____, 2024.

**Town Council of the Town of Merrillville,
Lake County, Indiana**

Rick Bella, President

Attest:

Eric O. January, C.P.A.
Merrillville Town Clerk-Treasurer