

Most sign off on enterprise zone

Application to be delivered to Springfield next week

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DeKALB – In less than a week, Craig Coil will drive to Springfield to hand-deliver a copy of DeKalb County’s enterprise zone application.

It’s a little closer to the Dec. 31 deadline than Coil, the county’s consultant on the [enterprise zone application](#), would have liked.

But it’s the timeline he had to work with after the application hit a few roadblocks.

“We had a couple little delays,” Coil said. “At the end of the day, what’s important is we get the application in on time.”

Sycamore and DeKalb city officials [delayed votes](#) on the intergovernmental agreement between seven local municipalities that lays out the increased state and local incentives available in areas around DeKalb County to attract investment, development and job creation.

DeKalb Ward 3 Alderman Kristen Lash and District 7 County Board member Misty Haji-Sheikh also raised concerns about Northern Illinois University’s Holmes Student Center being included on the map as a place a private commercial developer could receive incentives.

But all six cities and villages, as well as the county, eventually approved the agreement and map, County Administrator Gary Hanson said.

In fact, the County Board approved it twice – the second time was on Dec. 17 after DeKalb officials requested changes to the language.

DeKalb School District 428 officials tailored an agreement that will limit the school district’s involvement to five years, as opposed to at least 15 and up to 25 years.

Board President Tracy Williams said although board members want the district to be part of helping the industrial tax base grow, they don’t want a long-term committment because of uncertainty in state funding.

“We really don’t know what’s going to come out of Springfield,” Williams said, “We did this in a way we could participate, participate fully, participate officially, but also not be obligated to something for the next 20 years we may not be able to live up to.”

Meanwhile, board members for the DeKalb Park District voted not to be part of the enterprise zone, meaning businesses that locate in DeKalb won’t receive a tax break from the park district.

In Sycamore and Sandwich, school board members decided not to be part of the enterprise zone.

“We would have preferred to have everybody,” Hanson said. “But that fact that we have everyone we have is a really good sign.”