

Judge clears way for Waco hog-confinement construction

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Plans for a hog-confinement operation south of Waco got a green light from York County District Court Judge Alan Gless.

Gless weighed in after neighbors claimed the York County Board of Adjustments made the wrong call in their dispute with County Zoning Administrator Orval Stahr over the building permit for an operation known as West Blue Pork.

The opponents, who organized as the Old 76 Group, said there should have been a hearing on the matter before the building permit was issued, because a pork complex big enough to accommodate 500 sows and their litters hit the threshold for a hearing.

That would have given critics an opportunity to raise such concerns as odor, dust and the potential for lost property value on their homes.

Gless said a hearing wasn't necessary under county zoning regulations.

Steve Mossman, Lincoln-based attorney for about a dozen investors in the pork venture, said he knew of no other issues standing in the way of construction about 3 miles south of Interstate 80.

"We're glad to get the district court behind us," Mossman said, "and I know West Blue is looking forward to being good neighbors with all their neighbors, including those that were the petitioners."

Greg Barton, attorney for the Old 76 Group, and also of Lincoln, was not immediately available for comment.

Marty Rousseau, a member of Old 76, said there were no other plans for blocking construction.

"The bottom line is we have to leave it where it is for now," Rousseau said, "and work on zoning — and see that this doesn't happen again."

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