

Patrick County Planning Commission

Minutes of January 17, 2023

Present: Larry Cowley, Chairman, Kurt Bozenmayer, Vice-Chairman, David Lusk, Richard Hazelwood and Barbara Jo Newton; Jane Fulk and Cynthia Cowley, Citizens at Large members; Doug Perry, Board of Supervisor Liaison

Also Present: Teresa G. McCormick, Clerk, Jason Brown, Patrick County Building Official and Jim Best

Approval of the agenda and minutes.

Jane Fulk made a motion to approve the agenda with the addendum of adding electing officers to the Planning Commission; seconded by Kurt Bozenmayer and carried unanimously by all voting members present.

Kurt Bozenmayer made a motion to approve the November 15, 2022 minutes and work session as presented; seconded by Cynthia Cowley and carried unanimously by all voting members present.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

None discussed

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Jane Fulk made a motion to re-elect Larry Cowley as Chairman for the year 2023; seconded by David Lusk and carried unanimously by all voting members present.

Jane Fulk made a motion to re-elect Kurt Bozenmayer as Vice-Chairman for the year 2023; seconded by David Lusk and carried unanimously by all voting members present.

Jason Brown, Patrick County Building Official has concerns regarding the Solar Farms Ordinance.

Jason Brown stated some of the batteries used at the solar farms can be the size of a shipping container. There is a concern if one of the batteries were to catch on fire could cause the others to catch on fire. Jason Brown suggested making an addendum to the ordinance for batteries individually stored or having a fire wall between each battery.

Larry Cowley stated amending the ordinance we need to come up with a provision having everything pertaining to the solar farms to have an environmentalist or company for safety to address these issues.

Larry Cowley stated we can specify that the County appoints who the planning commission wants to assess it and not the company that is building the solar farm will pay for all expenses. The environmentalist or engineer will do an assessment on dangerous batteries, leakage, fire and

bad elements panels for environmentally and safety wise. The environmentalist or engineer will assess and will be liable before giving a stamp approval before granting a permit.

Barbara Jo Newton stated we need to pay attention as to how other counties and states are handling these issues.

Jason Brown stated there needs to be a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) party to do the inspections. The solar company will pay for a company, engineer and/or architect to do a third-party inspection.

Larry Cowley stated we could hire Clerk of the Works to work under the third party to do the inspections. Compensation paid by the company doing the work and not by the County.

Jason Brown stated whoever is the 3<sup>rd</sup> party will have to send my department their credentials for approval.

Larry Cowley will get in touch with the County attorney to discuss amending the Solar Farm Ordinance for Clerk of the Works.

Jason Brown stated the Cadmium Telluride is a heavy metal in the solar panels can cause contamination in the land and water. Several localities have banned this type panel in their ordinance. There is a silicone type being used in panels that is less hazardous.

Jim Best citizen of the County showed a presentation pertaining to a company Fairystone Solar, LLC aka Energix having violations against them could be coming to Patrick County.

Jim Best stated the solar farms power will not benefit the County, the power generated will benefit the Eastern Hub-Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland.(To listen to entire presentation see Teresa McCormick)

Jane Fulk made a motion to close the meeting; seconded by David Lusk and carried unanimously by all voting members present.

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Larry Cowley, Chairman

The next Planning Commission sub-committee work session at 4 p.m. and regular business meeting 6 p.m. scheduled February 21, 2023

