

ALAMANCE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, June 11, 2020
7:00 p.m., -Virtual

Members Present

Ray Cobb
Gene Brooks
Andrea Cheek
Lee Isley
Bill Poe
Ashley Harris
Vaughn Willoughby
David Spruill
Danielle Walker
Debra Hyder
Eric McPherson
Amy Galey

Members Absent

Dennis Arthur Hall
David Wyatt

Staff Present

Tonya Caddle, *Planning Director*
Taylor Perschau, *Planner II*
Ben Pierce, *Assistant County Attorney*
Sherry Hook, *Assistant County manager*

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Cobb called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Mr. Cobb took roll.

3. Approval of Planning Board Minutes

February 13, 2020: Board voted to approve February 13, 2020 minutes.

Motion: Mr. Willoughby

2nd: Ms. Harris

Vote: Unanimous

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS*

Mr. Chris Jones representing Carolina solar energy submitted to the Board regarding the potential Solar Farm ordinance.

Great job running these remote sub-committee meetings, we appreciate your initiative in keeping everything running so smoothly despite circumstances. Since you posted the most recent draft ordinance on June 2nd we have reviewed and shared with our legal council. We

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Mission: The Mission of the Alamance County Planning Board is to respond to needs of its citizens by providing leadership and guidance for the comprehensive, thoughtful, and orderly growth and development of our land based upon respect for our rich history, culture, and fairness to our citizens.

have a few concerns that we would like to address in the next meeting. Apologies for getting these notes to you last minute!

- Section 3: is there an option for virtual meetings due to COVID?
- In North Carolina, it is unusual for a permit like this to have an expiration period or require renewal. Alamance County has the opportunity to review whether a project is in compliance with a permit (if there is a complaint or complaints) and revoke an issued permit if the permit holder is not in compliance. However, a renewal every 3 years opens a long-term project like this to risk which may be challenging to finance. Is there an opportunity to remove this language and rely on the fact that the permit holder must remain in compliance with the issued permit?
- We are concerned about the permit not being final until the Post-Construction As-Built construction plan submission and review. We will gladly provide a Post-Construction Planset for the county records but we need for the permit to be final before starting construction. A project cannot gather financing before getting a final permit.
- It is not typical for a landowner to sign a decommissioning plan. Typically we have needed to have our landowners sign permit applications but not the decommissioning plan. Is this necessary?
- Page 5, footnotes 12 and 13 are not shown on the document. Should those references be deleted?
- Appendix G refers to a Special Use Permit at the bottom of the page. Is this relevant?

BOARD/COMMISSIONER RESPONSES

The Board responded with a discussion about the items being reviewed at the subcommittee level for a draft of the recommendations after those items are considered.

5. NEW BUSINESS

1. Solar Energy System Ordinance Draft discussion

The Board discussed the draft ordinance prepared by the subcommittee. Mr. Gene Brooks lead the discussion to go through the ordinance in detail for the Board. Items that were discussed are:

- Having a public hearing is a good thing
- Should the access road be allowed in the operations setbacks
- The landscaping screening is more important than the setback to help with nuisance
- Language in the ordinance should include the maintenance of the landscaping- language provided in section 6

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- Discussion from the subcommittee confirmation that the committee intended a 50' setback and added 25' for an access road to increase the setback to 75'
- Discussion to add Mr. Vaughn Willoughby to the next subcommittee meeting for discussion on landscaping options.
- To keep a variance option to provide some availability for flexibility
- Should the decommissioning report include the land owner signature

2. OLD BUSINESS

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS/DISCUSSION

Staff announced the Virtual public workshop for the Land Development Plan update is scheduled for June 30, 2020 at 6pm. Staff let the Board know that this is to move the project forward even though we can't have in person meetings and will be on Facebook live to allow the public to comment and interact with the presentation.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:10.
Motion: Mr. Brooks
Second: Ms. Cheek
Vote: Unanimous

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