

MINUTES
PAGE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
July 28, 2020

THIS MEETING WAS ACCESSIBLE VIA ZOOM (AUDIO ONLY).

Members Present

Bernie Miller, Chairman, District 1
Donnie Middleton, District 2
Keith Weakley, District 3,
Gary Huffman, District 4
Jonathan Comer, District 5

Catherine Grech, District 1
Steve Atkins, District 2
James Holsinger, Secretary, District 4
William Turner, Vice Chairman, District 5

Members Absent

Jared Burner, District 3

Staff Present

Tracy Clatterbuck
Kelly Butler

Call to Order

Chairman Miller called the July 28, 2020 Page County Planning Commission Work Session to order in the Board of Supervisors Room located at the Page County Government Center, 103 S Court Street, Luray, Virginia at 7:05 p.m. The call to order was followed by *The Pledge of Allegiance* and a *Moment of Silence*.

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Comer made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Middleton. The motion passed unanimously 9-0.

New Business

A. Presentation from the Berkley Group, LLC regarding the draft solar regulations

Rebecca Cobb & Melissa Scott from the Berkley Group, LLC gave a presentation regarding Utility Scale Solar and how it relates to Page County. Please see the "Utility Scale Solar" presentation for more detail about each item discussed. Ms. Cobb discussed the solar boom and why it is happening. She discussed the clean energy demand in Virginia. Things to consider would be impact and location (see presentation). She discussed size considerations. Ms. Cobb pointed out that the rough rule of thumb is 10 acres is needed per megawatt. She stated that our locality is getting there in regards to "being ready." Solar is addressed in the new comprehensive plan. Other pieces of the puzzle are the zoning ordinance and special use permit conditions. Ms. Cobb outlined the general recommendations made by the Berkley Group (see presentation for additional detail): adding definitions for the different types of solar facilities, the zoning districts where the different types of solar facilities can be located, the application process and site plan requirements. Minimum development standards must be incorporated into the ordinance based on what works best for the locality (see presentation). Ms. Cobb discussed location standards that have been suggested for the county: minimum and maximum acreage; acreage coverage; avoiding planning areas; avoiding preserve forest resources; avoiding Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance; distance from towns, primary and secondary service areas; distance from another existing or permitted utility-scale solar facility; distance from electric transmission lines; distance from residences, historic, cultural, recreational, or environmentally-sensitive areas, and scenic view sheds. An example site was shown incorporating minimum development standards (see presentation) to give a better idea of what a site will look like. Ms. Cobb discussed other standards: minimum setback requirements, site slope requirements, fencing requirements and wildlife corridors.

Ms. Cobb next discussed decommissioning. She stated that the county should not accept salvage value. If you feel like you have to, only consider a portion of a salvage value because it is unpredictable and there are upfront costs to decommissioning. The county should consult the county attorney on forms of security. Ms. Cobb reviewed the minor edits suggested by the commission. Legislative changes were discussed including Machinery & Tools tax changes, negotiating siting agreements in areas eligible as federal opportunity zones, and negotiating proffers. Ms. Cobb also discussed storage changes and requirements. The next steps are to incorporate suggested edits, review a final draft, schedule and hold public hearings and adopt into the zoning ordinance. Ms. Cobb asked questions of the commission (see presentation). Minor edits [73 (f), (j), (l), 75 (r), legislative change and storage] were asked to be incorporated into a draft for review, as well as medium-scale solar adjustments [72 (b)] and definitions, farmland limits [75 (a) 5], and switchyards and substations [75 (c)]. No change to the visual impact analysis item [73 (m)]. Graded surface area [75 (e)] edit was discussed and it was agreed to take out the red (see presentation). Max acreage was discussed. A megawatt limit was considered as a condition and was decided against by a majority. Mr. Weakley suggested that maps be generated by GIS to incorporate changes to limitations that were made so the commission could see what available areas there are for potential sites. The max acreage discussion will be picked back up at the next meeting where the solar ordinance is on the agenda. Ms. Cobb restated the next steps are to incorporate suggested edits, review a final draft, schedule and hold public hearings and adopt into the zoning ordinance.

B. Adoption of Minutes- June 23, 2020 and July 7, 2020

Mr. Weakley made a motion to adopt the above listed minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Middleton. The motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

None

Chairman's Report

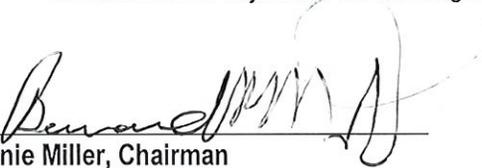
None

Clerk's Report

None

Adjourn

Chairman Miller adjourned the meeting at 8:52 p.m.


Bernie Miller, Chairman


Jamie Holsinger, Secretary