

**Planning and Zoning Board
Foxfire Village Administration Office
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, February 19, 2019 at 3:00 P.M.**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mary Gilroy at 3:00 P.M.

Roll Call: Roll call was taken by Beckie Pahner.

Present: Mary Gilroy, Tom McClellan, Janice Gregorich, and Beckie Pahner

Guests: Strata Solar Representatives; Kris Blanco, Jeremy Spaet, Sam Judd, Chelsea Woodtin, Katie Parker and Appraiser Rich Kirkland from Kirkland Appraisals.

Reading and Approval of Minutes:

- Motion to approve the regular meeting notes of January 15, 2019 was made by Tom McClellan, with the change of adding that the board met at the solar site with Strata representatives prior to the meeting. The motion was seconded by Janice Gregorich, and unanimously approved by all.

Old Business:

- There was discussion with Strata Solar about the Solar Farm site. Tom McClellan raised the question as to whether a berm could be added to the front of Hoffman Road. Katie responded that 2 staggered rows of broad leaf evergreen shrubs with minimum 6' height would provide a visual barrier from seeing the solar panels. Janice Gregorich then suggested different types of broad leaf evergreen shrubs for their consideration. Janice Gregorich raised several questions: the effect of the solar farm on adjacent property values, questions about the decommission process, and the financial state of the LLC in charge of the decommission process. Jeremy Spaet responded that generally the value of the salvageable materials at the time of decommission outweigh the cost of decommission. He commented that for the past ten years he has evaluated 500 some solar farms in 15 states and over 90% had agricultural and residential adjacent properties, and by using comparables and matched pairs, he found no difference in property values where the distance from the solar farm was as little as 125 ft. He mentioned that the closest home to this project is 3975 ft. He said his evaluations consider factors such as: noise, odor, traffic, and appearance, appearance being the hardest to measure, but with the solar panels not being easily seen from the road, there may be no impact to adjacent property values.
- The board looked at Sec 8.1. Various comments were expressed by Tom McClellan and Janice Gregorich regarding compliance to #3, #4 and #6. Rich Spaet responded that he did not feel the solar farm would impact the general welfare, comfort, and safety, and he commented that he did not feel the solar farm would impact adjacent property values.
- Beckie Pahner made a motion to approve the CUP for the Gladstone Farm Solar Generation Facility, Utility Scale, proposed on Hoffman Road. Mary Gilroy seconded the motion, and two board members; Janice Gregorich and Thomas McClellan voted against the approval based on the following: The proposed facility did not comply with the following points of section 8.1:

4 – That the conditional use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for purposes already permitted under terms of this ordinance and will not diminish nor impair property values within the neighborhood.

5- That the establishment of the Use Permitted with Conditions will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.

6- That the exterior architectural features and functional plan of the proposed structure will not be so at variance with the structures already constructed or in the course of construction in the immediate neighborhood or the character of the applicable district as to cause a substantial depreciation of the property values within the neighborhood.

Further comments and objections came from Janice Gregorich and Tom McClellan as follows:

1) We believe that this facility will diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood. Janice Gregorich asked numerous residents of Foxfire if they would purchase a home or property near or adjacent to a solar farm and 100% stated that they definitely would not.

a. We are **not certain** this facility will be invisible from Hoffman Road. If visible, we believe property values will be impaired.

b. Janice Gregorich asked all the people present at the meeting if they lived next to a solar farm and not one person did. Please note that the people present were Strata Solar employees and a real estate appraiser representing Strata Solar.

c. The Strata Solar real estate appraiser present at the meeting indicated that there is no evidence that solar farms decrease property values. He stated that many people prefer a solar facility neighbor because they are guaranteed that hundreds of homes will not be built in the area. He presented numerous data supporting his claims but no recent data was supplied; most home and property sales information was between 2012 and 2015. The real estate appraiser stated that he recently moved from one rural neighborhood to avoid a large residential development but, when asked, he stated that he did not relocate next to or near a solar facility.

2. Their second objection to approving the CUP related to the Decommissioning Plan.

a. We do not believe Gladstone Farm, LLC has the financial ability to insure or guarantee the cost of decommissioning. As an LLC, a **Member** of the LLC has not signed the agreement nor has a **Member** of the LLC signed a personal financial guarantee for the Decommissioning Plan. All these points are standard operating documents when dealing with LLC's.

The board then discussed Residential Square Footage.

New Business: The board discussed detached guest quarters for RS-30 and RS-40 zoning.

Adjournment:

- A motion to adjourn was made by Beckie Pahner, and seconded by Mary Gilroy, and unanimously approved by all.
- The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 P.M.

Submitted by,



Beckie Pahner