

XENIA TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION MEETING

August 24, 2021

THESE MINUTES ARE A SUMMARY OF THE EVENTS OF THE MEETING AND ARE NOT A WORD FOR WORD ACCOUNT OF THE DISCUSSIONS WHICH TOOK PLACE.

The Xenia Township Zoning Commission held a meeting on August 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Xenia Township Office, 8 Brush Row Road, Xenia, OH 45385; this meeting was advertised on the Xenia Township website within 24 hours of scheduling the meeting.

Jeffrey Zweber called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attendees: Jeffrey Zweber, Roy Colbrunn, Virgil Ferguson, Alan King and Alan Stock. Two guests, Mark Bonfas, Hull and Associates, a Consultant for Samsung, and Chris Simmons, a Land Manager for Samsung.

The minutes from the July 27, 2021 Zoning Commission meeting were read for additions or corrections. Mr. Colbrunn moved to approve the minutes from the July 27, 2021 meeting. Mr. King seconded the motion. All voted aye, MOTION PASSED.

The meeting began with a brief discussion of topics for the upcoming Combined Board meeting.

The text from Solar Energy System, Small Solar Energy System, and Utility Scale Solar Energy System was read and reworded to read:

Solar Energy System: Any system or group of components designed to produce power from the sun and affixed to real property, except self-contained, single purpose components, such as signage lighting panels. No Solar Energy System shall be erected, moved, added to, or structurally altered without an approved Zoning Permit. Components of the Solar Energy System must comply with the

components of the Flood Plain Overlay and the Well Field Protection Overlay if situated in either of the Districts.

There was then a recap of the Districts that allow Utility Scale Energy Systems with either a Conditional or Permitted Use.

Section 515 from the Zoning Resolution, Screening was read. It was reworded to now read.

Screening shall be required for non-residential buildings, structures or land use on a lot that adjoins, or faces any residential area. Screening shall also be required for all Utility Scale, Solar Energy Systems.

The next topic was regarding setbacks for Solar Panels. It was decided that the panels should be treated as accessory structures or as non-residential primary structures and that all components of the structure shall meet the setback regulations. It was then agreed that Utility Scale Solar should be treated as a non-residential primary structure. Section 404 – Schedule of Yard and Lot Requirements was then looked at. Section 504 – Accessory Building was then read and a brief discussion of existing Small Scale Panels placements ensued.

The discussion then turned to screening for solar panels, when and where screening would be needed. It was decided that natural screening should be used if available. It was then decided that screening shall be used on lands with solar panels even if the land around them is undeveloped.

It was then decided to add a line to the definition of Utility Scale Solar Energy to read:

Utility Scale Solar Energy System: Any solar energy system that is designed and intended to supply energy primarily into a utility grid, whether or not it also supplies energy for use on the parcel of land for which it is located. The system and all components shall be treated as a non-residential primary structure.

The discussion turned to updating the Zoning Resolution to include the Conditional Use of Utility Scale Solar Energy System to A, IG, B-3, M-1, and M-2, and to add it as a Permitted Use to M-3.

The next topic of discussion was the application for Utility Scale Solar Energy System and what information would be needed to aide in the process of

approving the Conditional Use request with the Board of Zoning Appeals. The discussion then turned to the process of a Board of Zoning Appeals Hearing.

The meeting then opened to guest comments.

Mark Bonfas, Hull and Associates, a Consultant for Samsung, asked if the Zoning Commission would take input from interested parties for the Zoning Resolution?

The Zoning Commission answered that they would take input for the Zoning Resolution.

Mr. Bonfas then stated that he could help provide descriptions to help write the Resolution. He further stated that he was under the impression that screening was decided by Zones and not by the structure. He gave examples of existing solar panels and the screening that has been done for them. Mr. Bonfas then asked for a copy of the Zoning Resolution and a Zoning Map.

The Zoning Commission asked Mr. Bonfas about decommissioning plans for solar panels. Mr. Bonfas stated that the life span for panels are 30-40 years. He stated that the intent is to return the land back to Agricultural land after this time. He further stated that an engineering firm would draw up a plan to show this and that most of the panels and components are recyclable.

Chris Simmons, a Land Manager for Samsung, stated that Samsung only wants to benefit the communities that solar panels are placed in.

The Zoning Commission asked about bonds for the panels, they specifically asked what would happen to the bond if Samsung sold the panel to another company, if the bond would stay with the township?

Mr. Simmons answered that the term of this request is obligating, and that should not be an issue to keep the original bond even if Samsung would sell the panels. He further stated that Samsung wants to revert land back to Agricultural land when the panels life is over and that the Township will hold the bond no matter who owns the panels.

Mr. Bonfas stated that solar panels are easier to screen than wind turbines, he stated that the panels fit into the landscape and are not a permanent fixture. The discussion turned to the different types of panels available.

The Zoning Commission asked cleaning the panels and noise emission. Mr. Bonfas stated that the rain would do most of the cleaning of the panels and that there is no noise and only lighting in certain areas.

The Zoning Commission asked about electrocution danger. Mr. Bonfas answered that the danger is no higher than if someone jumped a fence into an existing power substation. He further stated that there will be signage posted to warn of the danger and that there are no exposed conductors on the panels.

The Zoning Commission asked if there is annual training for the fire department Mr. Bonfas state that there is not training, but that was a good idea to do so. He further stated that there should be an action plan in place, and that the panels do not consist of heavy metals.

The Zoning Commission asked what the time line is for construction of a panel. Mr. Bonfas stated that construction was anywhere from one year to 18 months.

There was then a brief discussion of other solar panel projects within Ohio.

Mr. Colbrunn moved to adjourn; Mr. King seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

ATTEST:

Alan D. Stock, Zoning Inspector