

The Greensville County Planning Commission meeting was held Tuesday, December 11, 2018, 6:00 P.M., at the Greensville County Government Center, 1781 Greensville County Circle, Emporia, Virginia.

PRESENT

Walter Robinson, Vice-Chairman
Lofton Allen
Stephen Allen
Joe Antorn, Jr.
William Cain
Annie Odom
Dianne Barnes-Rhoades
Jeff Robinson
Kim Wiley

ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Darren Coffey
Linwood E. Pope, Jr.
Treva Pernell

OTHERS PRESENT

Denise Nelson
David Stoner

Vice-Chairman Robinson called the meeting of Tuesday, December 11, 2018 to order. Mr. Robinson stated that the Commission would start the meeting with prayer. He called on Commissioner Jeff Robinson to offer prayer.

Mr. Lin Pope welcomed new members, Mr. William Cain and Ms. Kim Wiley, to the Commission. Mr. Pope, the secretary, called the roll. All were in attendance.

In Re: APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Vice-Chairman Robinson entertained a motion for approval of the agenda. Mr. Pope requested that an item be added under Other Matters, Item B-Comp Plan and Zoning Ordinance Review and Amendments regarding Solar Projects. Commissioner Jeff Robinson made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Rhoades, with all voting aye, motion carried.

In Re: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Commissioner Jeff Robinson stated that the minutes of at the last meeting needed clarification, his intention was to give SP-5-17/Sedrick Miles 30 days to start the process for engineered drawings. Mr. Pope stated that Mr. Miles had started the process.

Vice-Chairman Robinson entertained a motion to approve the minutes of November 13, 2018, with the correction as discussed. Commissioner Jeff Robinson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Stephen Allen, with all voting aye, motion carried.

Vice-Chairman Robinson entertained a motion to go into Public Hearing. Commissioner Stephen Allen made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Jeff Robinson, with all voting aye, to go into Public Hearing.

In Re: PUBLIC HEARING

ZTA-4-18 – Marsha Daniel/Mark Gainey

Mr. Pope stated Marsha Daniel and Mark Gainey were requesting that the Planning Commission and the Greenville County Board of Supervisors look at the Permitted Use Table 4.1 of the County Zoning Ordinance and add a permitted use, a wedding or event venue within a barn or building. He stated that staff is recommending approval, with conditions, of this request with the issuance of a Special Use Permit within an agricultural district only.

Vice-Chairman Robinson asked if there were any other questions or comments. Being none, he asked for a motion to go back into regular session.

Commissioner Lofton Allen made a motion, Commissioner Jeff Robinson seconded, motion carried to return to regular session.

In Re: REGULAR SESSION

Vice-Chairman Robinson entertained a motion concerning ZTA-4-18-Marsha Daniel/Mark Gainey.

Commissioner Stephen Allen made a motion to approve the request to change Table 4.1 of the Zoning Ordinance to include weddings or event venues in a barn/building, seconded by Commissioner Jeff Robinson, with all voting aye, motion carried.

In Re: OTHER MATTERS

Darren Coffey addressed the Commission concerning Utility Scale Solar. It is classified as a public utility and under State Code section 15.2-2232 it states that this use must be in accord with the County's Comprehensive Plan. Once it is found to be in accord, then a Special Use Permit will be applied for. If the Commission does not approve, then the applicant can appeal to the Greenville County Board of Supervisors.

Denise Nelson, with the Berkley Group, addressed the Commission and described the 2232 Review of the SP2232-3-18 Fountain Creek Solar project. She described three key points to consider. The proposed site is in the same vicinity as the previously approved Meherrin Solar project and approximately four miles from the approved Tradewind Energy project site. She stated that it includes 2.2 miles of transmission line affecting six additional parcels. She further stated that the two parcels where the solar panels will be placed, while zoned agricultural, half the land is forested. She state that in this review staff has analyzed Comprehensive Plan elements and the proposed project meets some but not all of the Comprehensive Plan's land use and renewable energy goals, objectives and strategies. Ms. Nelson stated that based on the information review for this report, staff finds that this project may not be substantially in accord with the Greenville County Comprehensive Plan. She stated that the Commission should document their decision to approve, deny or defer the request.

Commissioner Cain suggested that it may be unwise to add another solar project to the county until results from the two previously approved projects have been implemented.

David Stoner, representing Fountain Creek Solar, addressed the Commission. He stated that there are benefits to the County in job creation, economic activity, and tax revenue. He also stated that he felt this project is in accord with the Comprehensive Plan. He further stated that this Fountain Creek Solar project is extremely well screened and sited in terms that 86% of the perimeter is forested and will remain so. He stated that this project, of all that have been discussed, is the least impactful in terms of visual impact.

Commissioner Cain stated that the tax revenue to the County would decrease each year.

Commissioner Antorn stated that he felt the Commission needed to proceed with caution. He stated that these projects are so new to the County that small steps need to be taken.

Mr. Pope explained that the 2232 Review Process is solely a decision made by the Planning Commission. He stated that if the request is denied, then the applicant can appeal to the Greenville County Board of Supervisors.

Commissioner Robinson stated that, of all the solar projects presented to the Commission, this is the most comfortable because it is so remote. He stated that he would like to see this request approved. He also stated that he is looking forward to discussing the wording in the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Wiley stated that she thought this proposed project was a good one and would suggest that this request be approved. She stated that she looked forward to reviewing the Comprehensive Plan.

Vice-Chairman Robinson entertained a motion on SP2232-3-18 Fountain Creek Solar.

Commissioner Jeff Robinson made a motion that the Fountain Creek Solar, LLC's proposed 80-megawatt photovoltaic solar energy facility as described in 2232 Review application 2232-3-18, is substantially in accord with the Greenville County Comprehensive Plan or parts thereof for the following reasons:

1. The Comprehensive Plan notes an interest in the development of environmental friendly energy.
2. The Comprehensive Plan states that so long as a solar energy facility is not detrimental to the surrounding area, solar energy facilities are encouraged in agricultural zoned districts.
3. The proposed project involves only a small part of the total agricultural land in the County and has proposed setbacks and buffers which, if adequate in scope and required in the Special Use Permit, could afford protection for adjacent properties.

Commissioner Wiley seconded, vote was taken with the following results:

AYE

Commissioner Walter Robinson
Commissioner Lofton Allen
Commissioner Jeff Robinson
Commissioner Stephen Allen
Commissioner Diane Barnes-Rhoades
Commissioner Annie Odom
Commissioner Kim Wiley

NAY

Commissioner William Cain
Commissioner Joe Antorn

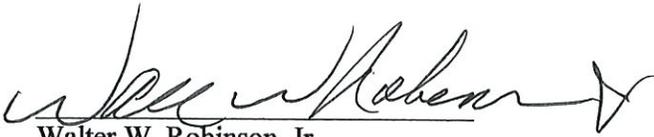
Vice-Chairman Robinson stated that with the majority voting AYE, the motion carried.

Mr. Pope stated that it was time to update the County's Comprehensive Plan as required by State Law. He stated that the County has entered into a contract with the Berkley Group to look at the Comp Plan and Zoning Ordinances with great detail; especially as related to solar development.

Darren Coffey stated that plans were in place to offer public work sessions starting in January 2019 with the Planning Commission, community and staff to hear opinions and concerns about developing solar projects.

In Re: ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Rhoades, seconded by Commissioner Jeff Robinson, with all voting aye, meeting was adjourned.


Walter W. Robinson, Jr.
Vice-Chairman