

The Zoning Board of Appeals/Planning Commission met on the above date with the following members present: Maggie Cimbalista, Tami Johnson, Michael Mott, and David Bardson. Jamie Walker, Jack Harris, and Heather Weber were absent.

Attorney Burton began the continued hearing with a review of proposed ordinance which parallels the standards of the Illinois Ordinance regarding solar and wind farms. He mentioned the county's code has recently changed and feels this set of standards would be beneficial for the village to adopt. Solar energy definitions were reviewed, including less sophisticated systems such as roof mounted solar systems, which would also require village permitting.

Review continued of the proposed ordinance regarding solar gardens and solar farms, an interconnection agreement would be completed with the territory's electric utility service. An agricultural mitigation agreement would also need to be in place with the Department of Agriculture. Site location, anti-glare, height of 20 feet, groundcover, setbacks, fencing and weed control, dimensional setbacks of 150 feet from the nearest point of outside wall of nonparticipating property, residence or building and 50 feet to the nearest edge of a public right of way or street, plans in place with the fire protection district, underground power lines within the facility, road contributions, decommissioning plan, price guarantee to participating neighboring property owners, recommendations to consult with Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Illinois State Historic Preservation Office, groundcover and runoff, minimum insurance, posting bond, inspections and fees were reviewed.

Attorney Burton then reviewed the proposed ordinance regarding smaller wind energy systems including definitions, special use, development standards, setbacks, perimeter fencing, code inspections, participation with Department of Natural Resources and Wildlife services, bond issues, and fee structure. The remaining proposed amendments pertain to the individual zoning districts adding solar and wind energy systems to the village agricultural and manufacturing districts that can be subject to special use permitting. Jeff Snape of Hamilton Engineering mentioned that woody or noxious weed shall be removed once monthly, and reflection angles do not project glare onto the roadways be added to the proposed ordinance. Ken Thompson inquired on the size of the proposed solar energy site. Jeff Snape responded that roughly 18 acres would be for solar panels and roughly one-half acre would be for the site access roadway.

Mike Mott motioned to recommend approval of the Ordinance to the Village Board including Hamilton's recommended additions. David Bardson seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion Carried.

Anyone wishing to speak tonight was sworn in under oath by Attorney Burton. Liz Reddington of Pivot Energy began her presentation. Their application for a solar garden has been submitted to the Village of Sheridan proposing a garden south of town on Jeffrey Tomlin's property located in an agriculturally zoned area. She spoke on Community Solar Energy being different from utility scale, wind or rooftop generation and customers can become subscribers to the Community Solar Garden by linking utility accounts without upfront capital and will be looking for subscribers with common metered accounts.

The site proposed is on agricultural zoned land with a compatible use with surrounding agricultural areas. The project area is about 18 acres with proposed setbacks of 50 feet from the side and rear property lines

also 50 feet from any dwellings. The proposed fencing is 8-foot chain link or agricultural game fence with a 12-foot-wide gravel access road. Fencing types were discussed.

Maggie Cimbalista inquired on the current subscription to the program. Liz replied Pivot Energy generally offers a ten percent discount which would be reflected on their Ameren electricity billing once the garden was operational. Mayor Wehner inquired on how far away this electricity would reach for use. Liz replied the state limits the projects to a utility territory to which this would be for Ameren customers. The system is a 3.3-Megawatt AC at 6.4 Gigawatts per year which is equivalent to 943 homes that it could provide service to. Wendy Greenrod inquired on if the Correctional Center were to utilize this, what would be left for residential use. Liz replied that they would only be able to take 40 percent if they wished to subscribe. Other questions regarding fees, subscriptions, other solar gardens in the area, benefits to the communities, distance for eligibility, house panels, cancellation, and waiting lists were discussed.

Liz continued with the proposed project stating it does not require any utilities, no public spending, sewage, waste, irrigation, potable water services, trash or recycling services or natural gas. The only utilities used and paid for would be from the used electric grid which is paid through the Pivot Energy. They have also done a review with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources with no endangered or threatened species or habitat. They have also gotten sign off through the State Historic Preservation Office as well. Site plans were provided to all. She discussed installation of tier one panel manufacturers, which are non-reflective technology to absorb the sunlight, string inverter technology throughout the array, noise cannot be heard from outside the fencing area, tracker racking which follows the sun east to west throughout the day. The tracking foundation would bore directly into the ground 15-20 feet with a small motor that moves the racking which would also not be heard from outside the fenced in area. There would be one concrete pad needed for the larger equipment such as the transformer. No emissions or pollution will be produced by the array. David Bardson asked if a panel were to go bad, what would be done with it to which Liz replied these would be taken to be recycled as they are made of glass, aluminum, and steel. Maggie Cimbalista asked if the business were to go under, would things be cleaned up. Attorney Burton responded there will be a decommissioning agreement. Liz added that this was also in the lease agreement with the landowner to restore the site to how it was found.

Liz went on to state that with planting and vegetation surrounding the array they like to reach out to local ecologists for opinions on what would be best options for the location for successful planting. She mentioned the landowner would be responsible for maintaining any land outside the fenced in area. Ken Thompson asked the life expectancy of the garden. Liz replied the panels have a 25-year warranty and their agreement with the State of Illinois is for 20 years, and with the utility for 20 years. They could extend the contracts if they wanted to go 30 or 40 years.

Liz discussed property taxes. Being zoned for agricultural use the current taxes are roughly two hundred dollars per year. With the solar facility, taxes would be approximately nineteen thousand five hundred dollars per year. She stated the yearly increase to the Village of Sheridan would be about three thousand dollars per year which would be shared with the Sheridan Fire Protection District.

She then discussed construction, with a timeline of roughly six months and having their own twelve-foot-wide entrance. During the commercial period, the site will be visited two to four times per year. The local fire department and emergency teams will be trained on site and have access along with Knox Box access. They will also have twenty-four-hour surveillance and monitoring of the system. Decommissioning bond was also discussed, along with State of Illinois requirements of this. Mike Mott had concerns with the proposed entrance to the solar garden with truck traffic, prison, and the school nearby. Kurt Tirevold

wondered if the road was large enough to accommodate emergency equipment if needed. Liz replied that engines would not, and fire and safety departments would be trained and invited to view the progress as it is being constructed.

Attorney Burton asked for a recommendation of the proposed solar project. Maggie Cimbalista motioned to recommend the project. David Bardson seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion Carried.

The Zoning Board of Appeals then discussed conditions they feel are needed with the permitting proposal to include:

- Negotiating agreement with LaSalle County Highway Department and Village of Sheridan an agreement and a designated traffic route for construction, including access from the south, upgrades to the existing road and turning radius for the Solar Property, including delivery schedule with hours tentatively set between 9:00AM-2:00PM.
- Negotiating safety plan Sheridan Police Department and Sheridan Fire Department.
- Securing the solar facility by an 8' chain link fence and any other security measures identified in safety plans.
- Construction hours limited to daylight hours.
- Developer to complete a drainage tile survey of the Solar Property and present such with the building permit application.
- West side of solar facility shall be landscaped to reduce visibility, identifying in the final building permit application.
- Insurance coverage of three million to five million listing the village as additional insured.
- Plat of survey be presented.
- A fee agreement to cover out of pocket expenses.

David Bardson motioned to accept the proposal with these conditions. Mike Mott seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion Carried.

Minutes from May 23, 2022, and June 1, 2023, were presented for approval. David Bardson motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Maggie Cimbalista seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion Carried.

There being no further business, David Bardson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Maggie Cimbalista seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion Carried and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cathy Grimwood
Village Clerk