



Grass Lake Township Planning Commission

**07092020 approved PC minutes**

Grass Lake Charter Township Hall  
373 Lakeside Dr. Grass Lake MI 49240

1. Call to Order at 7:06 pm

Meeting was held using Zoom PC Video Conferencing Facilities

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

P\_ Tom Brennan, \_P\_ Jim Ducey, \_P\_ Jere Hinkle, \_P\_ Mark Jewell, \_P\_ Dale Lucas, \_P\_ Nancy Prindle, \_P\_ Jim Warbritton also in attendance Doug Lammers – Township Zoning Administrator and John Enos – Township Planner

Representatives from S Power including Frank Krawczel - Project Manager, Ali Rodrian - Permitting Manager, Mackenzie Meinhold - Internal Counsel, Daniel Wang - Interconnection Manger, Cat Mosley - Community Relations Director, Patricia Haslam - Real Estate Manager and Drew Demos - Land Acquisition Manager.

Approximately 35 citizens were also signed in on this virtual meeting.

4. Approval of Agenda

A motion by Chairman Hinkle was made to modify the agenda by placement of board discussion/actions of each subject Public Meeting immediately after its close. As such, Case #20-05-0008 - New business Item 8a (discussion/action for the Letts Creek Solar Farm Special Land Use request) would be relocated and designated as Item 6d. Similarly for Case #20-02-0005, New business Item 8b (discussion/action for the Proposed Text Amendment for Mining Ordinance, Section 14.07 HH) would be relocated and designated as Item 7c. The motion was supported by Ducey. All ayes. Motion carried.

5. Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Brennan and supported by Lucas that the May 21, 2020 Meeting Minutes be approved as presented. All ayes. Motion carried.

The meeting was then closed by Chairman Hinkle.

6. Public hearing Case #20-05-0008

Preliminary Site Plan and Special Use Permit (SLUP) request for a Large Solar Energy System by Letts Creek Solar, LLC.

A. The project

The hearing was opened with an introduction of the proposed project by John Enos, the Commission's Consultant Planner. The project is a 109-acre commercial solar farm in eastern Grass Lake Township at the Washtenaw County border. Mr. Enos presented an overview of the project status to date. He related the planning activities that had been performed that has culminated with a Site Plan and Special Land Use Permit under review and consideration at this Public Hearing. Mr. Enos was very complimentary regarding the thoroughness of the Site Plan and information that had been provided by S-power, the developer, in demonstration of the proposed project's compliance with the Township's Large Solar Energy Systems Ordinance and Site Plan requirements. He recommended that plan be approved, with conditions.

The hearing continued with a presentation by Frank Krawczel, S Power Project Manager. It centered around a 28- slide presentation covering the following main points:

- a. Who is S-Power and their history: Headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah, - an Independent Power Producer (IPP), specializing in developing, owning and operating renewable energy projects, Operate 155+ Projects in 12 States with 1,600 + MW, and 15 GW of projects under development
- b. S-Power is owned by a joint venture partnership between The AES Corporation (NYSE:AES) - a Fortune 500 global power company, and the Alberta Investment Management Corporation (AIMCo), one of Canada's largest and most diversified institutional investment managers.
- c. Project Overview of Letts Creek Solar Project
  - Location - Grass Lake Charter Township in Jackson County
  - Project Plan - 15 MW single-axis tracker solar project
  - Construction Timing - Spring 2021 through end of Year 2021
  - PPA Offtake - Electricity will be sold to Consumers Energy, IT will produce 28,323 MWh/year, enough to power 2,400 residences.
  - Offsets - 20,029 tons of CO2 reduction, equivalent to the annual amount of carbon sequestered by 23,570 acres of forest.
  - Physical Description - The project will utilize pole mounted photovoltaic (PV) panel technology. The pole mounting will be secured on steel driven piles which obviates the need for

concrete foundations This will result in lower project grading requirements and minimize long-term impacts to the project site. The PV panels will be approximately 5 – 8 feet in height. The project will have a minimum 40 foot setback from all property lines. The site will be secured with an eight-foot chain-link fence along North Francisco Road and 7' chain-link fence topped with one foot of barbed wire on all other sides. □ Overhead poles will be constructed at the southern edge of site property will connect the solar array to the Consumer Powers distribution grid.

- Site conditions – The site is in a rural setting, currently farmed and zoned Agricultural. It is bounded by North Francisco Road on the west, the NS Railroad on the north and privately-owned farmed properties on the east and south. There is no unique farmland soil present on the site. A landscaping plan has been prepared depicting how the solar farm will be integrated into the existing agricultural setting.
- A summary of projected selected economic/fiscal impacts is contained in the following:



The slide presentation is attached.

Two co-owners of the property that is proposed for development, Mr. and Mrs. David & Ann Moore spoke relating their perspective of the project development history and their expectations of the project. They stated that the solar farm

would be developed and operated in such a manner that the site would provide positive benefits to all concerned.

B. Public Comment

Five public comments all supportive of the project. Eight letters had been received, also supporting the project were received. The letters are attached. No negative comments on this project were received.

C. Close Public Hearing

It was moved by Ducey and supported by Brennan to close the Public Hearing. All ayes. Motion carried.

7. New Business (Item 6d in revised Agenda)

Case #20-05-0008 -- Preliminary Site Plan and Special Use Permit (SLUP) request for a Large Solar Energy System by Letts Creek Solar, LLC.

Discussion ensued regarding minor alterations of proposed Pre operating and Operating Conditions. A resolution was proposed by Hinkle and supported by Ducey to conditionally approve the project Site Plan and SLUP. All ayes. Motion carried. A copy of this resolution is attached.

The meeting was then closed by Chairman Hinkle.

8. Public Hearing, Case #20-02-0005

Proposed Text Amendment to the Mining Ordinance, Section 14.07 HH Version 7 Draft.

A. The Draft Amendment Status

Text Amendment - version 7 has been available for review since May 22, 2020. The proposed text is attached.

B. Public Comment

Five letters have been received regarding the Version 7 draft. These letters are attached.

The subjects focused primarily on the following:

- Surface and ground water considerations and the necessity of the conduction, and type, of hydrologic surface and ground water survey/analyses before issuance of a Special Land Use Permit (SLUP).
- Potential health impacts of mining operations.
- Operations monitoring including enforcement of Special Land Use Permit conditions.

- Comparison of procedures/metrics (site size, offsets, financial, insurance enforcement, SLUP length) contained in the draft with those of Waterloo Township's Mining ordinance.

The authors of four of the above noted letters spoke reiterating the comments presented in their letters. A representative of the Michigan Aggregate Association, Doug Needham, addressed issues associated with the hydrogeologic requirements of the proposed amendment.

C. Close Public Hearing.

It was moved by Ducey and supported by Brennan to close the Public Hearing. All ayes. Motion carried.

9. New Business (Item 7c in revised agenda)

Case #20-02-0005 Proposed Text Amendment to the Mining Ordinance, Section 14.07 HH Version 7 Draft.

Members of the Planning commission discussed the comments received regarding the Version 7 of Zoning Ordinance amendment. It was concluded that in light of these comments no further revisions at this time were necessary before submission to the Jackson County Planning Commission for review. Future actions in the ordinance implementation could result in further revisions needed.

A motion was made by Hinkle and supported by Ducey to approve the draft of proposed text amendment to the Grass Lake Charter Township Zoning Ordinance regulating mining and extraction operations within the Township in order to maintain the public health, safety and welfare of the residents of and visitors to Grass Lake Charter Township. All ayes. Motion carried.

A copy of the draft amendment is attached.

10. Citizens Wishing to Address the Commission-non agenda items

Richard Murphy asked if any action had been taken regarding information regarding Township regulations on marijuana production/distribution. Mr. Murphy was informed that the Township Board is addressing this issue.

11. Old Business

The necessity to initiate the updating of the Township Master Plan was noted. This updating should be completed in 2021. It was suggested that a subcommittee should be established to develop the updating process.

12. Township Board Report

A proposed tax millage to support rehabilitation of Township local public roads will be placed on the November ballot.

13. Proposed Business for Next Regular Meeting - on August 20, 2020.

A. Possible review of a SLUP application for the Bohne Road gravel pit. (if timely submitted to the Township)

14. General Discussion

None

15. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn by Ducey and supported by Brennan at 8:59 pm. All ayes.  
Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted.

Jim Ducey, Secretary

Attachments

1. Solar Farm Slide presentation
2. Eight Solar Polar Public Comment Letters
3. Solar Power Conditional Approval Resolution
4. Gravel Pit Text Amendment Version
5. Five Gravel Pit Letters