

CLYDE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes

October 10th, 2023

Meeting called to order: 7:00 pm

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Mike McGriff

Roll Call:

PRESENT: Mike McGriff-Chair; Colleen Skrypkun-Recording Secretary; Nick Weaver; Stephen Sullivan; Leigh Grimes; Doug Voight-Board Representative

ABSENT-Rob Cowen, Building Inspector

Additions to Agenda: None

Approval of Agenda: Move Old Business ahead of New Business. Move to approve by Nick W., seconded by Leigh Grimes

Approval of Minutes from Sept 12th, 2023 Regular Meeting: Move to approve by Leigh G.; seconded by Nick W. Minutes approved as written.

Public Comment:

Mr. Fred Kaluza, 5740 Old Sawmill Ln,. made a statement categorically opposing any changes in zoning (which would be necessary to allow for utility scale solar installations). It was noted that Michigan does not have enough degree days nor enough sun days to make solar cost effective.

Mr. Jim Wier, 7171 Beard Rd., also spoke in opposition to allowing utility scale solar operations in Clyde Twp.

A local business owner, Debbie, spoke to confirm that Clyde Township had previously determined to not give over local control to the State of operations including gravel, solar, wind, etc.

Zoning Admin Report: None

Reports from Ad Hoc Committees: None

OLD BUSINESS

Request to approve application for Home Occupation. Jamie and Deborah M. attended tonight's meeting and answered questions about the Home Occupation they are seeking to operate from their home. Nick W. moved to approve the Home Occupation going forward, Leigh G. supported. Approval of Home Occupation passed.

Master Plan-Move to Nov. meeting

Ordinance Review-Move to Nov. meeting

NEW BUSINESS

Special Condition Permit Application-The Gierman family, 4601 N. River Rd., is requesting to add a toilet and sink in their pole barn, tied into current septic system, for family use during family gatherings. Rod has not granted permits pending approval by Planning Commission. Planning Commission Members requested additional time to review this request. Motion was made by Doug V. and seconded by Leigh G. to review request at next month's meeting.

PRESENTATION BY RANGER POWER regarding the proposed PORTSIDE PROJECT, a utility scale solar project encompassing 1,000 acres of farmland that lies in both Fort Gratiot Township and Clyde Township near the McIntyre Substation. The 50 megawatt to 250 megawatt station would provide electricity to 25,000 homes.

It is estimated that the Project would remain in operation for 25 to 40 years with 90% of the components being recyclable. A Bond for the cost of Decommissioning the project would be filed with the Dept. of Agriculture.

There are currently four homeowners committed to the project. The Portside Project would be 30% Government Funded with Private funding by DE Shaw Renewable Investments making up the remainder of the cost.

Community Members in attendance posed a number of questions.

The property would be surrounded by a 7 ft. woven wire fence with the Inverter being in the center of the interior 500 acres. Construction would be accomplished in one phase approximately 12 to 18 months using local Union Labor as available. All permits would be local.

The noise produced by the Inverter would be about 50 decibels (as loud as a refrigerator running) at the boundary as required by current Ordinances. Ranger Power was not able to say **what the noise level would be at the source (Inverter).**

Maintenance of the property would be minimal, mowed twice a year, as it would be planted with natural cover made up of native, local plants, designed to encourage pollinators (based on the Pollinator Score Card published by Michigan State) and retention of storm water. The impact on other wildlife would be negligible.

There is no plan to expand the Portside Project outside the 1,000 acres.

A Technician monitors the Project remotely and would likely not be able local.

According to Ranger Power's assessments, Housing and Property values are not negatively impacted by the presence of a utility scale solar project such as the one in Shiawassee County which is similar in size to the proposed Portside Project. However, Ranger Power was not able to say **what the market value of neighboring properties were before the project went in nor how many days properties were on the market before they sold.**

Ranger Power Reps will seek to provide more satisfactory answers to questions regarding noise levels at the source and impact on bees as well as other wildlife. And will seek to provide more detailed information regarding the impact of utility scale solar projects on home/property values.

Announcements and Correspondence:

Franz Neruda, Clyde Twp. Board Member, shared that he had attended the Public Hearing in Fort Gratiot Twp. regarding the proposed Portside Project. The meeting had to be postponed as approximately 400 community members were in attendance and there was no venue readily available to accommodate such a large number of people.

Second Public Comment:

Mr. Weir encouraged Attendees to use the Referendum system to combat government overreach.

Linda Kaluza, 5740 Old Sawmill Ln., expressed concern for the loss of farmland and the negative impact on our community.

Clyde Twp. Supervisor, Ernie Manoleas, thanked Ranger Power for the presentation and thanked the citizens in attendance for the thoughtful questions. He reiterated that the Planning Commission must approve a Special Use Permit in order for the Portside Project to go forward and that professional assistance is available.

News and Views:

MTA has training opportunities coming up in November.

There is a protest in Lansing on 10/11/23 at 8 am to address the House Bills aimed at superseding local authority in determining placement and permitting of large-scale wind and solar projects. House Bills 5120, 5121, 5122 and 5123 will be heard in the House Committee on Energy, Communications and Technology at 9 am.

Next Regular Meeting is Nov. 14th, 2023 at 7 pm. Nick may not be able to attend.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made by Colleen S., seconded by Nick W., Meeting adjourned at 8:18 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Colleen Skrypkun