

MINUTES

P & Z COMMISSION HEARING

6/18/2020

ATTENDANCE

P & Z Commissioners

ATTENDED

1. Chuck Teetsel
2. Ruth Ann Smith*
3. Wendell DeCross
4. Randy Murph
5. Chuck Howe*

STAFF ATTENDANCE

1. Berrin Nejad
2. Cody Cooper
3. Jeanine Carruthers
4. John Osgood
5. Sandra Phillips*
6. Kristyn Saunders

ABSENT

1. Rodger Rhoades
2. Nick McVicker
3. George John

*present through Zoom.us

Meeting held at the Navajo County Board of Supervisors Chambers, Holbrook, Arizona –
Time: 6:00 to 7:34

Chairman Teetsel called the meeting of the Navajo County Planning & Zoning Commission to order and explained the meeting procedures to the public. **Mr. Teetsel** then led the pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM #1 – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ITEM #2 – REVIEW OF AGENDA BY COMMISSIONERS

ITEM #3 – CALL TO PUBLIC FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

ITEM #4 – CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE COMMISSION HEARING ON June 4, 2020.

Possible approval of the June 4th 2020 Minutes. **Commissioner DeCross** made a motion to approve the minutes. **Commissioner Howe** seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. (4 - 0)

ITEM #5 –SUP-A 20-001 HASHKNIFE ENERGY CENTER LLC, DISTRICT III: A request for a Special Use Permit Amendment to expand the site area from the previously approved 3,000 acres to approximately 3,960 acres, an addition of 960 acres, to build and operate a 400 MW solar generation and storage facility. The properties are located in the Joseph City area.

APN # 107-01-023, 107-05-031C, 107-05-031D, 110-15-001D, & 110-15-008, T18N R19E S30, 31, & 32, T17N, R19E, S05 & 06. **Owner:** Hashknife Energy Center LLC. **Agent:** James Williams. **(Tabled from May 21, 2020 meeting)**

Planner Cody Cooper presented the item, noting that this was an amendment to the previously approved special use permit for the solar farm as the applicant felt they could further expand their operations. He presented the commission the original letter of intent, which detailed their wish to expand for 840 additional acres. Staff had advised them to go for the larger amount of land as to not have to redo the process again if needed later. They felt it was necessary for the additional acreage to help with engineering. The amendment will only change the amount of acreage, it would not change any of the stipulations or conditions. Mr. Cooper noted that the applicant was present to answer any questions.

Discussion went on over how the applicant had been following the stipulations regarding care for the land, before the land owner Mr. Steve Brophy and Invenergy's project manager Susan Innis both addressed the commission with assurance that the land owner was satisfied with the care the applicant had taken to preserve the wild nature of the land, and as things were currently the construction on the site was still underway, and the current outbreak of COVID-19 had delayed progress. Mr. Brophy also noted that some impermanent damage had been done by a contractor that had been corrected swiftly, and that it would just take a little bit of time for the tracks made to blow back into the desert landscape. The county had not been out to inspect the land as of yet, but Assistant County Engineer Sandra Phillips said she would look into the concerns of the commissioners by going out to the field and see for herself if the concerns raised by Mr. J.R. DeSpain were legitimate. (Mr. J.R. DeSpain was in opposition to the expansion)

Chairman Teetsel called for a motion. **Commissioner Howe** made a motion to recommend Approval to the Board as submitted. **Commissioner Decross** seconded the motion. Motion carried. 3 - 2. (Commissioners Howe and DeCross for the recommendation of approval, and Commissioners Murph and Smith against the recommendation, the tie was broken by the chairman who voted for the recommendation of approval.)

ITEM #6 - SUP 20-002 AZ3 KAYWOOD WIRELESS COMMUNICATION FACILITY, DISTRICT V: A request for a Special Use Permit to construct a 100' wireless communication facility, centrally located on **APN#** 212-20-147D, T9N, R22E, S22 of the GSRM. **Owner:** Faith2Faith International Inc. – Richard Boen. **Agent:** Nancy Smith.

Planner Cooper presented the project, explained that the property already had an existing tower, that did not meet the standards required for the type of equipment as they wish to put into the area. The Applicant held a neighborhood hearing on March 12th at 5PM, and there were five attending from the public at that meeting as per their sign-in sheet.

Staff report recommends approval to encourage communications centers in rural areas. Mr. Cooper listed some conditions and the applicant wishes to apply a fence around the project, and they obtain a 100-foot easement to ensure nothing is built inside the potential fall-out zone, regardless of how the structure is engineered for breakage in the event of a freak accident.

A representative for the applicant, Nancy Smith, was present to speak with the board. Ms. Smith clarified that the landowner for the project was against the 100-foot easement as they wished to develop the area and noted that the poles were designed to collapse into itself.

They have also tried to design the site so that the setbacks and colors all meet code and blend into the area, and were originally going to try to disguise the pole with a pine tree design, but staff felt that would stick out more.

The Chairman asked if Ms. Smith was a representative of Verizon, to which she responded that she was. He further asked who owned the existing pole, **Commissioner Decross** noted that it was Cellular One.

The Chairman asked Ms. Smith about how the new tower would improve the area's reception, as there was some portions of the surrounding area in which he personally experienced poor reception, to which she replied she was unsure of how the project would impact the dropped call zones. Ms. Smith did provide some graphs showing how data availability would be affected by the new tower, showing a drastic improvement. She further noted that she could ask their people for data on how the tower would impact call reception.

With no further questions from the Commission, the Chairman opened the floor for public comment in favor of the project, and hearing none, called for those in opposition.

Mark McGhee approached to speak against the project, thanking the commission for being available to speak. He noted that they were homeowners in Blue Spruce Estates and said that the original draw was the forest. He wanted to speak on outreach, noting that the outreach was poor, and the staff posting on the property was pulled up and tossed in the ditch. **The Chairman** noted that staff had sent out cards to everyone within 300 feet as per state requirement to the address of record. Mr. McGhee again wished to say he was against the project and given he was directly south of the project, and that it would negatively impact his view, and noted some other neighbors that were also opposed. He complained about the height, specifically.

Deo Maynard also spoke in opposition of the project, she also spoke to the height of the tower, and was already perturbed by the existing tower.

With no further comments, the Chairman called for a motion. **Commissioner Murph** made a motion to recommend Denial to the Board. **Commissioner Smith** seconded the motion. Motion carried, 3-2. (**Commissioners Howe** and **Decross** opposed to the motion, **Commissioners Smith** and **Murph** for the motion, with the Chairman breaking the tie in favor of the motion.)

ITEM #7 – COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS AND DIRECTIONS TO STAFF.

Commissioners may use this time to offer additional comments regarding any item on this agenda or any other topic; and the Commission may direct Development Services Department staff to study or provide additional information on topics of the Commissions' choosing.

With there being no further business to come before the Planning and Zoning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:34. a motion was made to adjourn the meeting by **Commissioner DeCross**. **Commissioner Murph** seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved this _____ day of _____, _____

Chairman, Navajo County
Planning & Zoning Commission

ATTEST:

Secretary, Navajo County
Planning & Zoning Department