

## MINUTES

### HEARING OF THE NAVAJO COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

August 18, 2011

#### ATTENDANCE P & Z Commissioners

##### ATTENDED

1. Bob Hall
2. Chuck Teetsel
3. Joel Lawson
4. Randy Murph
5. Ruth Ann Smith
6. Bill Rawlings
7. Jason Hatch

##### ABSENT

Wendell DeCross  
Carol Davis  
Rick Slone  
Fred Shupla  
Robert K. Black, Jr.  
Evelyn Meadows

##### Staff Attendance

Greg Loper  
Bill Fraley

Peggy Saunders

Meeting held at the Navajo County Board of Supervisors Chambers, Holbrook, Arizona – Time: 6:03 p.m. to 6:27 p.m.

Chairman Joel Lawson called the meeting of the Navajo County Planning & Zoning Commission to order, and led the pledge of Allegiance. **Mr. Lawson** then explained the meeting procedures to the public and introduced Item # 1.

**Item # 1 – Case # 11-20: SPECIAL USE PERMIT:** Discussion and possible Commission action on a request by Aurora Solar, LLC, for a Special Use Permit to develop a photovoltaic solar power generating facility on approximately 397.55 acres located on a portion of APN's 202-50-002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 007, 009, 010, 011 & 012 on a portion of Section 17, Township 14 North, Range 21 East, G&SRM, Navajo County, Arizona approximately 3 miles north of Snowflake.

**Greg Loper** presented the staff report and gave an overview of the project. Aurora Solar LLC, is a subsidiary of Iberdrola, and is requesting a Special Use Permit to set up a photovoltaic power generating facility which would generate approximately 50 mega watts of energy. The project will be located within the Dry Lake II wind project boundaries. The site plan shows the location of the facility in conjunction with SR 77, and the general layout of the facility. The photovoltaic structures are set up in an array of panels that feed into a number of inverters and collected to go into the substation facility. They will co-share the Dry Lake II O&M building, the site, and access to the facility. Staff's primary concern with the project was dust during the construction phase, but the project will not disturb the land thru mass grading as originally thought. They will place concrete pedestals at each panel and inverter site to keep the land disturbance at a minimum. Water will be used as a dust deterrent. Staff is recommending approval of this Special Use Permit subject to the stipulations as outlined in the Staff Report. Aurora Solar, LLC representatives will answer any questions from the Commission or the public.

**Chairman Joel Lawson** opened the floor for public comments; the Developer did not comment at that time but would answer any questions from the public or the Commission. No one from the public came forward to speak in favor of the project; those opposed were then asked to come forward to speak to the Commission.

**Kay Turner**, of 8100 Paint Pony Trail in Snowflake, said she is not opposed to the project, and is very much in favor of solar energy, but she had a list of questions for the developer, including power purchase agreements, where the power would go, the type of piers they will use, the water usage, and drainage. Ms. Turner referred to a document submitted by Kathy Hemenway, PhD of 8452 Hansa Trail, Snowflake. (Staff provided copies of the document to the Commissioners.) **Greg Loper** said the drainage issue would be addressed as part of the overall plan review which would include drainage studies and be addressed under the stipulations.

**Andrew Milner** of Aurora Solar addressed the questions raised by Ms. Turner as follows: Iberdrola is currently working with Salt River Project (SRP) on a power purchase agreement. The typical pier foundations are embedded; the depth is usually from 5-10 feet. There is no ongoing water usage, but there would be some washing that could occur approximately every six months to clean the panels. Water will be used for dust control and for re-vegetation purposes, which would minimize the water usage on the site to the Operations & Maintenance Building. They will only add a few personnel which might increase water usage. When asked if there was water on site, **Mr. Milner** answered yes, but they would truck in water, as needed, for dust control. It should not be a substantial amount.

**Dannette Weiss**, of the Arizona Game & Fish Department, 2878 E. White Mountain Blvd in Pinetop, provided a comment letter to the Commission. Concerns included increased lighting at the facility which attracts bugs and in turn bats. They suggested the use of narrow spectrum bulbs as often as possible, to clear rock rubble to discourage rodents, and increased survey monitoring to determine the mortality rate of nocturnal birds and bats. They also recommended a perimeter fence height of eight (8) feet.

**Amy Parsons**, of Aurora Solar LLC, addressed the question on re-vegetation: They would use native seed and plants, and will work with the Game & Fish Department. They are committed to increased monitoring. Outside lighting will be minimal; they have security lighting that is motion activated, there is no external lighting on the solar panels, however they do have plug ins on the units for maintenance of the panels. If you were flying over the solar panels at night you would not see a light.

Since there were no further comments from the public, Chairman Lawson closed the public comment portion of the hearing and opened the item to the Commissioners for discussion and possible action.

**Chuck Teetsel** made a motion to recommend approval of the Special Use Permit with the stipulations recommended by staff. **Randy Murph** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. (7-0).

**Item # 2 – POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE COMMISSION HEARING OF May 19, 2011.** **Ruth Ann Smith** made a motion to approve the minutes, **Jason Hatch** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7-0)

**Item # 3 – POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE COMMISSION HEARING OF July 21, 2011.** **Randy Murph** made a motion to approve the minutes, **Chuck Teetsel** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7-0)

**Item # 4 – ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN FOR PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION:** **Jason Hatch** nominated **Ruth Ann Smith** as Vice Chair. **Chuck Teetsel** seconded the nomination and made a motion to – close the nominations and elect Commissioner Smith as the Vice Chair for the Planning Commission. The nomination and election of Ruth Ann Smith as Vice Chair was unanimously approved (7-0).

**Item # 5 – REPORT FROM STAFF TO THE COMMISSION:** **Greg Loper** and **Bill Fraley** gave updates on the upcoming projects for BOS and Planning & Zoning. **Greg Loper** said there were no items for September’s Agenda, Commissioners attending future hearings will be seated by District. Staff thanked Ruth Ann Smith for accepting the call to serve as Vice Chair. Normally the election of officers occurs in January, going forward we will elect Chair and Vice Chair at the first Commission meeting of the year.

**Item # 6 – COMMISSIONER’S COMMENTS AND/OR 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 staff to study or provide additional information on topics of the Commissions’ choosing. **Bob Hall** announced that the Winslow “Standing on the Corner” event would take place the weekend of September 23, 2011. He also spoke about the amphitheatre and the progress on the streetscape. **Chairman Joel Lawson** added his thanks to **Commissioner Smith** for serving as Vice Chair

With there being no further business to come before the Planning and Zoning Commission, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting by **Bob Hall**. **Jason Hatch** seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

The meeting adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

Approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Navajo County  
Planning & Zoning Commission

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary, Navajo County  
Planning & Zoning Department