

MINUTES

HEARING OF THE NAVAJO COUNTY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

November 17, 2011

ATTENDANCE P & Z Commissioners

Attended:

1. Bob Hall
2. Chuck Teetsel
3. Joel Lawson
4. Fred Shupla
5. Randy Murph
6. Ruth Ann Smith
7. Wendell DeCross

Absent:

Bill Rawlings
Carol Davis
Jason Hatch
Rick Slone
Robert K. Black, Jr.
Evelyn Meadows

Staff Attendance:

Greg Loper
Bill Fraley
Bill Bess

Trent Larson
Veronica Dale

Meeting held at the Navajo County Board of Supervisors Chambers, Holbrook, Arizona – Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:29 p.m.

Chairman Joel Lawson called the meeting of the Navajo County Planning & Zoning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m., and led the pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Lawson then explained the meeting procedures to the public.

Item # 1 – CASE # 11-42: SPECIAL USE PERMIT. Discussion and possible Commission action on a request by Disgen Marcou Mesa, LLC, for a Special Use Permit to place wind power generating towers and related facilities for the purpose of developing an alternative power (wind) facility known as the Disgen Marcou Mesa project, on various Assessors Parcels in the Marcou Mesa vicinity north of Holbrook.

Greg Loper provided an overview of the request, and noted that this project is proposed to be a “Merchant Facility”, meaning that this project will not sell its power to a specific utility company, but rather sell its power on the open market and thereby negating any Power Purchase Agreement. He noted that the applicant is requesting that their setbacks be as little as 110% of the total wind turbine tower height, which is less than the setbacks as required in the adopted “Wind Ordinance”. He also noted that staff has received over 200 letters regarding this request – along with numerous phone calls and emails – and that of those letters, approximately 30 are in opposition, with concerns regarding setbacks, noise, and property values. He concluded by stating that staff supports the requested Special Use Permit, subject to the stipulations listed in the staff report. The stipulations include compliance with the setbacks and other portions of the adopted “Wind Ordinance”.

Dale Osborn, President of Disgen spoke about his company, the project, and jobs it would create. He noted that the project includes 207 individual landowners who have signed up as a part of the project. He

stated that they are trying to qualify for federal grants and tax credits which require that 5% of the funds be committed by the end of 2011, and that the project be operational by the end of 2012. They anticipate 12-14 million dollars will be spent in the local area, and they hope to take the power produced to the Four Corners area for distribution. In regard to setbacks, he stated that the requested setbacks are needed to ensure the viability of the project. He also noted that most property owners are out of state, that there are no public services available in the area, and that there are no existing adjacent residences.

Chairman Lawson called for the public to speak in regard to the project. **Steen Hviid** was generally in favor of the project as long as the project complies with the Wind Ordinance in regard to both physical and sound setbacks requirements. **Charles Lowery, Joseph Barreras, Terry Shaff, Jerry Paschal, and Bill Jeffers** all spoke in favor of the project. **Kay Turner** spoke in favor of the project, as long as the setbacks as noted in the Wind Ordinance are upheld. **Kathy Hemenway**, President of ARENA, also stated her support of the project as long as the Wind Ordinance setbacks are maintained. **Dannette Weiss**, with the Arizona Game & Fish Department, handed out charts to the Commissioners noting the positive economic impact that wildlife has on the local economy, and noted that the Game & Fish Department will make their full assessment of the project upon completion of studies. No one from the public came forward to speak in opposition of the project.

Wendell DeCross made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of Case #11-42 with the supporting stipulations as proposed by staff, with a change to Stipulation 5.c. to remove the requirement for a Power Purchase Agreement, to read "Documentation confirming an Interconnection Agreement (or equivalent documentation)." **Chuck Teetsel** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7-0).

Greg Loper stated to the Commission and public that this item would go before the Board of Supervisors on December 13, 2011, at 9:00 a.m.

Item # 2 – POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE COMMISSION HEARING OF August 18, 2011.

Chuck Teetsel made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. **Bob Hall** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7-0).

Item # 3 – COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS AND/OR DIRECTIONS TO STAFF:

Bob Hall reported on activities in the City of Winslow, including the Renaissance Project (Route 66) project and the private prison project.

Greg Loper addressed the Commission and handed out information regarding Pot Ash Mining in the area around the Petrified Forest National Park, and the significant impact these mines could have in creating jobs in our County. He and **Bill Fraley** also touched on other upcoming projects, Bill Fraley's retirement at the end of January, 2012, and the County Strategic Planning process.

With there being no further business before the Planning and Zoning Commission, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting by **Ruth Ann Smith**. **Bob Hall** seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (7-0).

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Approved this **19th day of January, 2012.**

Chairman, Navajo County
Planning & Zoning Commission

ATTEST:

Secretary, Navajo County
Planning & Zoning Department