

MINUTES
Blue Earth County Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
Wednesday January 6, 2016
7:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Lyle Femrite. Planning Commission members present were Bill Anderson, Kurt Anderson, Kip Bruender, Lyle Femrite, Chuck Grams, Barry Jacques and Joe Smentek. County staff members Aaron Stubbs, Chris Meeks, and George Leary were also present.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kurt Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 2, 2015 Regular Planning Commission Meeting. Mr. Smentek seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3. AGENDA APPROVAL

Mr. Leary indicated there was no change to the agenda.

4. NEW BUSINESS

PC 02-16

Donna Jean Sharp Trust - Request for review and approval of the Final Plat of Sharp Subdivision, a subdivision plat consisting of one lot and two outlots. The property is located in part of the Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter and in part of the Northeast Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 15, Sterling Township. The property is zoned Conservation and Agricultural and includes an area within the Shoreland Overlay District of Rice Creek.

Mr. Stubbs presented the staff report.

The applicants were present and had no additional comment.

There was no public comment and little discussion by the Planning Commission.

Following the discussion, Mr. Smentek made a motion to forward a recommendation of approval of the request to the County Board. Bill Anderson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

PC 34-15

John & Anne Frey and Ecoplexus Inc. – Request for a Conditional Use Permit to construct and operate a Large Solar Energy System. The proposed project will span an estimated 40 acres and will have a power capacity of up to 5 Megawatts (MW), which by Blue Earth County standards, classifies it as a Large Energy System. The property is zoned Agricultural and is located in the Eastern Half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 15, Lincoln Township.

Mr. Stubbs presented the staff report. He advised the Planning Commission that the applicants had submitted an extension of the review period. The applicants also asked the County Board that the larger project of a 40 acre site be reviewed. At their December 15, 2015 Board meeting, the County Board voted to remand the request back to the Planning Commission to review the 40 acre project.

The applicants were present and had no initial comment.

Ken Wilmes asked how the proposal will impact the tax classification of the property.

Mr. Femrite stated that would be a question better answered by the assessor's office.

John Frey advised the Commission that he had received a call from Ralph Campbell. He indicated that Mr. Campbell conveyed to him that his earlier questions and concerns had been answered and that he is now supportive of the proposal.

Bill Anderson stated he was pleased with the new definitive boundary. He proceeded with a motion to approve the updated proposal with the conditions outlined by staff.

Mr. Bruender seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Nathan Rogers, representing Ecoplexus, Inc. provided the Commission with some property tax information that will result from the development of the site.

Ken Wilmes asked what impact the project may have on the county ditch system.

Mr. Femrite stated that there would be limited grading of the site and the majority of the water will infiltrate into the ground.

Mr. Leary indicated that as outlined in the conditions of the report, the applicants are required to submit a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business. Mr. Jacques made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Mr. Smentek and the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Planning Commission Chair

Date

Planning Commission Secretary

Date