

# APPROVED MINUTES

## VILLAGE OF ANTIOCH PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD – REGULAR MEETING Municipal Building: 874 Main Street, Antioch, IL 60002 January 4, 2023

### **A. CALL TO ORDER**

Acting Chairman Ryan called the January 4, 2023 regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Board to order at 7:00 pm at the Antioch Municipal Building.

### **B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Planning and Zoning Board led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **C. ROLL CALL**

Roll call indicated the following Trustees were present: Ryan, Sanfilippo, McCarty, Carstensen, Madigan and Turner. Also present were Community Development Director Garrigan, Attorney Vasselli and Recording Secretary Thiel. Absent: Chairwoman Henning.

### **D. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

Director Garrigan stated the applicant for PZB 22-08 has requested the item be continued to the February 1, 2023 meeting.

### **E. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 7, 2022 PLANNING & ZONING BOARD MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED**

Commissioner Sanfilippo moved, seconded by Commissioner McCarty, to approve the December 7, 2022 Planning and Zoning Board meeting minutes as presented.

Upon roll call, the vote was:

**YES: 5:** Ryan, McCarty, Carstensen, Madigan, and Turner.

**NO: 0.**

**ABSTAIN: 1:** Sanfilippo.

**ABSENT: 1:** Henning.

**THE MOTION CARRIED.**

### **F. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment prior to the public hearings.

### **G. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

### **H. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **1. PZB 22-10 – Consideration of a concept plan for Wildcat Renewables Solar Farm located on North Avenue, east of Deep Lake Road, commonly known as 650 E. North Ave**

Director Garrigan presented the concept plan for a 20-acre solar farm to be located at the subject site that is approximately 51-acres. The property is currently zoned “Estate” and the area is currently identified as low density residential per the Village’s current comp plan. The property is currently vacant and being used for agricultural purposes. A solar farm is considered special use. If there is support for the concept, the applicant will then a submit special use and concept plan.

Director Garrigan stated the proposed solar farm will be interconnected with ComEd’s electrical distribution system. He added the proposed solar farm could generate approximately 2.8 megawatts of electricity which could provide enough power to approximately 500 homes or 10% of the Village’s population.

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Attorney Vasselli administered the oath to those wishing to testify.

Jim Auld, Site Acquisition Manager with Renewable Properties, discussed the plan to lease the property at 650 E. North Avenue under Wildcat Renewables as the development entity to construct the proposed solar farm. He further discussed the history of Renewable Properties. He explained how potential solar farm sites are selected, time it takes to complete construction of a facility and health and safety impacts to the surrounding environment. Mr. Auld provided details on how the solar farm would be constructed. He further detailed the benefits of having community solar available to local residents. It allows residents who may not have the ability to install solar panels on their own homes to still be able participate in solar use. If a resident wants to utilize the community solar facility, they will enroll with a third party or directly with the utility provider. Mr. Auld clarified that only local residents will be able to utilize the proposed solar facility.

David Streicker, counsel to the applicant, explained how revenue would be acquired to fund the project by use of state programs, such as the Adjustable Block Program and Renewable Energy Credits.

Mr. Auld explained the proposed construction schedule and development process. He discussed the wetlands areas on the site and the need to maintain a buffer to avoid the areas identified as wetlands. He also stated no trees will be taken down to construct the solar farm.

Commissioner Sanfilippo asked how the panels will be mounted, for clarification on the areas on the site that have been identified as wetlands and how the wetlands areas would be affected and how the development will affect future use of the area. Mr. Gio Del Rivero with TRC Companies responded there was one main wetland area that would need to be avoided on the site and a couple other areas on the perimeter of the property that are considered wetland. Mr. Auld advised the panels would be mounted on posts that will be piledriven into the ground, which will cause minimal disturbance to the ground and soil. Mr. Streicker added trees will be left to provide screening. Mr. Del Rivero further explained additional native plants will be added to the site to promote drainage.

Commissioner McCarty inquired about the life expectancy of the solar panels. Mr. Auld responded the life expectancy is 30 years and the land will be leased for 35 years. Commissioner McCarty noted the property is located northwest of Redwing Slough and asked if any studies have been done showing how the habitat will be affected. Mr. Del Rivero stated no work will be performed between April 1<sup>st</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup> to avoid adverse effects on migrating birds. Commissioner McCarty asked about fencing, security and possible safety concerns. He further stated renewables are great but expressed concern about safety and placement concerns with proximity to the Redwing Slough.

Commissioner Carstensen asked if anyone knew what the land was used for prior to agricultural. She expressed the importance of knowing the land's history. She inquired about jobs post construction. Mr. Auld explained a maintenance team would be contracted out to maintain the facility. Mr. Streicker added a local electric company could receive the maintenance contract. Commissioner Carstensen asked Director Garrigan if local vendors could be notified. Director Garrigan responded notice could be put out on Facebook or the Village website when more details are available to notify local electricians of the opportunity. Commissioner Carstensen requested more details on the benefits of updating the grid. Mr. Streicker explained the effects on property taxes and offsetting peak usage.

Commissioner Madigan asked for more information about recycling the panels. Mr. Auld restated solar panels have a life expectancy of 30 years. The panels must maintain 85% or more of efficiency. Mr. Auld remarked that the solar panel recycling industry is still in its infancy. Most parts of a decommissioned panel can be recycled. Commissioner Madigan asked if fencing around the site will be screening or landscaping. Mr. Auld stated it would depend on the board's suggestion, but a natural buffer is more appealing.

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Commissioner Turner stated his support of renewable energy. He asked the applicant to explain how the number of users can differ based on the type of user, such as a big box store or a residential user. Mr. Streicker responded that power from the solar farm will stay local. He is not aware of any parameters being put on the size of subscribers, but there may be consumer protections. Subscribers could potentially save ten to fifteen percent on their energy bills. Mr. Streicker further stated using renewable energy will offset fossil fuel generation. Commissioner Turner inquired about the height of the panels and single panels versus double panels. Mr. Auld said single panels could affect output. Commissioner Turner asked if decommissioning bonds would be put in to place to recycle panels. Mr. Streicker explained Illinois requires an agricultural impact mitigation agreement, which will be an agreement between the project owner and the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

Chairman Ryan asked how much funding would be coming from the state to make the project economically viable. Mr. Streicker clarified that the funding would not be coming from the state, rather it would be coming from the state statute that mandates the three utilities buy the solar power. Chairman Ryan asked what the current rates are compared to what the rate would be if a user subscribed to the solar program. Mr. Auld responded he did not have that information but could get it. Chairman Ryan asked for clarification on fossil fuel and nuclear energy in the area. Mr. Striker advised the energy cost is based on the fossil fuel market.

Commissioner Sanfilippo asked if the applicant has other solar farms located in the Midwest. Mr. Auld responded there are currently four sites in Ohio, but most of their sites are located in California, New Mexico and New York.

Commissioner McCarty reiterated he is supportive of renewable energy. He would like the petitioner to provide background and pictures of existing facilities that include landscaping and a timeframe of the project.

Commissioner Turner suggested Director Garrigan address the need for an ordinance regarding requirements and guidelines for solar farms.

Commissioner Sanfilippo asked if the Army Corp of Engineers have been consulted. Mr. Del Rivero advised this project is not within their jurisdiction.

Director Garrigan thanked the board for the positive feedback.

### **2. PZB 22-08 – Consideration of a request for a Special Use for the operation of a Cannabis Dispensary at the property commonly known as 510 Main Street; PIN 02-05-305-063**

Commissioner McCarty moved, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to continue the request for a Special Use to allow the operation of a Cannabis Dispensary at the property commonly knowns at 510 Main Street to the February 1, 2023 meeting. Upon roll call, the vote was:

Upon roll call, the vote was:

**YES: 6:** Ryan, Sanfilippo, McCarty, Carstensen, Madigan and Turner.

**NO: 0.**

**ABSENT: 1:** Henning

**THE MOTION CARRIED.**

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further discussion, the Planning and Zoning Board regular meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Rachel Thiel  
Recording Secretary