

Meeting Minutes
Jefferson County Planning Commission
February 23, 2021

The Jefferson County Planning Commission met on February 23, 2021 at 7:01 p.m. with the following Commission members present: Mike Shepp, President; Donnie Fisher, Vice President; Wade Louthan, Secretary; Jack Hefestay, Matt Knott and Jay Ware.

Staff members present included Jennifer Brockman, County Planner; Alexandra Beaulieu, Zoning Administrator; Nathan Cochran, County Attorney, Jennilee Hartman, Zoning Clerk and Alice Johns, Planning Clerk.

Mr. Shane Roper and Mr. Steve Stolipher were absent with prior notice (recusal from this agenda item during 02-09-21 meeting). Mr. Ron Thomas was absent without prior notice.

By order of the President, the Planning Commission meeting was held virtually via ZOOM. Access information was made available on the agenda and packet, which were posted to the County website.

The Planning Clerk conducted a roll call. Mr. Shepp verified that there was a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

1. **Citizen Communication:** Mr. Shepp stated that public comment period related to the Solar Energy Facilities text amendment was closed and explained that no comments would be heard relative to the text amendment. There were no citizens signed up to speak.
2. **Discussion and Possible Action:** Proposed text amendment to the Jefferson County Zoning and Land Development Ordinance, File #ZTA19-03, to allow Solar Energy Facilities to process as a Principal Permitted Use in the following Zoning Districts: General Commercial, Highway Commercial, Light Industrial, Major Industrial, Rural, Residential Growth, Residential-Light Industrial-Commercial, and Industrial Commercial. The text amendment proposes revisions to Article 2 Definitions; Article 8 Supplemental Use Regulations (creation of Section 8.20 Solar Energy Facilities); and Appendix C Principal Permitted and Conditional Uses Table.

Mr. Cochran recommended that the Planning Commission go into Executive Session to receive legal advice. Mr. Shepp requested that Ms. Beaulieu join the Executive Session. Mr. Wade Louthan motioned to go into Executive Session at 7:06 pm, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wade Louthan motioned to come out of Executive Session at 7:27 pm, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Planning Commission discussed the draft text amendment. Ms. Alexandra Beaulieu requested that the Planning Commission consider exempting underground utilities from the 25' setback. Ms. Beaulieu explained that underground utilities are typically exempt from setback requirements and noted that the language in the current draft required underground utilities to comply with setbacks. Mr. Shepp and Mr. Knott agreed that underground utilities should not be subject to setback requirements.

Mr. Jack Hefestay requested that Staff provide an overview of the draft text amendment. Ms. Alexandra Beaulieu summarized the draft amendment, noting that the Decommissioning Guidelines and Surety Policy would be separate documents from the Zoning Ordinance. Ms. Beaulieu explained that similar to the current bonding policy for site development projects, the decommissioning guidelines and surety policy would be under the County Commission's purview and enforced by the Office of Engineering.

Mr. Mike Shepp stated that he believes that the draft amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan as a Principal Permitted Use, and where there may be any conflict with the

Comprehensive Plan, he stated that there had been significant changes in the County. Mr. Shepp moved that Mr. Nathan Cochran provide an order with findings of fact and conclusions of law for consideration at the next meeting for a vote. Mr. Hefestay seconded the motion.

Mr. Matt Knott noted that with regard to changes in the county, he believed that the changes reflected that the County was more in support of alternative energy than not. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wade Louthan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 pm, and the motion passed unanimously.

These minutes were prepared by Alice Johns, Planning Clerk.