

MINUTES-PLANNING COMMISSION/BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS MEETING

TUESDAY APRIL 14, 2015 – 7:00 P.M. COMMISSIONERS ROOM, LYON COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER, MARSHALL, MINNESOTA.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chalmers, DeCock, Ludeman, Steen, Williams

OTHERS PRESENT: Stensrud, Ritter, Biren, Olson

Ludeman opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

IDENTIFY ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Ludeman will join as a landowner, will abstain from voting on the Tracy Solar Project.

AMEND/APPROVE AGENDA: DeCock motioned, seconded by Williams. All vote in favor, motion carried.

CORRECT/APPROVE MINUTES: Chalmers motioned, seconded by Steen to approve the March 10th minutes. All vote in favor, motion carried.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT: None

PLANNING COMMISSION:

Public Hearing, MN Solar I, LLC has applied for a conditional use permit to construct a solar photovoltaic energy generation facility in part of the West Half, Section Fourteen (14) of Monroe Township, all located in Lyon County, MN. The property is zoned Agricultural.

Matt Heck, Senior Project Developer with juwi Wind LLC was present and representing MN Solar I, LLC. He outlined the Tracy Solar project and described project advances through the permitting process. The project will consist of 24.7 MW generation on 200 acres of leased land. 100 employees will be contracted for construction, many of which will be locally sourced. Over 25 years, an estimated \$1.5 million in revenue will be created for Lyon County from the solar energy generation tax. 330th Avenue (Highline Rd) is the only road near the project that will be impacted by construction. There will be setbacks imposed from the public drainage systems on-site.

Heck then goes into explaining the site plan. A detailed survey will be included with easements around the three city wells near the site. State permitting will include stormwater management planning. The fencing to be installed is 7 foot chain linked fence with barbed wire on top. Snow drifting will be addressed in the plan, but the fence will be installed 25 feet off of the County easements. Panel tracking is completely automated. The electricity needed to power operational motors and other equipment will be purchased. The panels flatten out during the winter months.

There is a seasonal stream that, if identified as a wetland, then electric lines will be overhead (otherwise they will be bored underground if no wetlands exist).

Steve Johnson with Monroe Township pointed out that they would like 330th Avenue maintained to its preconstruction condition, whether grading or gravel additions is needed. Construction will proceed at normal business hours with no night work. Ludeman asked how private drainage tile would be dealt with. Heck said that a survey will include existing private tile lines.

Ludeman opens the discussion to public comment. Steve Farison, resident in the City of Tracy, questions economic impacts from the project. Heck points out that juwi will provide construction managers but all other aspects will be subcontracted out, accounting for an estimated \$2 million in work. After the project, a lease extension will be up to the landowner to continue production. If production ceases, the site will be decommissioned, including post removal, concrete, panels, etc.

Steve Johnson highlights several additions that Monroe Township would like to see added to the conditional use. These include calcium chloride or equivalent applied to road in front of houses and that review of the road before and after will be performed by juwi and maintenance assistance will be provided accordingly.

Steen asks what happens if the project goes defunct. Heck ensure it is very unlikely because once built, there are few inputs. Albert Jensen asks what the payback on the project is. Heck says there is a 8 to 10 percent rate of return on the project. Steve Johnson asks if an Environmental Impact Statement is required. Heck says that the Army Corps of Engineers will require one if needed.

Ludeman moves to Finding-of-Facts. Special conditions were added per request by Monroe Township, including:

1. Help with repair/maintenance of road
2. Review the road condition before and after construction
3. Calcium chloride or equivalent to be applied in front of residents on 330th Avenue.

Williams makes motion to recommend approval of the conditional use permit with conditions, seconded by Chalmers. Chalmers proposed amendment to condition five, to include a representative from the City of Tracy, and condition seven, to highlight that a non-water dust control must be used on 330th Avenue. Chalmers moves to recommend approval of the motion with amendments, seconded by DeCock. All vote in favor, motion carries. Ludeman abstained from voting.

Motion made by Chalmers, seconded by Steen to adjourn at 7:55pm, All vote in favor, motion carries.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Planning and Zoning/Board of Adjustments
Zoning

Luke Olson, Lyon County Planning &