

## FRANKLIN COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

March 8, 2016

The Franklin County Planning Board held its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 8, 2016 in the Franklin County Administration Building, Commissioners Meeting Room, 113 Market Street, Louisburg, North Carolina.

**Present:** William Wallace, Mark McArn., Carolyn Paylor, Ricky May, Mary Solomon, Steve Mitchell, Robert Mann

**Staff:** Scott Hammerbacher, Jason Rogers, and Katie Rhyne.

Vice Chairman Mark McArn called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M., and welcomed everyone in attendance. Steve Mitchell gave the invocation.

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Carolyn Paylor with a second by Steve Mitchell. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the minutes from January 12, 2016, was made by Carolyn Paylor, seconded by Steve Mitchell. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Agenda Items:**

1. 16\_MAS\_01 A preliminary plan has been submitted for Keithley Subdivision. This property is located on NC 96 Hwy in Youngsville Township in the R-40 Residential (WS II Watershed) District. The preliminary plan is for the subdivision of approximately 75.96 acres into 35 lots. The subdivision was designed to be served by private wells and septic systems. A preliminary plat of this property was previously approved by this Board on October 13, 2015 for the subdivision of 24.386 acres into 15 lots.

Franklin County Health Department stated that a site visit has not been made to the property. Any comments in no way guarantees the issuance or denial of any septic permits, or type of septic systems, for the proposed lots. Lots 8, 9,10,11,12, 13, 21, 22, 23, 32, and 35 appear to be the most challenging based on useable soil areas, topography and proposed property lines. House size and placement will be critical on these lots to preserve the required area for initial and repair drain fields. For these reasons, they suggest a soil consultant evaluate these lots and determine the best house location and septic design. Any property lines that may need to be adjusted can be done at this time as well. The remaining lots appear to be suitable for the installation of a subsurface septic system.

Mike Moss (333 S. White Street Wake Forest, North Carolina 27588)

Mike Moss explained that he had been speaking with a soil scientist with regards to lots 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 21, 22, 23, 32, and 35 about them being suitable for the final plat phase and that he would continue to monitor them going forward.

Vice Chairman Marc McArn opened the meeting to questions.

Chairman Wallace asked why there were only two parking spaces for the mail kiosk

Scott Hammerbacher responded by explaining that only two were required with the number of proposed lots. He explained that a 111 lot subdivision required four (4) parking spaces and each additional twenty-five (25) lots would require an extra space.

Mike Moss explained that the idea behind the parking for the kiosk was that individuals who dwelled in the lots would quickly park, receive their mail, then leave their space. He explained that it was not to allow an individual to park for a lengthy amount of time.

Steven Mitchell made a motion for the board to approve the request. The motion was seconded by Robert Mann. The motion passed unanimously.

2. 16\_SUP\_04 Carolina Solar requested a Special Use Permit to construct a solar energy farm on 278 +/- acres of approximately 701.40 acres located off T.K. Allen Rd. in the Louisburg Township.

Carolina Solar Energy proposed to construct a solar energy farm on 278 +/- acres of approximately 701.40 acres located off T.K. Allen Rd. in the Louisburg Township. The application states the solar facility will be built to meet all local, state, and fire codes. The applicant has indicated the site would be visited by Technicians once a quarter to ensure safety, proper operation, maintenance, and aesthetics. The application further stated that the facility posed minimum impact to the parcel and the land could easily be restored to its original use upon completion of the lease. Additionally, within the application, the applicant provided a financial assurance for decommissioning.

The submitted site plan indicated there would be no outdoor lighting, and reflected the landscaping and buffer strips, fencing, and required parking.

In addition to requirements listed in the Franklin County UDO, the following items would be required if the special use permit were approved. Evidence of approval of erosion control from the North Carolina Department of Environment & Natural Resources, the subject property is located within the Tar-Pamlico River basin and would be required to meet nutrient regulations for nitrates and phosphates for new improvements exceeding one-half acre, North Carolina Department of Transportation driveway permit, approval from the North Carolina Utilities Commission, approval from the local fire department of a Knox box, and an engineering estimate for the removal of the solar facility would need to be submitted in addition to a financial surety prior to issuance of building permits.

Jason Rodgers added that the applicant had recently submitted a revised site plan. The revised site plan showed a section of the proposed buffer to be planted with Nellie Stevens Hollies. The Site Plan had also been altered to exclude an existing cemetery from a portion of the proposed Solar Farm.

Gerry Dudzick (137 Kingston Drive Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514)

Gerry Dudzick introduced George Retschie as the Civil Engineer assigned to the project.

Mr. Dudzick explained that the proposed project would be a fifty megawatt (50mW) solar facility which was similar to the five megawatt (5mW) facilities that had been approved by the county at previous meetings but was a larger array. He explained that the system would be a fix tilt, ground mounted system that would be installed via steel poles being inserted into the ground. The proposed system would be of minimal impact to the property and was on a thirty (30) year lease that once expired, would be restored to its original state. He explained that there was a contract with Duke Energy Progress for ten (10) years that was renewable. The project would be serviced once a quarter by one employee and the lot would be maintained by a local landscaping company.

Mr. Dudzick explained that Carolina Solar Energy II LLC had held a meeting to adjoining property owners, to help facilitate conversation and answer questions concerned residents may have had with the project.

George Retschie (221 Providence Rd, Chapel Hill, North Carolina)

Mr. Retschie explained that there would be two access points to the site along T.K. Allen Rd. He stated that the property would be surrounded by a six foot (6ft) chain link fence with three (3) strands of barb wire. Mr. Retschie described the property as having existing culverts but explained that these would be updated and a new one was being proposed as part of the design as well.

Britt Williams (1513 Duke Valentine Wynn Rd)

Mr. Williams asked how many existing trees would be removed from the site.

Mr. Retschie stated that they attempted to preserve as many trees as possible for the existing 20ft buffer requirements and new evergreens would be planted where the trees were too scarce to meet the minimum requirement.

Mr. Williams asked how the solar farm would impact adjacent property values.

Mr. Dudzik answered by explaining that they had spoken with many real estate agents across the state about a project in Goldsboro, North Carolina where a solar farm was constructed while a new development was being constructed. He stated that the real estate

agent indicated that there was no impact on the property values, either positive or negative. He explained that most jurisdictions require robust buffering to minimize the view of the solar panels.

Mr. Williams asked if the solar farm would increase the revenue of the existing land.

Mr. Dudzick replied by explaining the amount of taxes paid on the land would increase due to the cost of the equipment that would be installed on the site.

Steve Mitchell asked who was responsible for policing the landscaping on the lot.

Scott Hammerbacher responded by explaining that the County does enforce landscaping.

William Wallace made a motion to recommend approval of the request. The request was seconded by Ricky May. The motion passed unanimously.

3. 16\_SUP\_05 Carolina Solar requested a Special Use Permit to construct a solar energy farm on 65 +/- acres of at 123.20 acre tract located at 61 Mary Day Dr. off East River Rd. in the Louisburg Township.

The applicant proposed to construct a solar energy farm on 65 +/- acres of a 123.20 acre tract located at 61 Mary Day Dr. located off East River Rd. in the Louisburg Township. The application stated that the solar facility will be built to meet all local, state, and fire codes. The applicant has indicated the site would be visited by Technicians once a quarter to ensure safety, proper operation, maintenance, and aesthetics. The application further stated that the facility poses minimum impact to the parcel and the land can be easily restored to its original use upon completion of the lease. Additionally, within the application, the applicant provided a financial assurance for decommissioning.

The submitted site plan indicated there would be no outdoor lighting, and reflected the landscaping and buffer strips, fencing, and required parking.

In addition to requirements listed in the Franklin County UDO, the following items would be required if the special use permit were approved. Evidence of approval of erosion control from the North Carolina Department of Environment & Natural Resources, the subject property is located within the Tar-Pamlico River basin and is required to meet nutrient regulations for nitrates and phosphates for new improvements exceeding one-half acre, North Carolina Department of Transportation driveway permit, approval from the North Carolina Utilities Commission, approval from the local fire department of a Knox box, and an engineering estimate for the removal of the solar facility would need to be submitted in addition to a financial surety prior to issuance of building permits.

Mr. Dudzick explained that this project was similar to the one that had just been presented. This project would be a five megawatt (5mW) system which would be smaller than the previously proposed solar farm. The contract on this Solar Farm would be for

fifteen (15) years instead of ten (10) years with Duke Energy Progress and would also be renewable.

Scott Hammerbacher pointed out that since this was a smaller solar farm more of the landscaping that currently exists on the property would remain.

Martha Mogley (571 Leonard Farm Rd.)

Mrs. Mogley stated that she was in favor of the project she requested an extra buffer to be placed along the boundary to her property. She also suggested that Carolina Solar Energy II LLC consider allowing goats to maintain the grass on the site instead of mowers.

Mr. Dudzick explained that these topics had been discussed at the community meeting that Carolina Solar Energy II, LLC had held for the adjacent property owners.

Robert Mann made a motion to approve the special use permit as presented. Ricky May seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. 16\_UDO\_04 At the January 12, 2016 Planning Board Meeting, Mr. Mark McArn suggested that Planning Staff look at amending the Ordinance to allow for Indoor Shooting Ranges. Staff proposed to amend the UDO to allow for (Indoor Shooting Ranges) as a Permitted Use within Light Industrial (LI), Heavy Industrial (HI) zoning districts and Conditional Use within Highway Business (HB) and General Business zoning districts. Planning Staff had researched several ordinances across the state in order to establish regulations that they felt would fit within the UDO. Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute G.S. 14-409-.46 existing shooting ranges prior to the adoption of this Ordinance would not be subject to the provisions of this Ordinance. This proposed amendment would provide Citizens with criteria to regulate the size and location of Indoor Shooting Ranges.

Scott Hammerbacher made a suggestion for a change under the Notes to the Table of Permitted Uses Number 3. His proposal was to change the wording to “shall be designed/engineered to absorb or dissipate noise from the firing of weapons so that it is not audible from exterior property lines.” He felt it was more reasonable and less costly to the applicants.

Steve Mitchell made a motion to approve the amendment with the suggested changes. Mary Solomon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Scott Hammerbacher updated the Board on Planning and Inspections Staff activities.

With there being no further business before the Planning Board, Mr. McArn adjourned the meeting at 7:47 P.M.

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William Wallace – Chairman  
Franklin County Planning Board

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Katie Rhyne – Clerk  
Franklin County Planning Board