

Charlotte County Planning Commission
Regular Monthly Meeting (Schedule Change due to Public Hearings)
June 23, 2020
Charlotte County Administration Office

Present:

Andrew Carwile	W.V. Nichols
Deborah Haskins	George Sandridge (Call-In)
Kenny Howard	Eugene Wells
Kerwin Kunath	David Watkins, II

Absent:

Cornell Goldman
Clark Poindexter
Gladys Reid

Staff Present: Dan Witt, County Administrator & Monica Elder, Asst. County Administrator
Board Representative Present: Kay Pierantoni

Chairman Haskins called the meeting to order and Andrew Carwile gave the invocation.

David Watkins made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Kenny Howard seconded the motion and the motion carried with all members present voting yes.

David Watkins made the motion to approve the May 28th meeting minutes corrected to show George Sandridge was present. Kerwin Kunath seconded the motion and the motion carried with all members present voting yes.

Public Comments

Eleanor Cox addressed the Planning Commission to express concerns regarding the U.S. Cellular tower being considered for Mapleton Road and potential health risks due to radiation associated with 5G service. She inquired if the Commission had read the comments she had previously provided and then shared those comments which referenced several studies related to health issues and 5G.

Joel Cathy requested that the Planning Commission give consideration to allowing solar development closer to town boundaries, stating that it was a revenue opportunity and there were areas in close proximity to town where solar development would not be visible.

John Mullins spoke in support of Mr. Cathy's comments noting that there were good potential sites for solar development located within one mile of town boundaries.

Aditya Gangadharan with NOVI Energy requested the opportunity to provide comments when the Commission reached the solar amendment agenda item. Chairman Haskins approved his request.

Bryce Cox had signed up to provide comment, but declined the opportunity.

U.S. Cellular Conditional Use Permit Application

Staff explained that after the May 28th public hearing they were notified by Eleanor Cox that comments her family submitted regarding the U.S. Cellular application were not presented at the hearing. Due to a technical issue which has now been resolved, the comments were not received

from the County's voicemail comment system. Ms. Cox was invited to present her comments at the June 8th Board of Supervisors meeting. The Board then tabled the application until the Planning Commission heard her comments and reviewed their recommendation.

Planning Commissioners discussed the application and the comments provided with participation from Eleanor Cox, Bryce Cox, and Emilee Lauer (representing U.S. Cellular). The discussion addressed the need for additional service, the role of local officials in protecting public health, 4G service versus 5G service, tower frequencies and the process for upgrading existing towers. Supervisor Kay Pierantoni recommended that U.S. Cellular provide documented studies on health issues and 5G that supported their application.

After further discussion, Eugene Wells made the motion to stand by the recommendation the Planning Commission made in May to recommend approval of the application with the proposed conditions. Kerwin Kunath seconded the motion and the motion carried with all members present voting yes.

Zoning Amendment for Solar Proximity to Town Boundaries

Aditya Gangadharan with NOVI Energy addressed the Commission, requesting they consider recommending approval of the zoning amendment to allow the Courthouse Solar project to move through the conditional use permit review process.

The Planning Commission discussed comments received from the towns regarding the proposed zoning amendment. Andrew Carwile recommended revising the proposed amendment to allow the Board of Supervisors to approve solar development no closer than ½ mile to the towns in response to Charlotte Court House's Town Council and to retain the 1 mile boundary for the Town of Keysville in response to comments received. Keysville's representative, George Sandridge, stated that he was supportive if Keysville retained its one mile boundary.

Andrew Carwile made the motion to recommend modification of the proposed zoning ordinance amendment for 10-23-4 to add the following language: "provided that no project is approved closer than one mile to the Town of Keysville or closer than one-half mile to the Towns of Phenix, Charlotte Court House, or Drakes Branch." Kenny Howard seconded the motion and the motion carried with all members present voting yes.

Staff reported that the Board of Zoning Appeals was scheduled to hear the Hermon Presbyterian Church variance application on July 7th and a letter from the Planning Commission recommending approval was being provided as requested. Staff also noted that the Board of Supervisors had approved the zoning amendments for retreats, nonconforming lots, and maximum density for utility-scale solar and several conditional use permit applications were anticipated in the near future.

David Watkins made the motion to adjourn. Andrew Carwile seconded the motion and the motion carried with all members present voting yes.