



STEELE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Steele County Administration Center – 630 Florence - Owatonna, MN 55060

Steele County's Mission:

Driven to deliver quality services in a respectful and fiscally responsible way.

Monday, March 4th, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. – Steele County Boardroom

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by chair Esplan at 7 pm. Present were Esplan, Lammers, Dinse, Spatenka, Ingvaldson, Queen, Pool, Commissioner Brady, and staff member Oolman.

Agenda:

Motion by Lammers, second by Queen to approve the agenda as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes:

Motion by Dinse second by Lammers to approve the Jan 8th, 2024, minutes as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

Building Permits:

The building permits for Jan and Feb were reviewed.

County Board Action

Oolman reported the County Board approved CUP #435 (Dobberstein Craft Retreat) and the renewal of IUP 2009-06 (Wencl Pit) as recommended by the planning commission.

CUP #214 (Medford Sand & Gravel – Medford Pit)

This request is from Medford Sand and Gravel LLC to renew conditional use permit #214 allowing the mining of sand and gravel on properties located in the W ½ of the NW ¼, Section 4, and the E ½ of the NE ¼, Section 5, Medford Township.

Questions and comments of the commission.

Oolman – Medford Sand and Gravel has asked to table a decision on this request so they can complete reclamation of areas in Section 9 that are to be removed from the permit.

The public hearing was opened.

Chris Hanke- I am neighbors with the operation and have no issue with them continuing their work.

As there were no additional questions or comments, the public hearing was closed.

Motion by Ingvaldson, second by Lammers to table discussion on CUP #214 to allow time for the operator to complete reclamation.

Motion passed unanimously.

IUP 2024-01 (EESolar 33, LLC- Busho 4 MW Solar)

This request is from EESolar33 LLC to construct and operate a 4 MW Community Solar Project on property located in the N 1/2 of the NE 1/4, Section 31 Clinton Falls township on property owned by the Buscho Trust.

Questions and comments of the commission.

Oolman – The airport has asked to table any decision on this item as they have questions on the glare study and would like to more time to have their consultant look at it.

Dinse- Will we as the county see that there is financial assurance to reclaim the property?

Oolman- One of the recommended conditions is that they provide evidence they have notified the property owner of their responsibilities to reclaim the site.

Dinse- Do we talk about bonding these types of projects?

Esplan- According to the decommissioning plans it looks like the project needs to be bonded at \$94,877.81.

Pool- Those numbers may not be accurate.

Oolman- Figuring the cost of decommissioning several decades from now is problematic in these types of projects. The counties position in the past has been to make sure the property owner is protecting themselves.

Pool- Our concern should be that the County does not get stuck with this, and it becomes the taxpayers responsibility.

Ingvoldson- The land value should cover the cost of decommissioning in that case.

The public hearing was opened.

Evan Carlson, developer - This is the same type of project that Steele County recently permitted.

This one is just going to be a little bigger. They put it in the lease that they will be responsible for decommissioning and provide financial assurance to the landowner to see that it gets done.

Dinse- Do you build these sites and then sell them?

Carlson- Yes

Dinse- Have you had panels go bad?

Carlson- No I have not had a panel go bad, there are recycling centers that will take the panel if it does go bad. There is not a lot that needs to be decommissioned.

As there were no further questions or comments, the public hearing was closed.

Motion by Dinse, second by Pool to recommend to Table IUP request 2024-01

Motion passed unanimously.

2023 Year Report

Oolman went through the 2023 Year End Planning and Zoning Report

Adjournment:

Motion by Lammers, second by Pool to adjourn at 7:36pm.