

Long Grove Plan Commission & Zoning Board of Appeals (PCZBA)

Regular Meeting Minutes – May 5, 2020

Long Grove Village Hall (virtual)

3110 Old McHenry Road, Long Grove, Illinois 60047

Present:

PCZBA Commissioners Helen Wilson, Chair, Jeff Kazmer, Charles Cohn, Magdalena Dworak-Mathews, Sheldon Rubin, Richard Terrett and Brooke Bauer.

Also Present: Village Planner James Hogue, Brett Smith, PCZBA Secretary, and Attorney Betsy Gates-Alford of the Filippini Law Firm

Absent: None

Visitors: Michael Sarlitto, Rita O'Connor

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wilson at 7:02 pm

Visitor Business:

There was no visitor business.

New Business:

Public Hearing - Consideration of amendments to the Village Code for the Village of Long Grove, Title 5, Zoning Regulations, without limitation, as referred by the Village Board, for the review, recommendation and amendment of the adopted Alternative Energy Systems (AES) Regulations.

Village Planner Hogue reviewed his March 31, 2020 memo which summarizes the changes that the Commission requested in the previous meeting. Village Planner Hogue reviewed the regulations of several neighboring communities. Several communities did not have any AES regulations. Kildeer, Hawthorn Woods and Deer Park only allow roof mounted AES panels. Vernon Hills and Lake Forest only allow solar AES for heating and cooling applications. Highland Park only allows wind AES. Lake Bluff allows both building mounted and ground mounted solar AES. Wadsworth allows both building mounted and freestanding solar AES. Village Planner Hogue was not able to find much information on buffering but found model language from various Georgia regulations. Long Grove's regulations are seemingly more comprehensive than other neighboring communities.

Attorney Alford revised the ordinance and presented her changes. On page 7, Attorney Alford made changes regarding the color of the panels. The color of the finish of the panels should be reasonably close to the color of the panel itself. On page 10, regarding decommissioning, if all or a material portion of an AES solar system is abandoned, then the decommissioning obligation is triggered. On page 11, obligation of the owner of an AES to make reasonable updates to a decommissioning plan may become necessary

due to technology changes. On page 17, similar changes regarding decommissioning for geothermal systems. No comments from the Commission to Attorney Alford's changes.

Chairman Wilson asks if any additional changes are necessary. Commissioner Cohn has no comments. Visitor Sarlitto asked whether the Commission has taken into account the screening issues with the school district and from the Lake County workshops. Commissioner Dworak does not have any substantive comments and stated that if ground panels require special use permits, the Commission does not need to address such situation any more in the regulations. Commissioner Bauer thanked Village Planner Hogue for his research work on the neighboring communities. Commissioner Bauer asked if there is a conflict between what is ground mounted and what is an accessory structure and whether it needs to be further addressed in the ordinance. A vigorous discussion regarding Commissioner Bauer's questions subsequently took place. Attorney Alford stated that "Accessory Structure" is already defined in the code. A discussion ensued regarding solar panels on detached accessory structures and whether solar panels can be used to heat a barn. The Commission agreed that the simplest solution is to prohibit solar panels on detached accessory structures as several neighboring communities have already done that. Commissioner Kazmer asked if AES panels should be limited on an accessory structure only if it produces heat or light for such accessory structure only. Attorney Alford suggested that a detached accessory structure with panels could be a special use permit as it is more burdensome and requires more fees and review costs. A discussion ensued on the aesthetics of solar panels. Most of the Commissioners do not mind the aesthetics or find them unsightly. Chairman Wilson stated her reluctance to prohibit access to sunlight by overscreening or overburden the ability to use panels and that making it a special use permit may make it prohibitive. Visitor Sarlitto asked how many times in the past 5-10 years has this been an actual resident-resident issue?

Chairman Wilson asked if there are any additional comments or questions or is the Commission ready to make a motion to send the revised regulations to the Board of Trustees. Commissioner Terrett made a motion to move it on (but adding that panels on detached accessory structure must serve the needs of such structure). Commissioner Dworak seconded the motion. Motion passes on aye vote unanimously.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Commissioner Cohn and seconded by Commissioner Terrett to recommend approval of the March 3, 2020 Minutes. On a voice vote, all aye.

Adjournment:

The next meeting is currently scheduled for June 2, 2020. Commissioner Cohn moved to adjourn and seconded by Commissioner Bauer. On a voice vote, all aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brett Smith

Brett Smith, PCZBA Secretary