

Charlotte County Planning Commission
May 24, 2022
Randolph-Henry High School Auditorium

Present:

Miller Adams	W.V. Nichols
Patrick Andrews	Clark Poindexter
James Benn	Hazel Bowman Smith*
Andrew Carwile	David Watkins, Jr.
Cornell Goldman	Eugene Wells
Kenny Howard	

Absent:

Kerwin Kunath

**Board of Supervisors Representative – Non-voting*

Staff in Attendance: Dan Witt, County Administrator
Monica Elder, Assistant County Administrator

Chairman Carwile called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm and David Watkins gave the invocation.

Cornell Goldman made the motion to approve the minutes for January 25, 2022; April 19, 2022; April 26, 2022, and May 3, 2022. Kenny Howard seconded the motion and the motion carried with all members present voting yes.

In response to Conflict of Interest Act information staff and the County Attorney provided prior to the meeting, Chairman Carwile inquired if any Commissioner had a statement to make associated with Tall Pines Solar. Patrick Andrews stated he was employed by Dominion Energy and operated a land management business but did not have a conflict of interest. Cornell Goldman stated that he had no conflict of interest. Chairman Carwile stated he had no direct beneficial interest in Tall Pines nor did he provide services to Tall Pines or related parties. He stated that he did have a direct interest in real property that is adjacent or near property under option for solar development and, through LEGAS Holdings LLC, had real property under option for solar development which was not associated with Tall Pines Solar.

Consideration of Tall Pines Solar

Lindsay Edwards with the County's third-party reviewer, the Berkley Group, addressed questions regarding updates to the proposed conditions for Tall Pines Solar and stated that staff's recommendation was to approve the application.

Commissioners inquired if the applicant's change from a 220MW facility to a 240MW facility should be incorporated into the decommissioning estimate. Ms. Edwards explained the increase was related to the capacity of proposed equipment and would not result in additional equipment or project area, so would not impact decommissioning cost. It was also noted that the conditions require the decommissioning cost be recalculated at the time the building permit is obtained and every five years thereafter.

Ms. Edwards stated the applicant had provided clarification on project density and updated density calculations in a follow-up letter that was included in the packet. The new calculation included the additional 65 acres that were added to the project prior to the April 26th hearing,

Cornell Goldman then made the motion to recommend approval of the Tall Pines Solar conditional use permit application with the conditions recommended by staff. Patrick Andrews seconded the motion.

After discussion on the need for a project manager, Cornell Goldman amended his motion to recommend approval of the Tall Pines Solar conditional use permit application with the conditions recommended by staff and an additional condition to require a professional construction firm with solar experience be engaged as project manager at the cost of the applicant. Patrick Andrews seconded the amended motion.

Roll call vote on the motion as amended was as follows: Cornell Goldman – Yes; Patrick Andrews – Yes; Miller Adams – No; Kenny Howard – Yes; Clark Poindexter – No; W.V. Nichols – Yes; David Watkins – No; Eugene Wells – Yes; James Benn – Yes; Andrew Carwile – Yes. Motion carried 7-3 with Kerwin Kunath absent.

Closing Public Comments

Citizen P.K. Pettus addressed the Commission regarding a Virginia Tech report identifying potential issues with land restoration and reuse after solar due to soil compaction and reclamation costs. She recommended the county wait for a report from HB206 prior to issuing more solar approvals.

Staff Report

Staff reported that the Board of Supervisors had received the Commission's recommendation on Randolph Solar and had scheduled their public hearing for June 1st. Staff noted that Dominion Energy had provided a presentation at the May Board meeting on a new transmission line project known as the Butler Farm Transmission Line that would cross Charlotte County. In addition, Dominion had announced their purchase of the Courthouse Solar project. Staff then provided an update on the comprehensive plan community survey, noting work on the plan would continue in June.

Adjourn

David Watkins made the motion to adjourn. Cornell Goldman seconded the motion, and the motion carried with all members present voting yes.