



MINUTES

Carbondale Planning Commission
Wednesday, March 2, 2022
Room 108, 6:00 p.m.
City Hall/Civic Center

Ms. Litecky called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Members Present: LeBeau, Sheffer, Hamilton, Lilly, Litecky, and Doherty (ex-officio)

Members Absent: Burnside and Love

Staff Present: Lenzini, Maxwell, and Gibson

1. Approval of Minutes:

There were none.

2. Citizen Comments or Questions

There were none.

3. Report of Officers, Committees, Communications

There were none.

4. Public Hearings

PC 22-06 - Map Amendment of 3436 S. Illinois Ave. from R-1-8D (Low-Density Residential 2-Unit Dwelling) District to PAR (Professional Administrative Residential) District.

Ms. Litecky declared Public Hearing PC 22-06 open and for Ms. Maxwell to review PC 22-06.

Ms. Litecky asked Ms. Maxwell to read the staff report. Ms. Maxwell read parts A and B of the staff report.

Ms. Litecky asked if the Commissioners had questions for staff.

There were none.

Ms. Litecky asked if the applicant was present and wished to speak.

The applicant, Dr. Paul Shawler, is present and is available for questions.

Ms. Litecky asked if there were any questions for the applicant.

There were none.

Ms. Litecky asked if anyone wished to speak in favor.

There were none.

Ms. Litecky asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition.

There were none.

Ms. Maxwell read Part C of the staff report for PC 22-06, with a recommendation of approval.

Ms. Litecky asked if the Commissioners had questions for staff.

Mr. Sheffer asked if there is a requirement to increase parking. Ms. Maxwell stated there is already adequate parking as there is about 24 paved spaces.

Ms. Litecky asked if there were questions from anyone to anyone.

There were none.

Ms. Litecky declared PC 22-06 closed and asked for a motion on the findings of fact.

Mr. Sheffer moved that the Commission accept as findings of fact Part A & B of the staff report for PC 22-06, the applicant was present, zero spoke in favor, zero spoke in opposition, and zero letters/emails were read in opposition or support, and seconded by Mr. LeBeau.

The motion was passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Sheffer moved that the Commission recommend approval of the PC 22-06, seconded by Ms. Lilly.

Ms. Litecky stated she would like an amendment that the property be annexed when it becomes contiguous.

Mr. Sheffer moved to amend the motion that the Commission recommends approval and that the property will be annexed into the City when the property is contiguous, seconded

by Ms. Lilly.

Ms. Maxwell clarified that the property will sign an agreement to annex into the City when they do become contiguous.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes – 5 (LeBeau, Sheffer, Hamilton, Lilly and Litecky)

No- 0

Mr. Lenzini stated that the item will move forward with recommendation for approval of PC 22-06 for the March 22nd City Council meeting.

PC 22-07 -Text Amendment Regarding Zoning Regulation of Ground Mount Solar Energy Systems

Ms. Litecky declared Public Hearing PC 22-07 open and for Ms. Maxwell to review PC 22-07.

Ms. Litecky asked Ms. Maxwell to read the staff report. Ms. Maxwell read the staff report. There was a sentence missing in the staff report. Ms. Maxwell added “For lots greater than 10,000 square feet, the system shall not be greater than 5% of the lot area” in the section on special requirements, first paragraph.

Ms. Litecky asked if the Commissioners had questions for staff.

Dr. Lebeau asked if there is anything of the ground mount solar reflectors that criminals could steal. Mr. Beck stated that criminals could steal the solar modules but there is not a lot of monetary value in the panels.

Ms. Litecky asked staff if there has been any vandalism of the police stations ground mount solar. Mr. Lenzini stated not that he is aware of.

Ms. Litecky asked if anyone wished to speak in favor.

There were none.

Ms. Litecky asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition.

Mr. Benson of AES Solar asked that the height of the solar panels is 11 feet and 14 feet was requested. Mr. Lenzini stated there wasn't a lot of information on the ground mount

solar panels from other communities as far as the height. He stated that there could be an amendment to the code that City Council will receive and is a discussion for the Planning Commission.

Mr. Benson asked if the area of the primary structure square footage could be changed to 800 square feet for all lots or no less than 10 percent and also change the setbacks from 10 feet to preferably 3 feet but will settle for 5 feet.

Mr. Beck stated that all solar panels are composed of non-reflective materials as it would decrease the solar production as they are designed to absorb all solar light. Mr. Lenzini stated that staff wanted to make sure there was no issues with the panels reflecting light for passing helicopters and air planes.

Mr. Benson stated that there could be a general phrase that the solar panels will be constructed of non-reflective materials there will not be an issues with that as all solar panels are non-reflective. There is not any data or information about how reflective the solar panels are as it is not an issue because if the panels are more reflective then they are less efficient.

Ms. Litecky stated she has no issue with a 10 foot setback, but asked why 800 square feet instead of the proposed 500 square feet.

Mr. Shakir of AES Solar stated that this proposal is more restrictive than the accessory code in size and setback and would like to keep it the ground solar not more restrictive than the accessory code.

Mr. Beck asked if Mr. Shakir could calculate what the amount of an 800 square foot solar would produce.

Mr. Lenzini stated that the square footage for the solar code is in addition to the accessory code, so a customer could have an 800 square foot accessory structure as well the 500 square foot ground solar. He also stated that there were considerations for the 10 foot setback like a neighbor's tree branch falling on the solar or any work that needs to be done.

Mr. Shakir did calculations for a small 2 bedroom house and the minimum amount of square footage that is needed for that home would be 680 square feet. He stated that the 500 square feet proposed would not be enough. He also stated that the shade percentage will affect the amount of square footage as if a property has more shade it will require more square footage to have the same production value.

Mr. Sheffer stated he is okay with the changes of the height of the panels going from 11 feet to 14 feet and changing the square footage from 500 to 800. He stated the change of the setback from 10 feet to 3 or 5 feet as there needs to be room between the properties to be courteous of neighboring properties.

Mr. Benson stated that as with the accessory structure code, having solar panels 3 or 5 feet

from the setback then having a shed 3 feet from the setback.

Mr. Sheffer stated that the 3 or 5 foot setback would be too close and he would be willing to compromise with a 7 foot setback but feels the 10 foot setback is the best choice.

Ms. Litecky and Dr. Lebeau stated they agree with Mr. Sheffer but would like to stay with the 10 foot setback.

Dr. Hamilton stated he is okay with the 10 foot setback.

Mr. Doherty asked what is the reason for the height of the solar panels to be 11 feet or changed to 14 feet, why not shorter.

Mr. Benson stated the shorter or closer to the ground the panels are, the more obstructive they are and are the less efficient as well. Mr. Shakir stated one the reasons for raising the panels is due to a shade issue and the reason for 14 feet maximum height is that is the most latitude that the manufacturer with allow and also if the ground is too hard and won't allow the piles to go down further.

Ms. Litecky stated she would rather the height be set at 11 feet instead of 14 feet.

Mr. Beck stated that the National Electric Code requires a minimum height of the solar panels to be 6 feet 7 inches.

Mr. Doherty clarified that the bottom of the panel would have to meet the minimum height of the 6 foot 7 inches. Mr. Beck agreed.

Mr. Sheffer stated that the changes that need to be voted on will be the materials of the solar panels will be non-reflective, changing the height of the solar panels and the square footage of the solar system. There will be no changes to the setback, it will stay at 10 feet.

There was then a discussion on changing the square footage of the solar system to 800 square feet for lots less than 10,000 square feet and for lots that are greater than 10,000 square feet, change the square footage percentage to 8 percent. The commission agreed.

There was then a discussion on the height of the solar panels and changing the height from 11 feet to 14 feet. Mr. Sheffer proposed a compromise to change the height to 12 feet and the Commission agreed.

Ms. Litecky invited anyone to ask anyone a question.

There were none.

Ms. Litecky declared PC 22-07 closed and asked for a motion on the findings of fact.

Mr. Sheffer made a motion to make the following changes of the finding of facts, in section

(1) the height of the solar panels be change to 12 feet, the square footage of the system be changed to 800 square feet for lots less than 10,000 square feet and 8 percent for lots greater than 10,000 square feet, no change to the setbacks, and change the wording in section (3) from 30% to non-reflective materials. Seconded by Dr. Lebeau.

The motion was passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Ms. Litecky asked for a motion on the findings of fact.

Mr. Sheffer moved that the Commission accept as findings of fact Part A & B with changes of the staff report for PC 22-07, the applicant was present, zero spoke in favor, one spoke in opposition, and zero letters/emails were read in opposition or support, and seconded by Dr. LeBeau.

The motion was passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Sheffer moved that the Commission recommend approval of the PC 22-07, seconded by Ms. Lilly.

Roll Call Vote:

Yes – 5 (LeBeau, Sheffer, Hamilton, Lilly and Litecky)

No- 0

Mr. Lenzini stated that the item will move forward with recommendation for approval of PC 22-07 for the March 22nd City Council meeting.

5. Old Business

There was none.

6. New Business

A. Mr. Doherty reviewed the City Council meetings as they related to Planning.

6. Adjournment

Ms. Litecky adjourned the meeting at 8:41 p.m.