

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP LAND USE BOARD
WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
May 16, 2012

FLAG SALUTE:

The Franklin Township (Warren County) Land Use Board met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, May 16, 2012 at the Franklin Township Municipal building at 2093 Rt. 57, Broadway, NJ 08808. Vice Chairman J. Tietz called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and declared all aspects of the Open Public Meeting Act had been met by posting notice of this meeting on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building and notifying the Municipal Clerk. Advertisement of notice was placed in the Star Gazette of Hackettstown, NJ and the Express Times of Easton, Pa.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Mayor Butler, Mr. Corde, Mr. Onembo, Mr. Tietz, Mr. Van Sadlers, Mr. Schnorrbusch, Mr. Banes

Members Absent: Mr. Santini, Mr. Sigler, Mr. Hart, Mr. Meltzer, Ms. Payne, Ms. Kantor

Also Present: Engineer G. Weber, Attorney R. Schneider, Planner J. Kyle

CORRESPONDENCE:

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Franklin Township Land Use board adopted this Resolution in order to enter into executive session at 7:40 in order to discuss matters of Attorney/Client Privilege and Pending Litigation:

Motion by : Mr. Tietz, seconded by Mr. Van Sadlers, motion carries to enter into Executive Session.

WHEREAS, N.J.S. 2:4-12, Open Public Meetings Act, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances existed:

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Land Use Board of the Township of Franklin, County of Warren, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of the hereinafter specified subject matters;
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:
Attorney/Client Privilege regarding pending litigation
3. It is anticipated at this time that the above matter will be made public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.
4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

A motion was made at 8:01 p.m. to exit executive session and return to public session.

Motion by : Mr. Tietz, seconded by Mr. Van Sadlers, motion carries to exit executive session and return to public session. Mayor Butler left the meeting at this time.

PUBLIC HEARING & DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Docket 2011 - 10 - ISE Farms Solar/Moncada NJ Solar 201, LLC.
Public Hearing for Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan application for Block 26 Lots 16 & 17 and Block 27 Lot 2. This application was carried from the May 2, 2012 meeting without further notice. The applicant was represented by Attorney Daniel J. O'Hern Jr. of Byrnes O'Hern LLC, Engineer Michael R. Thomas of Innovative Engineering, Inc. and Consultant William Rever of Global Strategic Consulting Solar & Renewable Energy. Attorney D. O'Hern reviewed the background of Moncada NJ Solar 201 a sister company of Moncada Energy which is based in Europe, Italy. Moncada is the manufacturer of the panels, the owner and the developer. Mr. O'Hern stated the proposed site is located on the ISE Farms property, the solar farm will provide direct energy to their facility and will provide almost if not all of the energy for the facility which is an inherently beneficial use. The variance standards were reviewed for the board.

Attorney R. Schneider swore in Engineer Michael R. Thomas of Innovative Engineering, Inc, Mr. Thomas reviewed his credentials for the board and was accepted as an expert witness. Mr. Thomas presented Exhibit A-1 Aerial Map. Mr. Thomas reviewed the systems first system will be connected directly to ISE Farms and second will be connected to the grid. Mr. Thomas reviewed the size, location and existing conditions on ISE Farms and the area surrounding the site including the railroad right of way and JCP&L right of way. Mr. Thomas stated the initial point of access will be off of Good Springs Road off of the existing complex driveway around the rear of the complex to the Gate in the rear of the site. Each facility will have an eight foot tall fence around it which will include Knox box connections if an emergency situation should arise.

Attorney R. Schneider swore in Mr. William Rever of Global Strategic Consulting Solar & Renewable Energy, Mr. Rever reviewed his credentials for the board and was accepted as an expert witness. Mr. Rever stated the solar installation is a normal type of installation. Mr. Rever stated the site was good due to the fact it is open and flat providing easy access to the power lines. The site will provide a lot of clean renewable energy, no noise or emissions from the project. The site would replace a substantial amount of fossil fuel. Mr. Rever stated the solar is being encouraged to generate local economic activity. Mr. Rever reviewed the type of solar panel which will be used for this project and how the panel is manufactured Mr. Rever presented Exhibit A-2 Solar Panel. Attorney D. O'Hern provided exhibit A-3 Material Safety Data sheets for AN10 TCO coated glass for thin film application. Exhibit A-4 Manufacturer Safety Data sheet for a-Si thin film Solar PV Serie S1. Exhibit A-5 Moncada Energy Group thin film Si Manufacturing process. Mr. Rever stated the panels absorb about 90% of the sunlight and reflect about 10% light and do not hold a charge at night. Mr. Tietz asked about how long have these panels been commercially available, the larger modules about five years.

Mr. Rever explained and stated the panels have a life expectancy of twenty five years. Mr. Rever explained the technology does not advance that quickly. Mr. Onembo asked what makes these panels superior, Mr. Rever explained the panel is manufactured by Moncada so you have strength behind it. It's a well made very modern type of panel. Mr. Onembo asked what would you estimate the value of installation what kind of value is related to a project of this size, Mr. Rever explained if you take out the cost of the project it would be in excess of seven figures. Mr. Rever stated it varies a lot I don't know that aspect of this project.

Mr. Banes asked how would the panels be stacked, Mr. O'Hern stated the project Engineer would answer that. Mr. Schnorrbusch who would clean up the site twenty five years from now, Moncada would be responsible.

Mr. Onembo what percentage of the project is staying on site, Mr. O'Hern stated approximately three mega watts for Ise Farm and five mega watts to the grid.

Mr. Van Sadlers asked for glare to be addressed, Mr. Rever stated it would be addressed.

Mr. Kyle asked how other types of panels would compare to other panels for glare.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Donald Craig of 83 Good Springs Road.

Who is the township's expert for the board, Mr. Corde explained.

If the panels are angled toward you what will the reflection be, Mr. Schneider asked the witness to respond regarding glare. Mr. Rever stated generally speaking they will appear dark. How are they anchored to the ground. Mr. Rever stated basically they are screwed in. Could they please provide additional pictures.

Ms. Diane Burton of 3 Old Street.

How much would it cost to clean it up and who would pay.

Mr. O'Hern stated it will be addressed.

Ms. Jean Marie Murray Good Springs Road.

How much glare off of the framework, Mr. Rever replied Aluminum framework.

What does rain sound like on the panels, will provide.

Where is the closest facility for Moncada, first project in the United States.

Engineer Michael Thomas reviewed the walk through of the site and a review visual landscape for the site. Mr. Thomas stated most of the comments have been addressed for the site from the Fire official including Knox box at gates for emergency access. Mr. Thomas reviewed the permits including flood hazard, LOI, Railroad Crossing (pipe/wire for electrical utility), Soil Conservation and awaiting Warren County Planning Board approval. JCP&L have taken to exception to what is on the plans. Mr. Thomas provided the easement letter dated April 22, 2012 from JCP&L.

Mr. Thomas explained the reduction of run off on site with the meadow grass which should actually slow down the stormwater on site. The peak and volume run off will be reduced at the site. Engineer G. Weber briefly discussed storm water responsibilities.

Lighting:

Mr. Thomas there would be lighting on the north eastern corner, downward facing led lights. We have provided lighting near each proposed gate, thirteen motion activated lights, fourteen in total for the overall site.

Planner J. Kyle and Chief Read suggested the lighting be on switches in the Knox boxes. motion sensors with animals around will be on and off all night long, the applicant agreed.

Buffering:

Mr. Thomas stated there was an existing vegetative buffer around the site some additional screening will be provided on the south western corner per the Township Engineer's request to supplement the open area identified.

Additional evergreen screening will be provided per the landscape design.

Approximately seven acres of hedgerow will be removed at the site as described in Mr. Kyle's report dated April 23, 2012. , Mr. Kyle suggested a post project inspection to check for gaps in the buffer.

Mr. Kyle suggested a visual impact study for the surrounding homes east of Good Springs Road. Mr. Thomas stated they will provide photo simulations.

Mr. Banes requested information on the racking detail, Mr. Thomas explained. Mr. Thomas addressed the process for the installation of the panels which will take approximately eight to twelve months to construct depending on the speed with which they receive their permits. The site will not really be graded the site will be terraced with a minimum height will 6.5 foot to a maximum of 12 foot the array for the most part is less than ten. Mr. Thomas explained tilt for the board.

Engineer's report:

Engineer G. Weber reviewed his report dated April 30, 2012. Mr. Weber asked the board how they would like to deal with the tree rows for the visual impact of the facility. Mr. O'Hern stated they would have to address this with the applicant ISE Farm, the board agreed. Planner J. Kyle suggested they cover the areas covered by permit. Mr. Thomas reviewed the wetland Areas which are primarily the western area of the site. Engineer G. Weber briefly reviewed the storm water management report issues comment #10 and #11. Mr. Weber stated there would have to be additional disturbance for trenching on the site and planting of trees on the southwest corner. Mr. Weber stated some of the panels installed in the flood hazard area may be subject to flooding item #12. Will need to comply with the township's ordinance Chapter 80 which shows requirements for development in the flood hazard areas. Mr. Thomas reviewed the area for the board. Mr. Thomas will have to provide additional information regarding the installation of the panels in the flood hazard area. The applicant will correct references for item #14 in the EIS.

Mr. Thomas stated in the Stormwater report they will show the DEP disturbances on site.

Mr. Weber stated the run off will also be reduced by the meadowgrass as

Mr. Thomas testified to.

The applicant would satisfy the remaining items per the Engineer's report.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Don Craig of 83 Good Springs Road.

What is the topography for the site and will there be additional power lines and how will this impact adjacent homes, Mr. Thomas explained.

Linda Feltovic of 95 Good Springs Road.

How do the brackets attach, Mr. Thomas explained with acrylic adhesive tape rated for wind gusts.

Attorney R. Schneider announced the application would be carried to the June 6, 2012 meeting without further notice being required.

ADJOURNMENT: 10:50 p.m.

With no further business before the board and no public comment offered the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret Housman, Secretary
Franklin Township Land Use Board