

**VEVAY TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, August 3, 2022  
Vevay Township Hall – 6:30 p.m.  
517-676-9523  
MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order by Nate Ross at 6:32 PM.

Present: Anderson, Cady, Winters, McNeilly, Ross, VanDeventer, and Pinkerton

Absent: None

Others present: John Lazet, Supervisor

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

All present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. Set/Amend Agenda**

MOTION made by McNeilly accept, SECONDED by Anderson to set the agenda as presented.

MOTION carried 7-0.

**IV. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting July 6, 2022**

MOTION made by Cady to approve with correction to add Ross as present, SECONDED by McNeilly to approve the minutes as amended.

MOTION carried 7-0.

Special Meeting July 27, 2022

MOTION made by Cady to approve, SECONDED by Winters to approve the minutes as presented. McNeilly recused herself as she was not present at the Special Meeting.

MOTION carried 6-0.

**V. Brief Public Comment**

Public Comment:

Interested resident of a neighboring township commented on behalf of a family member potentially moving to Vevay Township about the current Home Occupation ordinances.

**VI. Reports/Correspondence**

A. July 2022 Building Report

B. July 2022 Code Enforcement Report

C. Board of Trustees Minutes 6-7-22, 6-15-22 & 6-17-22 (distribution only)

Reports A-C provided to the commission for information only. Reports are on file with the Vevay Township Office.

**VII. Pending Business**

**A. Ground mount solar array, 2285 Coy Road**

Applicant presented a completed building permit application, including engineered drawings. All application and building fees have been paid to the township office.

Following are the findings of fact for the requested project:

**SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM (SES)**

A system consisting of a device or combination of devices, structures or parts thereof, that collect, transfer or transform solar radiant energy into thermal, chemical or electrical energy.

**CONDITIONS MET**

SMALL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM (SSES): A solar energy system intended to principally serve a single residential unit or business and which relies on roof mounted and/or ground mounted collection systems that occupy no more than one-half (0.5) acre.

**CONDITION MET**

SOLAR COLLECTION PANELS: Panels and tiles comprised of semiconductor devices and typically referred to as photovoltaic cells, which collect and convert solar energy directly into electricity. Ground mounted solar collection panels are panels attached to the ground by a pole, metal frame or other similar support structure.

**CONDITIONS MET**

**In accordance with Zoning Ordinance 3.27 (A), Small Solar Energy System (SSES), following are the findings of fact for the requested project:**

**A. Small Solar Energy Systems (SSES)**

**1. SSES Authorization, Review and Approval Procedures:**

- a. An SSES is an authorized accessory use in all districts subject to SSES manufacturer specifications, Township ordinance, as amended, and applicable State and Federal law and regulations. An SSES shall comply with the standards for accessory structures under section 3.09, in the district in which the SSES is located. SSES mounted on the ground by way of posts or other support structure shall be subject to Planning Commission approval, upon the receipt of a complete application that complies with the standards of this section. An SSES, that is roof-mounted, shall be subject to approval of the Zoning Administrator or other designated Township official upon the receipt of a complete application and the Zoning Administrator or Township official finds that the application complies with the standards of this section.

**CONDITIONS MET**

- b. An application for a SSES need not include a site plan prepared according to Chapter 14, but the application shall include a scaled property line survey showing north arrow; property dimensions, bearings, lot area, legal description, and parcel or lot number; the location and footprint of existing driveways, buildings and structures including distances of buildings and structures from lot lines; existing public and private right-of-ways and easements; existing location of septic drain field and potable water well and other existing and proposed utility locations; and structures on adjacent properties within one hundred-fifty (150) feet of a shared lot line. The Zoning Administrator may require a property line survey prepared by a Michigan-licensed surveyor, and the delineation of existing structures on the property as part of such survey, in the case where a more detailed or official delineation of property lines and structures is necessary to ensure compliance with this Section.

**CONDITIONS MET**

**2. SSES General Provisions**

- a. Solar collection panels must be placed in such manner so as to not direct solar glare onto nearby residences, businesses or public roadways. When deemed necessary, the Zoning Administrator, or designated Township official, may require a report from a registered civil engineer or other professional deemed qualified by the Township official, attesting to the glare impact on nearby properties and public roadways.
  
- b. Solar collection panels shall not cause the district's maximum lot coverage standards to be exceeded.

**CONDITIONS MET**

**3. Roof-Mounted Systems**

- a. A solar energy system on the roof of a principal building or accessory structure, whether an integral part of the roof structure or mounted on the finished roof structure, and whether the system is flush with the roof or projects from or at an angle to the roof, may exceed the maximum height standard for the structure to which it is attached according to the district in which it is to be located, but no portion of the system shall extend more than five (5) feet above the roof surface to which it is attached.
  
- b. Roof-mounted solar collection panels located on a flat roof in a Residential or Agricultural district shall be set back from the edge of the roof a minimum distance of ten (10) feet.

**NOT APPLICABLE**

4. Ground-Mounted Systems

- a. Ground mounted solar collection panels shall comply with the standards for accessory structures for the district in which the panels are to be located. Except that with approval of the Planning Commission, a tracking ground mounted SSES, with solar collection panels that move throughout the day to track the sun, may exceed the height requirements designated for accessory structures in section 3.09 (E) by no more than three (3) feet (unless otherwise designated in this section). The Zoning Administrator or designated Township official may make recommendations to the Planning Commission regarding exceptions to the requirements for accessory structures in the subject district. A tracking ground mounted SSES approved by the Planning Commission that exceeds the height requirements of section 3.09 (E) shall be subject to a minimum setback of the distance equal to the maximum height of the SSES' solar panels from the adjacent lot lines. In no case shall an SSES exceed fifteen (15) feet in height in a designated Residential District.

**CONDITIONS MET**

- b. A ground mounted SSES may not be located in a front yard unless there is a minimum six hundred (600) foot setback from the centerline of the road. Any exceptions to the 600-foot setback requirement may be approved by the Planning Commission based upon written request, considering practical hardship, SSES design, and lot configuration. A ground mounted SSES **shall not** be located in the front yard closer than three hundred (300) feet of the centerline of the road, and one hundred feet (100) of adjacent lot lines, **except for adjacent parcels zoned as Commercial or Industrial, the side-lot set-back may be reduced to 30 feet with Planning Commission approval.** Otherwise, a ground mounted SSES is only permitted in the side or rear of the primary use building, no closer than 30 feet of adjacent lot lines, or a setback equal to the maximum height of a tracking SSES that exceeds height requirements for accessory structures in subject district.

**CONDITIONS MET**

- c. If the panels of a tracking SSES tilt at an angle to track the sun, the SSES, when tilted, may not encroach into setback requirements.

**NOT APPLICABLE**

- d. To the extent possible, an SSES shall be located to minimize the view from the public right-of-way and adjacent dwelling(s). A landscape, buffering, or screening plan, consisting of vegetative, non-vegetative, or man-made materials, or fencing, may be required to be submitted to the Planning Commission who shall determine if landscape, buffering or screening is necessary or adequate to reduce the visual impact of SSES to

adjacent dwellings and/or public roadways. Non-vegetative screening need not exceed a height of eight feet. This section is exempt from Section 15.05.

**Due to the location of the solar array with respect to neighboring structures and current vegetation, the Planning Commission felt screening was sufficient and no additional buffering or screening would be necessary. CONDITIONS MET**

- e. The Planning Commission may approve exceptions to screening requirements based upon practical hardship, SSES design, lot configuration and if it is demonstrated that the only feasible location for screening would impede the functioning of the SSES.

**NOT APPLICABLE**

- f. The surfaces of the solar panels shall not be used as a sign message board.

**Applicant advised and agreed that solar panel will not be used as a sign message board.**

- g. When a ground mounted SSES ceases to operate or is abandoned for six (6) months, or is deemed by the Building Inspector to be unsafe or not consistent with the building code, the applicant shall repair and restore the system to good working order within a reasonable time set by the Zoning Administrator or otherwise remove the system in its entirety including posts, equipment, panels, foundations and other features and restore the ground to its preconstruction state.

**Applicant was advised and agreed to reclamation of parcel in its entirety to preconstruction state upon the solar array ceasing to be viable and in working order.**

McNeilly MOTIONED that the installation of the solar array presented by Harvest Solar and Butcher Farm at parcel 33-10-10-21-300-001 be approved. Cady seconded MOTION. MOTION carried 7-0.

**B. LSES Zoning Ordinance amendments**

- 1. Special Meeting on July 27, PC recommended to the board to place a moratorium on application, approval, and construction of LSES for at least 6 months while the sub-committee works to review and update the LSES Zoning Ordinance.

**C. Home Occupations (previously distributed materials and new SLU spreadsheet)**

- 1. Reviewed potential new verbiage. Sub-committee will take the comment back and will bring revisions to the PC next month.

**D. Other Possible Zoning Ordinance Amendments (no enclosure)**

- 1. 3.17 A&C. Setback Measurements for Corner Lots

**VIII. Any Other Business**

No other business

**IX. Additional Public Comment**

Two interested residents of a neighboring township commented on their experience with their township's development of Wind and Solar Ordinances.

A Vevay Township resident voiced concern over losing farmland in the township to wind and solar energy.

**X. Adjournment**

MOTION by Cady to Adjourn

MOTION seconded by Anderson

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 PM.

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Ginette Anderson - Secretary