

Town of Florida Planning Board Meeting
Monday, March 4, 2024
6:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Stephen Viele, Chairman
Peter Rea, Member
Scott Marshall, Member
John Hutchison, Member
Nicholas Armour, Deputy Chairman
Jayme King, 1st Alternate
Cindy Schultz, 2nd Alternate
Michael Crowe, Attorney
Dan Roth, Member
John Hutchison, Member

ABSENT:

Charles Saul, Member

I. Call to Order

A meeting of the Town of Florida Planning Board was called to order at 6:30pm, by Chairman Stephen Viele.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

IV. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion was made by Jayme King and seconded by Peter Rea to accept the Agenda; all members present in favor and passed. None opposed.

V. Adoption of Minutes

Motion was made by Scott Marshall and seconded by Dan Roth to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2024 meeting. All members present in favor and passed. None opposed.

VI. Correspondence

Email comments from the public on New Leaf Turbine and DEIS

VII. Business

1. Public Hearing for New Leaf Wind Turbine DEIS

Chairman Steve Viele opened public comment. Dave Strong, Sr. Project Developer, from New Leaf introduced their stenographer. She was present to take minutes during the public comment portion. Mr. Strong gave a brief presentation of the turbine project. Explaining that this power will feed the local grid to be sold at a 10% discount. A host community agreement will be made and the Town will get \$30,000 per year with an escalation of 2% each year for the life of the turbine. A height variance was granted in 2021 and the Montgomery County Planning Board gave approval for the project to proceed. Welcome the comments and concerns from the public to be able to work with the Town and residents. Lydia Lake gave an overview of the site and process so far. New Leaf is following the ordinance. A decommissioning plan has been submitted. A transport study has been done and a road bond will be issued for any repairs that may need to be done after construction. All studies requested have been done and submitted. DEC has issued a jurisdictional letter; SHPO found not impacts to sites, FAA has no issues, wetland credits have been agreed to be purchased.

The following people from the public spoke:

Vannessa Curry

Scott Neff

Brian Jaracz

Ken Moritz

Mark Rulison

Kristin Jaracz

Timothy Gregson

Deanna DeLuke

Joe Wells

Karenanne Baran

Valerie Skaarland

Clinton Dietric

Becky Moritz

The speakers are against the turbine and do not feel the DEIS addresses concerns raised at previous meetings in an adequate manner. The questions were raised regarding how many kilowatts will be produced, what does the study show from the MET tower erected on Bean Hill at the site for the turbine and why was the bee study done when pollen collection by the insects was ending. Concerns over the decibels produced by the turbine blades turning, destruction of vegetation along the transport route and the fact that power poles will need to be moved and possibly the need to encroach on resident's land to get the turbine parts up the hill. Will there be more than one? Why do they not want a fence? Will there be blasting? Worries over the noise this could produce and the affect it could have on the wild animal population, bears, deer, hawks, eagles, other species of birds and the bees. Fears that a wind turbine of this size could lower property values and the noise from the turbine could affect people's health. What will happen to historical properties in the Town that are within the view shed of the turbine? This turbine will forever change the landscape and the views. Written public comments that were read by attendees will be attached to the minutes for the record.

Written public comments will be accepted until Friday, March 15, 2024 at 5pm.

2. Bill Balance & Tyler Balance – Minor Subdivision of Land on Bernaski Road

Mr. Blance wants to split the land he and wife currently have a home on. Their son Tyler will be moving into their current house, and they will be building a new house next door. Mr. Blance does not have enough frontage as required by the Town's Zoning Ordinance. The Town's Zoning Ordinance requires 250' of frontage and Mr. Blance only has 200' according to his survey. After discussion the Planning Board agrees that he should be sent to the Zoning Board of Appeals to get an Area Variance.

MOTION by John Hutchison and seconded by Dan Roth to send Bill and Tyler Blance's application to the Zoning Board of Appeals for their review. All members present in favor and passed. None opposed.

VIII. Any Other Business

Nothing at this time.

Motion by Stephen Viele and seconded by Nick Armour to adjourn the meeting at 7:31pm. All members present in favor and passed. None opposed.

Respectfully Submitted

Emily Staley

Town Clerk