

Mount Jackson
Planning Commission and Joint Public Hearing
October 1, 2018

Chairman Ambrose called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the council chamber at 5901 Main Street. Commissioners in attendance included Mses. A. Miller, Burner, W. Miller as well as Messrs. Andrick, Thompson and Hines. Councilmembers Shepherd, Pifer, Rudy, Fultz and Good were also in attendance. Town Manager, Kevin Fauber; Interim Town Clerk, Susan Maziarz were present. Others in attendance included Todd Holtzman, Robert and Eleanor Whitehurst, Matthew Gilliland and Parker Sloan of Cypress Creek Renewables, Todd Gordon and Katherine Rudford from the Berkley Group, Max Thornberry from the Northern Virginia Daily, Jack Frady and 11 visitors from the community.

Joint Public Hearing

Special Use Permit Request – Cypress Creek Renewables – Expansion of the solar farm on the Whitehurst property along Turkey Knob Road.

Parker Sloan and Matthew Gilliland of Cypress Creek Renewables gave an in-depth presentation introducing their project. Public discussion included the following questions –

L. Ambrose, on a couple of your slides showed those trees spaced far apart, I thought they were to be side by side for a buffer? We are proposing double rows of evergreens, after five years of growth the fencing will be mostly not visible to neighbors.

L. Ambrose, in the event it does not cover like the neighbors would like, would you come and plant more? Yes, we will. We are proposing planting Eastern Red Cedar or Meyer Spruce. We will work with the Town Manager for what works best.

Visitor, what is the long-term economic benefit once the construction is done? There is a direct tax benefit and there is indirect benefit from folks who come to the site and spend money locally.

D. Andrick, how impervious are the panels to hail? The panels are rated up to golf ball size hail.

Visitor, you had mentioned the 150 feet from the adjoining properties, the trees and the fence where would be the cut off for the 150 feet butting up residential properties? There is a 50-foot set back from the property line. Then a minimum 150 feet from any residents to the nearest piece of equipment. It would be 50 feet from the right way.

Visitor, you mention about everything would be able to be taken off the property except the for cemented inverters, how many inverters are you planning on putting on the 330 acres? The concrete pads for the inverters are sometimes poured on site, often they are poured off site then laid on the ground and they can be pulled up and removed. There will be 6 total pads.

B. Good, what is inside of the panels if they are hit by hail are there any chemicals inside the panels? There is nothing that is produced or manufactured in the panel that is capable of leaking out into the environment. B. Thompson said they are a solid-state devices.

Visitor, the fence between 2 and 3 on the north side, how are you going to do that being it is the same piece of property? There would be a shared fence and a separate fence area.

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Joint Public Hearing Continued

L. Ambrose, are you going to have local input on the design? That is one of the goals of being here and why I came out a few weeks ago to get this kind of feedback, and make sure these are projects that the community is a part of.

L. Ambrose, how do you plan to communicate with the people here? I would defer to you all (Planning Commission) I have my business card with my information to give to you all. We can meet after this meeting.

A. Miller, do Solar Farms take away property values from people's land around the Solar Farms? We look at and work with a lot of property appraisers. That is not what we have found. The reasons why you should not expect harm to your property values, they are low impact, no sound, no smell, no increased traffic or anything in terms of health and safety related. We do install buffers and vegetation to hide the fence.

Visitor, in the summer time what is the heat impact on the environment? There is no increase in temperature or impacts to birds. The modules are designed to absorb heat and light to create electricity. Mr. B. Thompson, that is the purpose nonreflecting, all the heat is soak in.

J. Hines, are you bonded for the cleanup? We have in our lease agreement with landowners to decommission, fully remove and restore the property to its original condition at the end of life. If it is the decision of the Town to require a surety bond for the decommissioning we have done those elsewhere.

J. Hines, that was the original agreement with Virginia Solar, isn't there a bond involved with that Mr. Fauber? I believe there was, I would have to go back and review that.

J. Hines, what is the size of a single panel? It is 6ft by 3ft.

J. Hines, how many panels per acre are going to be installed? It is difficult to answer because technology of the panels changes every year. Each year you would need fewer panels.

J. Hines, how many holes per single panel? 10 plus panels piles at 6ft to 12ft apart.

J. Hines, are you going to do any grading to the land? We try to avoid grading. The 2 knolls on the property we are not putting any panels on there.

Visitor, what kind of studies do you have to do before you come in and say yes, we will build on this type of land? One is the electrical and utility studies, the environmental study and the general zoning and permitting.

L. Ambrose, is there any noise from the panels turning? On the inverter converting the electricity from DC to AC. At the fence line you would be able to hear those and only during the heat of the day.

Visitor, what direction do they run? They follow the sun east/west trajectory. The rows are north/south facing.

Visitor, has Dominion guaranteed purchase of the power? No not these projects. These projects would be put to sale.

Visitor, what type of 240 KV's lines are going to be running? This project will connect to the 34.5 kilovolt line on Turkey Knob Road to the substation across Turkey Knob Road.

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Public Hearing Continued

E. Burner, with snow do the panels hold a lot of weight? They are rated for snow loading. The snow does melt off over time.

End of Public Hearing – 8:00pm

Regular Meeting

Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes: Addition to the Agenda to Old Business – Special Use Permit Request – Cypress Creek Renewables – Expansion of the solar farm on the Whitehurst property along Turkey Knob Road. Eligible for Action.

Commissioner Burner MOVED, seconded by Commissioner Andrick to APPROVE to addition to the Agenda to Old Business, Special Use Permit Request – Cypress Creek Renewables – Expansion of the solar farm on the Whitehurst property along Turkey Knob Road. Eligible for Action.

VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Commissioner Thompson	None	
“ W. Miller		
“ Andrick		
“ A. Miller		
“ Burner		
“ Hines		

6 AYES, motion carried

Presentation: None

Approval of the previous Meeting Minutes – Commissioner Thompson MOVED, seconded by Commissioner Andrick to APPROVE the Minutes of September 10, 2018, Joint Public Hearing & Regular Meeting.

VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Commissioner Thompson	None	
“ W. Miller		
“ Andrick		
“ A. Miller		
“ Burner		
“ Hines		

6 AYES, motion carried

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Old Business:

1. Special Use Permit Request – Triplett School Cafeteria, LLC (Todd Holtzman). Mr. Holtzman is requesting a Special Use Permit to convert the existing cafeteria into 4 apartments units. Eligible for Action.

Discussion: Mr. Holtzman spoke, I have submitted the parking plan. It was the missing component from the Special Use Permit.

L. Ambrose, how many cars can you park in the back? Mr. Holtzman, there are 41 parking spaces in the back.

J. Hines, you said there will be some parking in the front? Mr. Holtzman, there will be a couple of parking spaces in the front of the building (old engine bay area) another 6 to 8 parking spots.

Commissioner Thompson MOVED, seconded by Commissioner Miller to APPROVE Special Use Permit Request – Triplett School Cafeteria, LLC (Todd Holtzman). Mr. Holtzman is requesting a Special Use Permit to convert the existing cafeteria into 4 apartments units.

VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Commissioner Thompson	None	Commissioner Andrick
“ W. Miller		
“ A. Miller		
“ Burner		
“ Hines		

5 AYES, 1 ASTAIN motion carried

2. Special Use Permit Request – Cypress Creek Renewables – Expansion of the solar farm on the Whitehurst property along Turkey Knob Road. Eligible for Action.

Commissioner Thompson MOVED, seconded by Commissioner Andrick to APPROVE Special Use Permit Request – Cypress Creek Renewables – Expansion of the solar farm on the Whitehurst property along Turkey Knob Road.

VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Commissioner Thompson	Commissioner Hines	
“ W. Miller		
“ Andrick		
“ A. Miller		
“ Burner		

5 AYES, 1 NAY motion carried

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New Business:

1. Zoning Ordinance Update – Todd Gordon and Katherine Rudford with The Berkley Group – Zoning Ordinance Evaluation and Discussion. The project revises the zoning ordinances takes about a year of study. We are in the early stages of collecting information.

Katherine Rudford of The Berkley Group gave a short presentation on how they can bring the Town's Planning and Zoning Ordinances up to date.

Discussion: Todd Gordon answered some questions

B. Thompson, do you do this for all over the state for city's? We do.

B. Thompson, how close or how far are we from being in compliance in relation of others you have done? Not to bad, you are doing pretty well. The one thing we read that is an issue is not officially establishing the duties of the Planning Commission within the Ordinance. We spend at lot of time modernizing Ordinances.

B. Thompson, so what are you asking from the Planning Commission? Things along the line that Kevin has mentioned, the guidance needed when it comes to dividing a building into apartments. Other uses perhaps you have seen come before you and could not find in the Zoning Ordinance.

W. Miller, I think the most important thing for us and the citizens is to make it easy to understand and follow. So if somebody does have a question or a request, we can easily find it and figure it out.

J. Hines, re-writes on state code changes, does all state code changes automatically over ride the localities? Legally the state code does over ride your zoning ordinances. But when a change happens in state code no one comes to you and shows you line of zoning ordinances that needs to change to meet the requirement.

D. Andrick, how often should the ordinances be update? I would encourage you in a town of your size to look at it every five years when you look at your Comprehensive Plan.

End of discussion.

Actions of the Board of Zoning Appeals: None

Report on Town Council Items: None

Zoning Administrator's Report: None

Board Member's Report: None

Commissioner A Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Submitted by:

Susan Maziarz
Interim Town Clerk