

VILLAGE OF AVISTON
MINUTES OF THE ZONING BOARD MEETING HELD ON:
Tuesday, April 30, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Aviston Zoning Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on April 30, 2024, at the Village Hall by Mike Engel. In attendance were Mike Engel, Clayton Renth, Rick Zobrist, Zachary Meyer and Irma Deimeke. Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

1. GUESTS: Chrissi Albers, Sara and Clint Flowers representing 'The County', Paul Irby 'Dimension Renewable Energy', Jim & Donna Lampe, Craig Lampe, Curt Albers (Village Trustee), Andrew Beer

2. AGENDA:

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Clayton Renth and seconded by Zachary Meyer. Motion carried.

3. MINUTES:

Minutes of the March 2024 meeting were available for all to review. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Zachary Meyer and seconded by Rick Zobrist. Motion carried.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

- Clint & Sara Flowers and Chrissi Albers were in attendance to introduce themselves as the new owners of the old restaurant property and to state their intentions of use of the property. They brought preliminary plans for a sports bar/restaurant/arcade/golf simulator business, and it will be called 'The County'. No action required by zoning board.

-Paul Irby from Dimension Renewable Energy was in attendance and handed board members information of a possible 5-megawatt AC solar farm to put on property bordered by S. Clinton St. and Rocky Ford Rd on the south edge of town.

Mike Engel started discussion by reviewing the guidance for growth in the County and Village Comprehensive Plans. This project would be within the ½ mile North/South residential/business growth corridor. Therefore, this would impede village growth to the south.

It was asked how they came upon this property and Mr. Irby stated that letters were sent to multiple locations throughout Illinois and this landowner accepted their proposal of a 20-year lease for the solar farm.

Craig Lampe had a few questions. (Craig is a homeowner to the north of said property besides being the Aviston Fire Chief)

- Who maintains the grass cutting: his company (mowing or sheep).
- Who will take care of it if his company goes under? Hopefully, another company would pick up the lease.

- Is there a heat island caused by the panels? Research shows that on a hot day these panels could raise the temperature even more.
- Craig questioned the noise from them since they would be ‘automatically adjusting’ during the day. Yes, there would be some noise.
- Craig feels it would negatively impact home values due to walking out your door and staring at the solar farm (not very beautiful as if you’re looking out into nature. Mr. Irby stated they could possibly put a tree coverage around it to block it.
- Battery storage on-site? NO
- Craig asked about the area of these (aisles, etc.) --- Aisles are anywhere from 9- 50ft. There are also wires hanging. Craig is concerned on how to fight a fire or to get to it, especially if it’s in the middle of the entire grid.
- Is there a remote shut-off? YES

General questions/discussion: there are no other projects like this in Illinois by this company. His company has been in existence since 2018.

Clayton Renth asked if there have been any studies as to degradation of the soil. Currently, this land has good soil. Mr. Irby had no answer.

The panels will be metal racking with metal posts dug into the ground. They would not be concreted in.

Donna Lampe questioned – how much glare is there? Mr. Irby stated it has anti-reflective coating. (this is of concern to Andrew Beer also as his property is directly south of the proposed farm)

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the benefits to the Village and other taxing authorities. They estimate the tax for the first year would be about \$20K. This would be significantly less than would be realized by having 50-100 homes on this site not to mention lost water and sewer revenue. There might be savings for village homeowners if they subscribe to the company’s electric service.

Are there scheduled meetings with the County? Not yet. The village board will be briefed on the meeting and information provided and they will be performing their due diligence regarding the proposal.

While the village is not opposed to solar projects, they need to be thoughtfully located so as not to block village development. There are thousands of acres of land in the county that do not block village development. Perhaps there could be a different piece of land used for this purpose.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

B. Current permits: In Zoning Administrator’s absence, Irma reported: April permits – 6 – miscellaneous, 1 – accessory use, 1 – commercial addition. Totals for 2024 are: 2 – new home, 11 – Miscellaneous, 4 – Accessory Use, 3 – Commercial Addition, 1 – residential addition, 1 – commercial structure.

7. A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 p.m. was made by Zachary Meyer, seconded by Rick Zobrist. Motion carried.

Irma Deimeke