

**Grayson County Planning Commission Meeting
May 14, 2024, at 6 pm
Renewable Energy Workshop Meeting**

IN RE: Member Attendance

Dan Boyer, Lisa Hash, Brian Walls, Charlie Ward, Justin Funk, Travis Jones, Philip Vaughan

Absent: Howard Sharpe, Jr., Gary Ballard

Staff: Jada Black, Clerk Michael Zehner, Berkley Group

IN RE: Call to Order_ Consent Agenda

Chairman Walls called the Grayson County Planning meeting on May 14, 2024, to order. Dan Boyer made a motion to approve the agenda, duly seconded by Philip Vaughan. Motion carried 7-0.

IN RE: Discussion of proposed changes to the Renewable Energy Policy Addendum to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance text Amendments to align with the BOS resolution adopted on May 7, 2024.

Mr. Zehner shared with the Planning Commission the proposed policy identifying the modified text to be consistent with the recommended at the joint meeting between the BoS and Planning Commission on May 2, 2024.

Minimal modifications to the policy were needed. An addition to the last paragraph for consideration is “the appropriateness of these uses, along with” the size, scale, design, and siting of these uses “if allowed.”

In the policy under General Land Use Strategies for Renewable Energy in bullet number two, wind development was struck “ principally because of the board's direction that the policies or the zoning ordinance amendments support utility-scale wind.” This edit rebalances the opportunities and impacts of the future of renewable energy, specifically utility-scale solar. A third bullet was added to include language that utility-scale wind is not allowed use and is prohibited.

Overall, minimum edits were made to align with striking wind language. A typo left from the edits was struck, and dwindling was struck based on the Ag Committee's recommendations that “dwindling” should not be used to describe the ag revenues. Class III was added to policy eight for ag suitability as defined

by DCR Ag models. Additionally, the PC discussed Ecological Cores at the recommendation for removal by the Ag Committee; however, after discussions and viewing the map data from DCR, it was decided to leave this policy intact.

Staff explained the need for additional time to create the overlay district map and ridgeline protection. Due to an advertising issue, the language needed to advertise to create such a district was not included in the advertisement for policy and text changes. PC and staff will work on this element in the June meeting.

Lastly, Chairman Walls made a motion to change the policy in the third bullet from should to shall that utility-scale wind is not considered appropriate land use and shall be, therefore, prohibited, duly seconded by Justin Funk. A roll call vote was taken: Boyer, aye; Jones, aye; Funk, aye; Hash, aye; Ward, aye; Vaughan, aye; Walls, aye. Motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Zehner preceded by going through the zoning text regulations, mentioning striking all wind facility language throughout the zoning text and keeping all solar pertaining to energy. Advising the cleaning up of some general text to match the definitions in Part II Article III Renewable Energy Infrastructure. Additionally added was a new provision in 3-14.3.6.6 for Damaged Panels; Storage. This language was suggested to be added as a general condition should a solar facility application be submitted within the county. A general decision was made to explain this section. Also added was 3-14.4 Wind Energy Generating Facility. This section was added as an accessory to a principal structure either permitted by right or by SUP. But precludes wind energy-generating facilities. The Planning Commission and staff analyzed exactly what accessory wind was and if this term precluded a homeowner or farmer from using wind energy to energize their homes, farm buildings, water pumps, etc. Overall, it was determined to leave this text as it is written.

Dan Boyer requested that Mr. Zehner review the proposed HB 636, SB567, and SB697 House and Senate Bills that were tabled during the General Assembly session for the record. Should these bills be passed, the proposed language the PC has been working on would likely be void. SB697 was passed 21-18 and put the House tabled and will come back again and more evolved.

Staff requested an additional conversation about capping based on the resolution requirements from the BoS. Mr. Zehner explained the solar acreage provision at 3% of the land area at any given 5-mile radius as per 3.14.3.4.5. An at-length discussion included imposing a 2% rule of acreage of the county as a cap to 2% of the farmland, eventually deciding not all acreage within the county would not be conducive for solar facilities. The consensus by the PC

was to leave the verbiage as written, allowing the 2-mile requirement to transmission lines to be the deciding factor for a cap and not to consider share solar at this time. Mr. Zehener shared with the Commission he would not necessarily set a clear cap but set a standard that clearly defines reasonable policy. There are already reasonable limitations in place, such as proximity to transmission lines and acreage thresholds that are caps of sorts; there are already tools in place within the zoning text for limitations. Should the BoS not agree, this can be revisited and addressed at a later time if deemed necessary.

Staff reminded the PC that work would begin on the mountain overlay in June. Chairman, Walls reminded the PC of the Public Hearing on May 21, 2024.

IN RE: Adjournment

With no further discussion, a motion was made by Dan Boyer to adjourn, duly seconded by Lisa Hash. Motion carried.

Chairman

Date