

SENECA PLANNING COMMISSION

A regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting was held at Seneca Village Hall on October 11, 2023 and the meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Present: T. Justice, J. Lamb, W. Anderson, R. Jackson and L. Rasmussen

Absent: None

Also Present: Village Clerk Jennifer Peddicord, as Recording Secretary, Commissioner Scott Peddicord, Les Goslin, Ben Sych, Bobby Lee and Anthony Neve from New Leaf Energy, Doug Gladden and Tom Meade

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

A motion was made by J. Lamb and seconded by W. Anderson to recess the regular Planning Commission meeting to enter into a public hearing. All ayes. No nays.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Before the Planning Commission is the following proposed text amendment to the Zoning Code:

Section 10-3-1 of the Village of Seneca Code of Ordinances shall be amended by adding the following definition:

“COMMERCIAL SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY: A “commercial solar energy system” as such term is defined in Section 10-720 of the Property Tax Code as any device or assembly of devices that (i) is ground installed and (ii) uses solar energy from the sun for generating electricity for the primary purpose of wholesale or retail sale and not primarily for consumption on the property on which the device or devices reside.

Table 10-4-4T, Zoning Districts Special and Permitted Uses, of the Seneca Code of Ordinances (Zoning Code) is hereby amended as follows:

“Commercial Solar Energy Facility” shall be included as a Special Use in Industrial Districts.

Chairman Justice posed the following questions to the Planning Commission regarding the proposed text amendment:

- a) Whether such change is consistent with the intent and purpose of this title in establishing the particular zones affected: **YES.**
- b) Which areas in the village are most likely to be directly affected by such change and in what way they will be affected: **NO EFFECT. INDUSTRIAL ZONING ONLY.**
- c) Whether any indirect effects are likely to result from such change in the foreseeable future, and, if so, the nature of such indirect effects: **NOT APPLICABLE.**
- d) Whether the amendment under consideration would correct an error or oversight in the zoning ordinance as originally adopted: **YES. SOLAR FARMS WERE NOT PREVIOUSLY INCLUDED IN THE ZONING ORDINANCE.**

- e) Whether the amendment under consideration is made necessary because of changed or changing conditions in the areas and zones affected or in the village generally, and if so, the nature of such changed or changing conditions: **NO. JUST AN OVERSIGHT.**
- f) Whether the amendment under consideration meets the spirit and intent of the comprehensive plan: **YES.**

A motion was made by R. Jackson and seconded by W. Anderson to recommend to the village council that the text of the zoning ordinance be amended as follows:

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Table 10-4-4T, Zoning Districts Special and Permitted Uses, of the Seneca Code of Ordinances (Zoning Code) is hereby amended as follows:

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ROLL CALL: Ayes: T. Justice, J. Lamb, W. Anderson, R. Jackson and L. Rasmussen

Nays: None.

A motion was made by R. Jackson and seconded by J. Lamb to return to regular session. All ayes.

A motion was made by W. Anderson and seconded by R. Jackson to approve the September 27, 2023 minutes as presented.

Roll Call: Ayes: T. Justice, R. Jackson, J. Lamb, W. Anderson and L. Rasmussen

Nays: None

ZEO REPORT AND UPDATE:

L. Goslin presented the architectural drawings provided by Dave Stuedemann for the Williams Street project and advised that he has issues with the plans and suggests having an independent review take place. Commissioner Peddicord advised he will not pay for an independent review. L. Goslin suggested that the code be changed to require developers to pay for an independent review and all agreed.

Discussion took place regarding there being too few bathrooms per the plumbing code and no changing tables. There is also concern about the number of bathrooms for the rental space. L. Goslin indicated there are probably other issues, but he had not taken the time to thoroughly review the plans.

L. Goslin suggested this issue be discussed with Attorney Russo.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Clerk Peddicord advised that the Allen Carter fence matter has been set for a bench trial on November 8. Mr. Carter advised the attorney that he will not put up a fence until he is ready to do so.
- B. Clerk Peddicord presented proposed changes to the draft solar farm ordinance that were received from New Leaf Energy's attorney. Discussion took place regarding the timeline for having a clean ordinance to recommend to the council. It was reiterated that this will not be part of the zoning code, but rather the Business and License Regulations section of the code. The board will study the ordinance and proposed changes before the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tom Meade spoke regarding the solar farm ordinance recently passed by the City of Minooka.

A motion was made by W. Anderson and seconded by J. Lamb to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 6:51 p.m.

Roll Call: Ayes: T. Justice, R. Jackson, J. Lamb, W. Anderson and L. Rasmussen

Nays: None

Jennifer A. Peddicord
Jennifer A. Peddicord, Village Clerk/Recording Secretary