

CITY OF OLNEY
SPECIAL PLAN COMMISSION MEETING
JUNE 26, 2018

AGENDA #1 “CALL TO ORDER” The meeting of the Plan Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Olney City Hall, 300 S. Whittle Avenue, Olney, Illinois, with Wesley Tolliver presiding.

AGENDA #2 “ROLL CALL” The following Plan Commission members were present: Barb Roberts, Greg Eyer, Vicki Lobacz, Scott Jones, Wesley Tolliver, and Steve Eichhorst. David Abell, Belinda Henton, and Pat Everette were absent. Also present were Code Enforcement Officer Mike Mitchell and City Clerk Kelsie Sterchi.

AGENDA #3 “APPROVE MINUTES OF THE PLAN COMMISSION MEETING ON MAY 7, 2018” Mr. Eichhorst moved to approve the minutes of the Plan Commission meeting on May 7, 2018, seconded by Mr. Eyer. Mrs. Roberts, Mr. Eyer, Mrs. Lobacz, Mr. Jones, Mr. Tolliver, and Mr. Eichhorst voted yes. There were no opposing votes. The motion carried.

AGENDA #4 “SWEARING IN” Mr. Tolliver asked that anyone wishing to testify on behalf of the items being discussed to stand and be sworn in. City Clerk Sterchi asked those standing to raise their right hand and “swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help me God.” Donald Brian was sworn in.

AGENDA #5 “PROPOSED ORDINANCE: AMEND SECTION 17.80.010 (SPECIAL USE PERMITS) OF CHAPTER 17.80 (SPECIAL USE REGULATIONS) OF THE CITY OF OLNEY MUNICIPAL CODE” The Plan Commission was provided with a copy of a proposed ordinance that would amend Section 17.80.010 (Special Use Permits) of Chapter 17.80 (Special Use Regulations) of the City of Olney Municipal Code. The proposed ordinance would add a provision for a Special Use Permit for community renewable generation projects, utility scale solar projects, and/or utility scale wind projects..

Mr. Tolliver wondered why the proposed ordinance would change Special Use Permit classifications instead of making such projects acceptable in zoning areas such as M-2 (Heavy Industrial District). Mr. Mitchell replied that such zoning areas were included inside of City limits, and within the City’s jurisdiction. By creating a provision for Special Use Permit, if there was a request, the Plan Commission would always have the opportunity to hear the request first. From there, the Plan Commission would be able to recommend to the City Council approval or denial of the request. Essentially, the proposed ordinance would give the City of Olney more control over such requests.

Mr. Tolliver asked, for example, if anyone placing any type of solar equipment would need a Special Use Permit. Mr. Mitchell indicated that would only be needed for solar equipment in relation to projects such as solar farms.

Mr. Jones wondered if the proposed ordinance would be inclusive for areas outside of City limits. Mr. Mitchell responded that like other zoning ordinances, the City's jurisdiction would cover a one and a half mile radius outside of City limits.

Mr. Eyer wondered if any such projects were in the works, or if the City was simply trying to be proactive. Mr. Mitchell indicated that a site was currently being considered. The interested party has not yet submitted any sort of application for permit, but it would be wise to have some regulation in place beforehand.

Mr. Brian had heard that sites northwest and north of Olney were being actively solicited by solar energy farmers. Mr. Tolliver had also heard of sites being evaluated, but noted that this evening's topic was simply for whether or not a provision for consideration of a Special Use Permit should be allowed.

Mr. Jones was aware that Wayne Schuetz had been placing some solar panels on commercial buildings, and Mrs. Roberts was aware that having solar panels placed in backyards was becoming popular. It was asked if such a Special Use Permit would be necessary. Mr. Mitchell replied it would not, but he would like to have an ordinance of some type in the future that would require an application before such placement; similar to a building permit.

Mr. Eichhorst moved to approve the proposed ordinance that would amend Section 17.80.010 (Special Use Permits) of Chapter 17.80 (Special Use Regulations) of the City of Olney Municipal Code, seconded by Mr. Jones. Mrs. Roberts, Mr. Eyer, Mrs. Lobacz, Mr. Jones, Mr. Tolliver, and Mr. Eichhorst voted yes. There were no opposing votes. The motion carried.

The proposed ordinance would be presented to the City Council for their approval or denial on Monday, July 9, 2018, at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Tolliver told the Commission that he had heard talk of cell phone service going to G5 with equipment to be placed on telephone poles. Mrs. Sterchi indicated that the Illinois Municipal League had provided information on the small cell wireless plans, and would require the Council to take action on an ordinance to address the topic within the very near future.

Mrs. Roberts then asked Mr. Brian if the Commission's discussion had taken care of his concerns. Mr. Brian believed so, and was pleased that the proposed ordinance changes would add protection.

Mr. Tolliver noted his opinion that he would only want to see such projects in an industrial park.

AGENDA #6 "PUBLIC COMMENTS/PRESENTATIONS" No one from the public wished to speak.

AGENDA #7 “ADJOURN” Mr. Jones moved to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Roberts. Mrs. Roberts, Mr. Eyer, Mrs. Lobacz, Mr. Jones, Mr. Tolliver, and Mr. Eichhorst voted yes. There were no opposing votes. The motion carried. The Plan Commission meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Kelsie J. Sterchi
City Clerk