

**COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
KITTITAS COUNTY EVENT CENTER
ARMORY HALL
901 EAST 7TH AVENUE ELLENSBURG, WA
SPECIAL MEETING**

MONDAY

6:00 P.M.

JUNE 25, 2018

Board members present: Chairman Laura Osiadacz; Vice-Chairman Obie O'Brien and Commissioner Paul Jewell.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Lindsey Ozbolt, Planning Official; Dan Carlson, CDS Director; Chelsea Benner, Staff Planner; Dusty Pilkington, Staff Planner; Neil Caulkins, Deputy Prosecutor; Jeremy Johnston, Staff Planner; and approximately 25 members of the public.

PUBLIC HEARING

SOLAR POWER PRODUCTION FACILITIES

CDS

At 6:00 p.m. **CHAIRMAN OSIADACZ** opened a Public Hearing to consider Amendments to the Kittitas County Code, Adoption of Solar Power Production Facilities Development Regulations and Overlay Map, as well as Amendments to Maximum Lot Coverage Standards in Urban Growth Areas. The Commissioners would also consider whether or not to extend the current moratorium on accepting applications for solar facilities that qualify as Major Alternative Energy Facilities per Kittitas County Code.

DAN CARLSON, CDS DIRECTOR provided a Staff Report on the proposed amendments along with the background; authority and public notice; Comprehensive Plan; environmental review; agency and public comments; analysis and recommendation.

LINDSEY OZBOLT, PLANNING OFFICIAL reviewed a proposed new section of the County Code relating to the maximum lot coverage.

THERE BEING NO ONE IN ATTENDANCE REQUESTING TO TESTIFY RELATING TO THE MAXIMUM LOT COVERAGE IN THE URBAN GROWTH AREAS, THAT PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN moved to approve the Maximum Lot Coverages as, as recommended. **COMMISSIONER JEWELL** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

MR. CARLSON said the current moratorium was set to expire on July 10, 2018. He reported on how the Solar Advisory Committee has held many meetings including an Open House so they could hear citizen's comments and concerns. He reviewed the committee's proposed amendments relating to Solar Power Production Facilities Development

Regulations and Overlay Map. The Board asked questions of Staff relating to various topics relating to the proposed amendments.

THOSE PRESENT & TESTIFYING: **RON SLATER** said he was representing 400 acres in Zone 3. He said he had lost all of the water and his property is now non-irrigated and non-producing land and no longer worth anything at this point. He felt solar would be a perfect fit in those types of areas. **DICK CARKNER** representing Save Our Farms described why agriculture was important to Kittitas County and included the economic and cultural benefits. He urged the Board to adopt the regulations that had been forwarded by the Planning Commission. **JEFF DUNNING** spoke of how 95% of water rights were not held by the landowners. **JP ROAN** felt there was no consistency in the math and how his place is in Zone 1 and goes up to Zone 3. He didn't agree with limiting eligibility. **MARLENE PFEIFER** addressed property rights and the argument of how people should be able to use their land. She felt the amendments should be consistent with the regulations and recommended going with the Planning Commission's recommendation. **JIM NELSON** said their ranch should be designated as Zone 3 and not Zone 1 and explained the reasons why. **LOGAN CRAIG, CYPRESS CREEK RENEWABLES** provided comments and concerns on the recommendations of the proposed amendments. **KATIE HEATH, REPRESENTING HEELSTONE ENERGY** said they have been looking at development in Kittitas County and they have listened to the community and agreed with concerns relating to clarity of the overlay map and footprint which could potentially leave the door open for issues later. **RACHEL DONAHUE, HEELSTONE ENERGY** thanked the Board for their consideration of the proposal and said they are looking forward to bringing solar to Kittitas County and working with the community. **CHAD UNLAND, WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES** said they previously submitted comments and some of the parcels that are owned by the State were improperly categorized in a few of the zones. **KAREN POULSON** expressed her concerns and urged the Board to try and accommodate all landowner's rights. **PETER NESBIT** felt consistency was extremely important when it comes to land use and how retail development in the solar world is changing. **COLLEEN DONOVAN** supported an aggressive ban on locating commercial solar on prime farmlands and urged the Board to protect them. **STEFANIE WICKSTROM** commented on how Ag-lands are what produces food and the County needs to be careful as those prime lands are very valuable and the Board is setting precedence for the future. **JIM THORTON, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT** reminded everyone that there's a SEPA process with projects and at that time there would be a determination of any impacts. **THERE BEING NO OTHERS REQUESTING TO TESTIFY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.**

COMMISSIONER JEWELL said it was not an easy issue as they are trying to protect irrigated and other valuable farm lands. He was concerned with their simplistic approach and there were many things that needed to be looked at again and redrawn based on both irrigated and

non-irrigated Ag-lands. He was supportive of the idea of having irrigated and other prime farm lands to not be allowed to have solar facilities placed on them. He felt the map needed a lot of work & better definition of footprint. **COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN** acknowledged how Staff & GIS who were committed to doing their job and there may be too much to generate one map to cover everything. He said he would be in favor of a Conditional Use Permit in Zone 1, and possibly have Zone 2 and Zone 3 as an Administrative CUP. **CHAIRMAN OSIADACZ** said it had been interesting going through the process and how their decision will shape the future of Kittitas County and the importance of protecting the limited and valuable farm lands. She spoke of past dealings with EFSEC and the County's been disappointed with their decisions and feels it's important the County is clear when writing their Codes so they are aware of the direction in which the County is planning and conditions that can be relied upon.

The Board asked Staff to bring back a map and changes according to their direction. **MR. CARLSON** did not believe they could accomplish what the Board was asking for by July 10th and urged them to extend the moratorium to allow for additional time to make the changes.

COMMISSIONER JEWELL moved to extend the moratorium for 6 months and instruct Staff to provide review of the proposed amendments and draft an Ordinance to bring back to the Board as quickly as possible. **COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.


The Board of County Commissioners thanked everyone for being part of the process.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

CLERK OF THE BOARD


Julie Kjorsvik

KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Laura Osiadacz, Chairman