

would bury all lines to the inverters and then from the inverters they have to be above ground to connect to the system. Jeff stated that they would come forward with a Conditional Use Permit for a decommissioning plan that would be scheduled around the 19th or 20th year. Jeff felt that the drafted language that is in front of the Planning Commission would be sufficient for proposed programs for Solar Gardens out currently. Jeff passed around the Xcel territory map for the commission to view.

2. Doug Sonnee, Solar Stone Minneapolis MN. Has signed up 22 land leases with owners for solar gardens. They have been able to offer land owners 3 to 4 times the value of their land that is something that is green and removable.

Hearing no other public comment Chair Wodele closed the public hearing at 7:54 pm.

Staff Recommendation: A public hearing was held on September 8, 2015 before the Planning and Zoning Commission for this issue. Several minor edits were suggested by the Commission to further clarify the standards for solar structures and solar garden/farms. **These suggested changes can be found in the red underlined text below.**

Proposed Solar Text is as follows:

Section 305.09 Subd. 68. - Amend the following Use

- **Essential utility and public services facilities** – Structures which provide shelter for equipment, a central utility hub for utilities, boosters, or transmitting (not including towers), and solar garden/farm.

Section 305.09 – Add the following definitions:

- **Solar garden/farm** is a solar power installation that accepts capital from and provides output credit and tax benefits to individual and other investors.
- **Solar structure:** A structure designed to utilize solar energy as an alternate for, or supplement to, a conventional energy system. A solar structure may be erected on commercial, industrial, or private lots or dwellings.

Section 305.07 Subd. 26. - Zoning Ordinance –Add the following performance standards

Solar garden/farms and structures are subject to the following standards.

Solar structures

1. Buildings or roof mounted structures shall not exceed above the maximum height requirement for the principal building and shall not extend beyond the exterior perimeter of the building on which the system is mounted or built.
2. Solar structures must meet the accessory structure setback and locations for the district if not attached to a roof when oriented at minimum design tilt.

Solar garden/farm

3. The minimum lot size for a solar garden/farm is 5 acres **with a maximum lot size of 30 acres.**
4. Screening: solar garden/farm shall be screened from view of adjacent residential zoning districts and public roads to the extent possible without affecting their function.

5. Abandonment: Any solar garden/farm which is inoperable for twelve (12) successive months shall be deemed abandoned and a public nuisance. The owner shall remove the abandoned system at their expense. **A decommissioning plan outlining the removal of all structures and electrical components will be required as part of the conditional use permit.**
6. **All on-site power and communication lines running between solar panels and buildings shall be buried underground on the premise.**
7. **Solar Farms that generate capacity of 50 megawatts or more shall fall under the jurisdiction of the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.**

Text to be added to all zoning districts – as Conditional Uses Only - private solar structures greater than 5,000 square feet.

Commission Recommendation & Motion: Commissioners Miller and Falkum made a motion to recommend the attached changes to the zoning ordinance providing definitions of solar garden/farm and solar structures, amended use of “essential utility and public services facilities”, and amended performance standards for solar structures and garden/farms be placed in the City of Wabasha Zoning Districts, with the sited edits as shown in red above, made the following findings:

1. The Planning Commission was notified of public interest regarding the use of solar structures and solar garden/farms within Wabasha.
2. The Commission has reviewed and discussed the additional uses and placed them in permitted and conditional use categories so as not to impede the health, safety and general welfare of the community.
3. The Planning Commission and City Planning staff reviewed and researched general and specific information relating to these uses and feel that these uses will provide additional services for the City.
4. The Planning Commission has drafted performance standards to add to the existing zoning ordinance to further define the setbacks, lot sizes, screening, and location of solar structures to better fit in with adjacent properties.

Adopted unanimously.

6) Old Business

a) Comp Plan Update

Kristi provided a brief update and indicated that the Comp Plan is coming along and continuing to use the Steering Committee. The next step is to work on the goals and policies and then produce that to the Steering Committee and then forwarded on to the Planning Commission. Once Kristi produces a final draft she would forward that on to the Steering Committee and give them a month, which will include a draft online, in and around town, at City Hall with an open house environment and then move forward with the final stages with the Planning Commission.

b) Parking- Kristi provided the following memo.

Request: The Planning and Zoning Commissioners have asked that staff look into the CUP, IUP, and PUD parking criteria and potentially add some language to the code that would allow the City to better manage and record significant off-site parking stalls.

Potential Language: 305.04 Subd. 5 (Conditional/Interim Use Permits) and 305.06 Subd. 11 (Planned Unit Development) could add the following text:

An off-site parking plan must be submitted and if approved, will be recorded as a condition of the CUP, IUP, or PUD. Approved off street parking will be added to the City-Wide Parking Map. Overlap parking may be allowed as determined by the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Potential Concerns:

1) Do we need to manage small projects where off-site parking can be managed in the public R.O.W.'s?

2) If we are just looking for 'significant' parking stalls off-site, would requiring additional *parking lots* be recorded not *on-street parking stalls* be the way to go?

Discussion among the commission. Commissioners Wallerich and Miller made a motion to direct staff to look into a City wide parking analysis. Adopted unanimously.

- 7) New Business- None
- 8) Board of Adjustment Business- None
- 9) Other Business – None

Commissioner Miller wonders if we could consider, towards the end of 2015, asking some of the previous member of the Planning Commission and having a social gathering.

10) Next Regular Meeting Date –

The next regular meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday October 13th at 7pm at Wabasha City Hall.

11) Adjourn – Commissioners Wallerich and Wodele made a motion to adjourn at 8:27 pm. Adopted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by: _____
Wendy Busch, Planning & Zoning Assistant

Adopted Date