

**COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
KITITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
COMMISSIONERS AUDITORIUM
ELLENSBURG, WASHINGTON**

TUESDAY

6:00 P.M.

JANUARY 10, 2017

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

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Jeff Watson, Staff Planner, Dan Carlson, Community Development Services Director; Doc Hansen, Planning Official; and approximately 20 members of the public.

SPECIAL MEETING

IRON HORSE SOLAR FARM CUP

CDS

At 6:00 p.m. **CHAIRMAN JEWELL** opened the Closed Record Hearing continued from December 20, 2016 to consider the Hearing Examiners recommendation on the Iron Horse Solar Farm Conditional Use Permit (CU-15-00006). The Board members provided disclosures and there were no objections or concerns expressed.

JEFF WATSON, STAFF PLANNER provided a Staff Report and reviewed the research they conducted as previously requested by the Board relating to noise, fencing, and a decommissioning plan. The Board asked Staff questions and for additional clarification relating to the proposed project.

COMMISSIONER OSIADACZ explained the additional research she did within the WAC's and County Code relating to the definition of agricultural zones and utilities. She said there was nothing in the application which would limit the applicant from having another solar site located on his acreage and was concerned about having nothing in place to protect the County. She expressed the reasons why she would not be voting in favor of the project. **COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN** referenced the County Code, definitions, and preserving rural character. He said after further research of the proposed project he felt it was not compatible and did not meet the criteria for approval. **CHAIRMAN JEWELL** said he read the entire record and even though he has concerns with the project in the particular area, he felt the County did not have cause, given the ability to apply conditions, to deny the application at this time. He reviewed the County's compliance with the Growth Management Act; Development Regulations; and the County Code. He said the

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Board's decision could be appealed to Superior Court and they would base their decision on relevant State Law and County Code, not the Growth Management Act. He felt the applicant had invested and followed the County's rules as outlined in the County Code and by denying the application it would be a mistake, despite his concerns with the project in its proposed location.

COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN moved to deny the Iron Horse Solar Farm Conditional Use Permit (CU-15-0006) application. **COMMISSIONER OSIADACZ** seconded. Motion carried to deny the Iron Horse Solar Farm Conditional Use Permit (CU-15-0006) was approved by a vote of 2-1. (Chairman Jewell opposed the motion to deny the Conditional Use Permit).

COMMISSIONER JEWELL suggested placing a 60-day moratorium on large scale solar farms, not specifically related to the project. He said he had been contacted by the electrical generation industry and they have been contacted by people in the real estate market about future plans and regulations. He has also been contacted by farmers who have been approached by potential developers of solar farms. He said he's not opposed to solar facilities, but they haven't been specifically considered within the County Code at larger development levels. He explained the Comprehensive Plan is currently under review for 2017 and the Planning Official has been engaged with some of the groups in the community. He felt before there is a bunch of applications he would like to consider regulating them which would include the placements of them and to allow the community to be engaged in the process.

COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN said he would be in support of a 60-day moratorium in order to consider establishing criteria and to see if it should be extended to a longer period.

COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN moved to enact a 60-day moratorium on solar farms (large commercial structures only) and to direct Staff to prepare enabling documents and to direct Staff to Set a Public Hearing for a later date. **COMMISSIONER OSIADACZ** seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

CLERK OF THE BOARD


Julie Kjorsvik

KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Chairman, Paul Jewell