

**VILLAGE of SUGAR GROVE
SPECIAL MEETING of the
PLAN COMMISSION/ZONING BOARD of APPEALS
MINUTES of December 12, 2012**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Sugar Grove Plan Commission / Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Irv Ochsenschlager in the Village Hall Board meeting room.

2. ROLL CALL

Plan commission/ZBA members present:

Irv Ochsenschlager, John Guddendorf, Mary Heineman, Jim Eckert, Rebecca Sabo and Don Meisinger

Absent: Ryan Reuland

Also present: Mike Ferencak, Village Planner and Richard Young, Community Development Director

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of the November 14, 2012 MEETING

Motion made by **Commissioner Heineman** and seconded by **Commissioner Sabo** to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2012 Plan Commission meeting as presented.

The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Petition 12-013: Solar Energy Systems – Text Amendment (Village of Sugar Grove)

Chairman Ochsenschlager opened the continued public hearing. He then swore in any persons in attendance planning to testify. No public were in attendance.

Petitioners' Request: None

Petitioner Presentation: None

Public Comments/Questions: None

Chairman Ochsenschlager closed the public hearing.

5. OLD BUSINESS

None

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. Petition 12-013: Solar Energy Systems – Text Amendment (Village of Sugar Grove)

Chairman Ochenschlager gave a synopsis of the last discussion of the draft ordinance. The Commission had several questions. **Commissioner Eckert** was in attendance and able to answer any questions dealing with power supply. **Commissioner Guddendorf** was curious as to why the resident that was requesting a solar energy system hasn't come to these meetings. Mr. Ferencak stated the personal situation of the resident. **Mr. Ferencak** stated that the resident's goal is to install 5- 3'x5' panels for a total of 75 sq. ft. It will not cover the entire roof. The average electricity used in a single-family home is 700 kilowatt hours (kwh). The charts on pages 2 and 3 will calculate how much energy savings this installation will achieve. They have reviewed the draft ordinance over the phone to identify any inconsistencies between the ordinance and what his permit request would present. The ordinance presents limitations due to aesthetics and the positioning of the solar panels and the resident will need to place them on the south side of the roof for the best solar alignment and that is the front side of the roof. There won't be extra energy storage required. This is a supplemental energy supply not a complete replacement.

Commissioner Eckert stated that as an example, ComEd has a 40 acre solar farm that produces about 10 megawatts. 3 megawatts will run about 600 homes. On the last page of the staff report under the third hash mark the sentence regarding 10 kW producing enough power for one household or business was discussed. The discussion was whether the limitation should be 10 kilowatts or 100 kilowatts. Whichever is chose it should be consistent. An average home uses 30 kilowatts per day. He suggested maybe the separation between types of systems be commercial vs. residential instead of large vs. small.

There are two types of applications; photo panels which produce energy for the house and thermo/solar collectors which are only for a specific component like a water heater. The thermo/solar collectors for specific components would be classified as a self contained system under this ordinance. The most expensive part of the system is the switch (ATO) which tells the system what source to pull the power from and when. It's approximately \$15,000. A generator is only \$600 - \$800. These are motionless panels so they'll only catch 3 or 4 hours of solar power per day. New applications are evolving constantly. There are now panels that look like shingles but have the reflective solar capability. The draft ordinance does not require the panels to match the house; just the background / support structure of the panels, if any, should match. Aesthetics are a big part of this ordinance. Staff is looking for a recommendation from the Commission.

The Commission reviewed the ordinance being proposed. **Commissioner Eckert** stated that these systems are available for rent now. Staff indicated that even with a rented system, the property owner would still be subject to the rules of the ordinance. If the system is removed, restoration of the site is required. Each panel has wires that come out

and go down the side of the house inside conduit to a collector. Wind turbines are more efficient than solar panels.

The ordinance limits the number of planes of the roof that are allowed to be covered and sets a maximum percentage coverage of each plane. Ground mounted panels are restricted from the front and corner side yards and are only allowed in the back and interior side yards. The ordinance allows them to pick a plane for optimal exposure to the sun. The whole back can be done, but for aesthetics only one plane along the street can be used and it must be the highest plane..

It was noted that the color of the roof matters aesthetically as well; silver or black panels on black roof are not as obtrusive as on a tan colored roof. The draft ordinance does not require certain color panels however.

This ordinance allows for the building integrated panels and it treats them the same as the flush mounted panels but these two are treated different than the non-flush, angled panels. The height is restricted to no more than 6" off the roof and they must be parallel to the roof. For non-flush panels, different restrictions apply like not being able to see them from the property line and screening. Non-flush panels are more typical in commercial uses than residential.

There are only one or two residents inquiring about this type of system. The commission agreed that it's important to have guidelines in place so that when a system is applied for, the village is ready. Maintenance of the panels was discussed as well.

After much discussion it was determined to add language under A,1, Equipment, 'whether permanent or temporary'.

Under 4, a - change 'hot water' to 'thermal'.

Under A, 6, small, should possibly be defined with a size limit; and define, 'close proximity to a utility power source'.

B, Large Solar Systems would apply to a solar development or farm. The difference between large and small is the size of the system not the individual panel. Large would be for a solar farm and small would be for an individual residential or commercial use.

Building Code/Safety Standards were discussed with relation to UL approval. Staff will check with other municipalities.

Under C, 3 Compliance - under the 3rd line, change 'and', to 'or constitutes a danger'.
Under 4, Color - change 'wind energy systems', to 'solar energy systems' and 'other structures' may be changed so it's better defined. The intention under Color is to match all the different materials as closely as possible to each other.

Eliminate sections 7 and 11 under C.

Section 14 Batteries was discussed. There are building and fire codes that regulate them.

D, small solar systems, change 10kw to 100kw and then keep it consistent with E, 1, as well. Also, under 2, c – add “When working near energized lines must follow OSHA regulations”.

Add text that systems must be installed by an experienced installer. Systems should be allowed in yard or on roof, but not both.

Commissioner Guddendorf made a motion seconded by Commissioner Eckert to recommend approval of petition 12-013, the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment dealing with solar power as presented subject to the comments and changes made here tonight.

The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

7. **PLAN COMMISSIONER COMMENTS, PROJECTS UPDATES and MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

65 First Street Variances – These were approved by the Village Board and we’ve received a copy of the letter from the Township approving use of their lot for overflow parking.

Assisted Living Center, Hampstead Court is delayed due to their own situation. They met with EEI and are making modifications to the site plan.

Settlers Ridge is still in court because of the bonds.

Prairie Glen has three new home starts.

Chairman Ochsenschlager thanked the staff and Village for dinner and wished everyone a Happy Holiday.

Next meeting will be the regular scheduled meeting of January.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Commissioner Heineman and seconded by Commissioner Guddendorf that the meeting be adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Holly Baker

Village of Sugar Grove
Plan Commission/ZBA Meeting
Minutes of December 12, 2012

Substitute Recording Secretary