

# **RICHLAND TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

## **SPECIAL MEETING**

**SEPTEMBER 21, 2021**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Brian R. Frederick, Supervisor                      David Earley, Treasurer  
Renee R. Herhold, Clerk    Susan Neuenfeldt, Trustee  
Brian Beckrow, Trustee

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Special Meeting of the Richland Township Board of Trustees was called to order by Supervisor Frederick at 7:02 P.M. with the Pledge to the Flag.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Motion by David Earley, second by Susan Neuenfeldt, to approve the Agenda as printed. Unanimous voice vote. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There were approximately 26 present with the following comments heard:

- \*Planning Commission did a good job on the proposed ordinance;
- \*concerned with property values and EMR's (electromagnetic radiation);
- \*a good ordinance but setbacks of 500 feet are too extreme also concerned with the surety cash deposit, feels it should be a bond with 100 percent of the value;
- \*Commission did a good job but property values will decline;
- \*a David and Goliath situation, feels the 500 foot setback should be 600 feet;
- \*concerned with the radius around his home, appreciates Commissions work on the ordinance;
- \*residents will continue to live here, solar owners do not;
- \*Commission tried to keep everyone in focus while protecting what is there, should accept what the Commission put in place;
- \*should follow the law for reasonable conditions, 500 feet is excessive, AAA rated bond is better and adequate at 100 percent as cash deposit will cause problems in the long run;
- \*questioned what's reasonable, depends on who's point of view;
- \*cash bonds drain the capital out, should be reduced and go with AAA rated bonds, setbacks should be reduced to be reasonable;
- \*setbacks are reasonable with 500 foot;
- \*setbacks are not reasonable with 500 feet, should be set at 100 feet, appreciates the work the Commission did but referred to submitted correspondence along with the submitted draft of the ordinance with amendments, 16.4% of his land will not be profitable;
- \*setbacks are also for a safety factor; will affect property values negatively within five miles;
- \*does not want property values to diminish, buffers should be put in place, 100 foot setback is a fair balance;
- \*attended all meetings, it is an industrial use, concerned as to why they do not want a cash deposit;
- \*zoned agricultural land is being converted to an industrial use, setbacks can be negotiated with neighboring landowners with 20 acres or more;
- \*some land owners are not able to negotiate with neighbors due to lot size;
- \*safety concerns;
- \*suggested planting in the 500 feet.

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Motion by Susan Neuenfeldt, second by David Earley, to adjourn the public comment. Unanimous voice vote. Public comment adjourned – 7:57 P.M.

**OLD BUSINESS –**

**SOLAR FARM ORDINANCE:** Discussion held regarding the cash bond with the fact that the wind turbine ordinance is not a cash bond; also, the 500 foot setback should be reduced, proposed to 100 feet. Supervisor Frederick stated that four of the five Board Members have the potential to profit from solar farms but all Members will vote on the Ordinance as this regulates the use of Solar Energy within Richland Township as an alternative energy source providing for the land development, installation, and construction regulations.

Motion by Brian Frederick, support by Susan Neuenfeldt, to move forward, approving the Solar Power Ordinance as presented by the Richland Township Planning Commission (draft dated September 9, 2021), effective 30 days after publication. Roll call vote Frederick, yes; Herhold, yes; Neuenfeldt, yes; Beckrow, no; Earley, no. (3) Yeas, (2) Nays, (0) Absent. Motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS –** None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** The following comments were heard:

- \*property values will still decline;
- \*any ordinance can be challenged;
- \*questioned statement about Board Members profiting from solar farms;
- \*appreciated Board support, cash bond is the safest as it is readily available;
- \*cash bond language was derived from another sample township ordinance located in Saginaw County.

**ADJOURN SPECIAL MEETING:** Motion by Susan Neuenfeldt, second by David Earley, to adjourn the Special Meeting. Unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned – 8:17 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Renee R. Herhold      Richland Township Clerk