

**KINGS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

District 1 Commissioner – Riley Jones

District 2 Commissioner – Bob Bajwa

District 3 Commissioner – R.G. Trapnell*

District 4 Commissioner – Jim Gregory**

District 5 Commissioner - Louise Silacci

*Chairman

**Vice-Chairman

June 2, 2014

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting of the Kings County Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman Trapnell, on June 2, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors Chambers, Administration Building, Kings County Government Center, Hanford, California. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Riley Jones, Louise Silacci, R.G. Trapnell, Bob Bajwa, Jim Gregory

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Greg Gatzka – Director, Erik Kaeding – County Counsel, Chuck Kinney – Deputy Director – Planning, Terri Yarbrough – Executive Secretary, Sandy Roper – Principle Planner

VISITORS PRESENT: Beth Hoffman, Bert Wilgenburg, Willy Arts

SUMMARY OF THE AGENDA: Mr. Gatzka summarized the agenda for the Commission.

UNSCHEDULED

APPEARANCES: No one spoke during this portion of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made and seconded (Jones/Silacci) to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2014 meeting. Motion carried unanimously with Gregory abstaining.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Conditional Use Permit No. 13-2 (Gales 3 MW Solar Project)

Mr. Roper provided an overview of a proposal to establish a 3 Megawatt (MW) commercial photovoltaic solar energy generating facility located at 7749 7th Avenue, Hanford, Assessor's Parcel Number 014-090-033. He reported that the project site is located within the General Agriculture (AG-20) zoning district, is consistent with the Kings County General Plan, and is subject to a Farm Land Security contract. He also reported that one comment letter was received from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife prior to the close of the comment period. The comments resulted in minor changes to the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). The comments did not identify a new significant effect, nor did they result in a finding that the proposed mitigation measures IS/MND will not reduce potential effects to a less than significant level. Instead, the minor changes serve merely to clarify, amplify and make insignificant modifications to the IS/MND. Accordingly, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15073.5, recirculation of the IS/MND is not required. Mr. Roper stated that the address was listed incorrectly on page one of the resolution. The address is 7749 7th Avenue rather than 28990 Hwy 41, Kettleman City.

Chairman Trapnell opened the public hearing and asked if there was anyone wishing to speak in favor of the project. Beth Hoffman, representing the applicant, spoke in favor of the project and thanked the Commission for considering the project. Commissioner Gregory expressed concern that this project is one of the first to be located on productive soil and felt there will be an impact to agriculture. Beth responded that they searched for less productive land but

there wasn't any available. Seeing nobody else wanting to speak in favor of the project, he then asked if there was anyone wanting to speak in opposition to the project. Mr. Willy Arts spoke against the project and expressed concern that adjacent property values would be devalued. Commissioner Trapnell asked if he had anything to support that statement, which he did not. Mr. Burt Wilgenburg also spoke against the project and stated that he had seven neighbors who signed statements that they were not in favor of placing solar panels on prime farm land. He was concerned that this land traditionally has been used for feed for the dairies which is becoming scarce. He asked if there was anyone else wishing to speak against the project. Seeing none, he asked if the applicant had a rebuttal. Beth Hoffman stated they were considering growing grapes or blueberries which will be more visually screening so that might help address the concern of property values. She also stated that they are required to show a viable farming plan as a condition of the permit. Commissioner Jones asked about the crops on the adjacent parcels. Commissioner Gregory asked about dust control and if adequate space was being allowed to turn at the end of the rows. He also inquired about the frequency of washing the panels. Chairman Trapnell then closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Silacci made a motion not to approve resolution 14-06 and stated that she was against giving up any farm land. Motion died for a lack of a second. A motion was made and seconded (Jones/Gregory) to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-06 approving the proposal to establish a 3 Megawatt (MW) commercial photovoltaic solar energy generating facility, as amended to correct the address on the first page of the resolution. Motion carried with four voting yes and Silacci voting no.

- 2. Election of Officers** – Mr. Gatzka asked for nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair. Commissioner Silacci nominated Commissioner Gregory for Chairman. A motion was made and seconded (Trapnell/Jones) to close he nominations and cast a unanimous ballot. Motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Bajwa nominated Commissioner Jones for Vice Chairman. A motion was made and seconded (Gregory/Trapnell) to close the nominations and cast a unanimous ballot. Motion carried unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS

- 1. FUTURE MEETINGS:** The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for Monday, July 7, 2014.
- 2. CORRESPONDENCE:** Two pieces of correspondence were received. One was a community flier from DTSC regarding Chemical Waste Management and the other was a letter from the California High Speed Rail announcing that the project was approved and the east alignment had been selected.
- 3. STAFF COMMENTS:** Greg Gatzka announced that Commissioner Silacci's term had ended and she was not seeking reappointment. He recognized Commissioner Silacci for over 17 years of service on the Planning Commission and presented her with a plaque.
- 4. COMMISSION COMMENTS:** None

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

KINGS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION


Gregory R. Gatzka, Commission Secretary