



**Public Hearing Meeting Minutes
Nelson 2 Solar Farm
April 8, 2019 7:00pm**

ATTENDANCE

Clerk Molly Weber
Supervisor Jim Sipe
Treasurer Leo Nicolai

Planning Commission Members Present

Jeremy Irrthum
David Peine
Mike Tix
Casondra Schaffer

Planning Commission Members Absent

Larry Runyan

The purpose of the hearing is to consider, hear from the public, and act to make a recommendation to the Town Board regarding a conditional use permit for IPS Solar to build a 1 mega-watt AC photovoltaic solar system located on PID#17-01500-75-013, a 52.85 acre parcel owned by William and Diane Nelson, located north of 7315 250th Street East, Hampton, MN 55031.

The standard Public Hearing Process was followed.

1. Introduction: outline the rules, talk about what the rules are and follow that plan
2. Establish the ground rules: public will be limited to 5 minutes
3. Applicant presentation: applicant presents what they want to build
4. Public Testimony: anyone from public can voice their opinion
5. Rebuttal Testimony: applicant can counter any questions made by the public testimony
6. Closing

Applicant Presentation:

Evan Carlson of IPS Solar out of Roseville, MN presented the proposed 1 mega-watt AC photovoltaic solar system. IPS Solar has a good track record of not leaving when the project is done. This is a solar community project for Xcel energy subscribers generating and adding 1 mega-watt of power to the electrical grid. IPS will lease the land. The panels would be on I-beams that go into the ground where they would sit for a number of years. They would plant a pollinator friendly mix under the solar panels. The system would be monitored 24/7 via computer. Their contact information will be posted on the fence around the perimeter. They would mow it about twice per year. This a \$2,000,000 project that encompasses about 8 acres. With the one megawatt they will need 3 poles at max, one for Xcel, one for IPS and then perhaps one additional one.

Mike Kampmeyer of IPS Solar stated the parcel is about 56 acres of flat land that is 150 feet off of 250th Street. He said they would try to hide as much as they can but didn't feel a need to plant trees since it is so far back.

Public Testimony:

This was limited to 5 minutes per person.

Judy Kimmes asked what community solar meant and was told that it is a community of Xcel subscribers who purchase subscriptions to a central solar facility. IPS stated that the county expressed interest. IPS is bonded for 25 years and they set aside money at the onset of the project for the decommissioning and remove the whole thing once the term ends. They may reuse the panels but they become less efficient of the years but not obsolete.

Adjacent land owners, Bryce and Rodney Kimmes, noted the proposal uses their land to access the location and they have an irrigator that crosses the access. They were unaware their access is in the proposal and indicated IPS would need to work out a

agreement for access unless an alternative is identified. They also stated there are drainage issues across the property Bryce Kimmes had a question on the tax base. He was told the valuation does not change, just the use of land changes. The county is entitled to 20% of the tax base. The land would be zoned the same with conditional uses. Xcel limits their projects to 1 megawatt.

David and Debra Hayes @ 7160 250th Street were concerned since they are residents near it across 250th Street. They are concerned about the land use being changed. They bought AG land for it to stay AG land. IPS stated there would be about 3 months of disruption and then only service trucks about twice per year. It is 500 feet off the road and they could plant trees, or shrubs or put a fence around it. They could also limit the hours of construction. Once it is in, it is one of the least annoying disturbances.

There are no lights at night. Mr. Nelson stated his daughter lived out there and they could possibly talk to her about access to the property.

Jeremy Irrthum recommended trees be planted on the western edge so it is surrounded by trees on the West, South, and East.

Jim Sipe has a question on the land lease. IPS stated it was a 25-year lease and they can up it 2 more times for 5 years at a time. Conditions could be put on it with the Conditional Use Permit. Xcel is not partnering with IPS. IPS gets a lease from the resident. IPS pays Xcel \$22,000.00 to study their grid. IPS then pays fees of \$100,000.00 to reserve their spot in the grid. Xcel has 3 phase lines. The land is leased from the resident, then they sell the project to a lease holder at which time IPS is no longer involved but the contact information of the lease holder is put on the fence. This would be the first one in Dakota County but IPS did one at the Red Wing High School.

Gene Kimmes asked if access was a problem. Evan Carlson said they need to do their homework about access and the title line issue that the line runs through.

Rebuttal: none

Planning Commission Discussion:

Dave Peine stated that the title line issue and access issue would need to be worked through with Bryce and Rodney Kimmes.

Neighbors requested 4-foot conifer trees that would grow to about 7 feet as a buffer.

IPS stated the panels would be 7 foot at the tallest on the tracker as they move throughout the day.

IPS will need an updated plan to submit to the Town Board with the access properly resolved. At this point there is no given access to Mr. Nelson daughter property on the other side.

Dave Peine made a motion to allow the conditional use permit for IPS Solar to build a 1 mega-watt AC photovoltaic solar system located on PID#17-01500-75-013, a 52.85 acre parcel owned by William and Diane Nelson, located north of 7315 250th Street East, Hampton, MN 55031 with the conditions of access, title line and the tree buffer all being met first. Cassandra Schaffer seconded. Motion carried.

Cassandra Schaffer made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 8:48pm. Mike Tix seconded. Public Hearing was closed.