

**GUNNISON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, May 2, 2024**

The Gunnison County Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting in the Planning Commission Meeting Room in the Blackstock Government Center, 221 N. Wisconsin, Gunnison, Co. and on Zoom

Present:

Chair - Roland Mason	Director of Community and Economic Development- Cathie Pagano
Vice-Chair- Fred Niederer	Director of Planning- Hilary Seminick
Commissioner- Julie Baca	Planner- Sean Pope
Commissioner- Eric Phillips	Planning Technician – Jena Greene
Commissioner Matt Schwartz	Others present as listed in text
Alt. Commissioner- Bill Barvitski	
Alt. Commissioner- Catherine McBreen	

Absent: None

Recused: None

Zoom: Catherine McBreen, Eric Phillips, Julie Baca,

Regular Meeting: With a quorum present Chairperson Mason opened the May 2, 2024, regular meeting of the Planning Commission at 8:45 am.

Moved by Schwartz seconded by Phillips to approve Planning Commission meeting minutes, dated April 4, 2024. The motion passed unanimously in support.

Unscheduled Citizens

None

Work Session: LUC-23-00027 | GVS LLC Solar

Chair Mason opened the work session at 8:47 am.

Staff Presentation: Sean Pope introduced the project. This was the second work session for the 1.6 Mega Wat Solar Array on a parcel owned by the Town of Crested Butte, located just south of the Town. After the first work session there were four main concerns from the Planning Commission that the Applicant was needing to address at this meeting: 1) parking and trail impacts, quality of new parking area compared to existing area at the Baxter Gulch trail head; 2) Project staging and parking for construction workers; 3) concerns about the ditch that spanned the property; 4) landscaping and buffering from HWY 135. PC determined that a site visit wasn't necessary, due to overall familiarity with the site.

Applicant Presentation: Taylor Henderson was present. He reviewed the details and location of the project. Henderson reviewed the updated site plan that showed the location of the Spahnettick Ditch, and the required 25-foot setback on either side of the ditch. He was in the process of getting a signed and recorded document concerning the maintenance setback, as required by the LUR. In the process of having discussions with the ditch company to help address their concerns and make sure they would be able the access the ditch if needed at any point in the next 30 years. Pointed out the media voltage

equipment pad, strategically located near the road for winter accessibility. Gave an overview of the trailhead parking lot and trail realignment.

Parking Lot and Logistics – Town would continue to maintain the parking lot; a second survey would occur after receiving the Land Use Permit. Minor realignment of Trailhead coordinated with the Town and CBMBA. The plan was to make all possible efforts to limit any inconvenience to Community members and tourists, including considering busy seasons for the Town.

Staging – Construction would take approximately 4 months, depending on final selection of EPC approximately 20 people on site at any time during construction. Crew would stage and park at the parking lot of the Crested Butte GCEA Substation. Presented a table of estimated construction vehicle trips.

Visual Screening – included examples of other projects’ visual screening. Including a wood fence example from Watkins, and a example from severance which had very few trees., which Henderson explained eventually died due to lack of water on the site. Showed the proposed wire fence that was compliant with CPW. Presented a Visual simulation from HWY 135 with the solar panels in place.

Planning Commission Questions:

Mason clarified that the solar panel would be fixed as shown in the simulation. Henderson confirmed that the simulation was representative of the proposed fixed angle. Visual impacts to evaluate per landscaping and buffering section.

Discussion of wood fence vs chain link, to be further discussed at the public hearing. Additional discussion of natural vegetation in addition to the fencing. Logistics of adding water to the trees. Not much support for doing berms.

Concerns of reflectiveness of the panels and driver safety. The applicant wasn’t concerned about this; the intention was not to have any light to reflect off the panels. With the fixed tilt array as proposed, they didn’t anticipate it being an issue.

May consider upgrading as technology. Planned to need to replace and recycle after 30 years. Applicants would be in charge of maintaining the panels per their agreement with the Town of Crested Butte. Not planned to be abandoned, applicants would recycle the panels whenever replaced.

Equipment pad size was discussed.

Next Steps: More information needed concerning the buffering, and the ditch. Determined that public input would be a good next step for this project. Pope would work with the applicant to schedule.

Mason adjourned at 9:48 am