

**CASTLE ROCK TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2013-01
CASTLE ROCK TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE
November 2, 2015 @ 6:00 p.m.**

Approved

A Public Hearing of the Planning Commission of Castle Rock Township was held on Monday, November 2, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. Present were Jon Juenke, Chair; Jeff Partington, Vice-Chair, Mary Ann Enggren, and Barbara Lang, Commission members. Gerald Larson, Commission member was not present. Also attending were Dean Johnson, Bill Blackmore, Lee Dilley, Carolyn Dilley, Sandy Weber, Rhonda Rademacher, Dave Nicolai, Michelle Nicolai, and Kaya Tarhan.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Jon Juenke called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The purpose of this meeting is to review language for an Ordinance Amending Zoning Ordinance 2013-01 updating language in Section 4, Section 6.04 K, Section 6.05 H and I, Section 6.06 H and I, Section 6.07 I and J, Section 7 adding 7.21.

Chair Jon Juenke then turned to floor over to Dean Johnson, Township Planner. Mr. Johnson explained the definitions of retail solar electric systems and wholesale solar electric systems. He went on to summarize the proposed language in the Ordinance Amendment. Definitions for various terminology for solar energy will be added. In addition, language will be added to Ag-Agricultural, RR-1 Rural Residential 1, RR-2, Rural Residential 2, and Commercial/Industrial Zoning to include the type(s) of solar energy systems that will be allowed as Interim Uses in each of these categories. The Performance Standards Section of the Zoning Ordinance will add a section describing the requirements of Solar Electric Systems.

If this Ordinance Amendment is approved, Interim Use permits will be required to install and produce solar energy. Interim Use is preferred, as Xcel Energy's program at this time is for a maximum term of 25 years for any Solar Energy Systems.

There are currently two potential applications in Castle Rock Township.

Mr. Juenke then opened the meeting to questions or comments.

Mary Ann Enggren asked if the proposed systems will be with Xcel Energy, or if Dakota Electric will be participating in any programs. Mr. Johnson replied that at this time, Xcel is the only company with a mandatory program that is being pursued. He also remarked that there will be no direct connection to the CapX2020 lines that were recently installed in the area. All energy generated will be going to local grids.

Ms. Enggren asked what happens to the Interim Use permit if a property with a solar energy system is sold? Mr. Johnson explained that a Conditional Use permit goes with the land, basically in perpetuity. Interim Use permits generally define a specific term of expiration, and could be assigned to a new owner, if approved by the Township. Wording identifying that is usually included in the lease agreement between the land owner and the power company.

Jeff Partington asked if there is a cut-off date for any tax credits being offered by the State or Federal governments. Mr. Johnson indicated that most current funding initiatives require solar energy systems to be constructed by the end of 2016. He asked Mr. Tarhan if he had any additional input on that question. Mr. Tarhan indicated his company is working with Excel.

Mr. Johnson also commented that Xcel is defining what additional interconnections/poles will be required to transmit the energy that is generated. Power lines in Solar Electric Systems, in general, will be buried, not above ground.

Mr. Juenke closed the Public Comments at 6:18 pm.

Mary Ann Enggren / Jeff Partington made a motion to recommend approval of the Ordinance Amendment to the Board of Supervisors. 4 ayes. Motion carried.

Public Hearing was adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Lang, Town Clerk
Castle Rock Township

Attest: Jon Juenke, Chair, Castle Rock Planning Commission