

**Albemarle County Planning Commission  
FINAL Regular Meeting Minutes  
December 13, 2022**

The Albemarle County Planning Commission held a work session on Tuesday, December 13, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

Members attending were: Karen Firehock, Chair; Corey Clayborne, Vice-Chair; Julian Bivins; Luis Carrazana; Fred Missel; Lonnie Murray

Members absent: None

Other officials present were: Kevin McDermott, Acting Director of Planning; Leah Brumfield, Rebecca Ragsdale, Bill Fritz, Andy Herrick, County Attorney's Office; and Carolyn Shaffer, Clerk to the Planning Commission.

Ms. Shaffer was present electronically via Zoom call.

**Call to Order and Establish Quorum**

Ms. Shaffer called the roll.

Ms. Firehock established a quorum.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**SP202200014: Woodridge Solar Substation, and SP202200015: Woodridge Solar**

Ms. Firehock stated that items 4b and 4c on the agenda would be combined into one public hearing. She said that 50% more time would be provided to each speaker for a total of 4 minutes and 30 seconds of speaking time. She noted the Commission did not object to the speaking time increase. She said she would provide more instructions when it was time for public comment.

Mr. Bill Fritz, Development Process Manager, explained that the County had reviewed and approved three applications for solar facilities to date, and they were constantly updating the review process. He explained that the Board had directed staff to hire a consultant, and any work produced by the consultant before the Board reviewed the application could be included in the Board's review. He said that language could be included for a siting agreement between the Board and the applicant.

Mr. Fritz stated that there were two applications before the Commission—three were included in the staff report, but the Commission only had to take action on two. He stated that there were two special use permits—one, for an electrical substation, the other, for the solar energy system. He mentioned that he would reference to the solar energy system as a solar farm or solar facility during the presentation.

Mr. Fritz stated that there was a special exception for disturbances of critical slopes. He said that the Commission may provide comments, but they were not required to provide comments to the Board. He stated that there had been two community meetings for the project—one was held virtually, and the other was held in-person. He said that concerns about visual impacts, property value impacts, stormwater impacts, fire safety, and decommissioning and recycling of decommissioned materials were all brought up in the meeting.

Mr. Fritz stated that the subject property was in the southeastern part of the County close to the Fluvanna County line. He said that the area was rural with a lower population density than most other parts of the County. He noted that the property area was over 2,000 acres, and the developed portion was over 600 acres—including panels, cleared areas, stormwater management, access, and the like.

Mr. Fritz stated that the area was largely wooded with scattered fields and residential development. He noted the locations of Secretary's Road, Jefferson Mill Road, and the powerline crossing the property. He

said that staff recommended approval of the special exception for the property except for specific areas identified in the report. He said that the areas were identified in the review by determining whether the slopes were managed or preserved steep slopes. He said that staff felt the identified slopes to not be disturbed had characteristics that were more in the preserved than managed category. He said that they made a recommendation on that finding.

Mr. Fritz stated that the project was reviewed for compliance with the comprehensive plan as required by the special use permit process and by Virginia Code § 15.2-2232. He said the Commission would be requested to take action as part of the special use permit review. He said that a plan was submitted along with substantial documentation, and the documents were linked in the staff report.

Mr. Fritz said that the documents included an application plan, a vegetation management plan, a visual study, and others. He stated that the documents were considered during the review and when considering proposed conditions. He said that the staff report discussed many issues, and the applicant's information was significant, and for that reason, his presentation was limited. He said that the applicant was present at the meeting and would provide a presentation.

Mr. Fritz noted that there were three minor changes to the conditions for the special use permit. He said that he could provide those changes now or later in the public hearing. He mentioned that the changes were minor to reflect some overlooked items.

Ms. Firehock requested Mr. Fritz provide the changes to the conditions to the Commission so that they would be able to consider them.

Mr. Fritz explained that there was an update to the first condition to allow changes to be made if it was necessary to implement the vegetation management plan. He said that they wanted to ensure the flexibility was given so that they would not have to come back before the County to amend the special use permit.

Mr. Fritz noted that the project was composed of multiple properties. He explained that the third condition required 200-foot distances from property lines, but it should specify 200-foot distances from exterior property lines.

Mr. Fritz said that the fourteenth condition should be changed to allow for above-ground wires if it would avoid impacting wetlands or streams. He explained all the proposed changes to the conditions impacted the interior of the property and would not impact the adjoining properties.

Mr. Murray clarified that the vegetation management plan would include the management of invasive species and the replanting of native species within the buffer.

Mr. Fritz stated that the vegetation management plan was comprehensive. He said that the applicant would provide more information regarding the vegetation management plan.

Mr. Murray asked if the panels would be considered impermeable surfaces during the site planning stage.

Mr. Fritz noted that they had considered the panels as impermeable surfaces during prior reviews when the state had differing regulations. He explained that the County had more stringent regulations than the state when treating stormwater from the solar power systems. He responded yes to Mr. Murray's question.

Mr. Clayborne clarified that one of the conditions stated that, "the property owner must grant the Zoning Administrator or designee for inspection purposes within 30 days of the Zoning Administrator requesting access." He asked if the 30-day requirement was typical.

Mr. Fritz said that it was unusual because projects were not typically as large as the subject proposal, and projects did not typically have associated security. He explained that the proposal was a utility, so there were some security issues. He explained that the property would be fenced and gated. He said that there may be other safety issues. He said that it was not an unusual requirement for a project with unique characteristics.

Ms. Firehock stated that the applicant would be allowed additional time to present on both special use permit applications.

Mr. Scott Reamer stated that he represented Hexagon Energy. He said he lived at 1369 Lane Town Road in Crozet. He said that he had worked in the solar power industrial for seven years, and he had been a resident of the Charlottesville area for 10 years. He said that Hexagon Energy was a local employer, and several of his colleagues were in the audience. He said their offices were located on the Downtown Mall.

Mr. Reamer stated that discussions for the Woodridge Solar project began in 2019. He said that about a year ago, they received notice from the grid manager that their project was fast-tracked for connection. He said that they would have an interconnection agreement in hand within the month or early next year. He said that the interconnection agreement would enable the project to begin work rapidly, per the Board's approval.

Mr. Reamer noted the importance of solar energy. He said that between 25,000 to 30,000 homes worth of power would be produced per year by the project. He said that it was not enough, and the solar industry had not seriously taken into account land use considerations. He said that they wanted to use the project as an example of responsible land use.

Mr. Reamer stated that the project was located on a 2,300-acre timber tract, and it was several parcels under common ownership. He explained that the applicant had a lease agreement for the property. He said that the project's total impact area was about 1,500 acres. He said that the fenced area would be about 620 acres, but 650 acres was included as an upper-limit estimate.

Mr. Reamer said that this was not the largest solar project in the state. He said that there was a 500MW array in Spotsylvania County. He noted that the proposed array was 138MW. He noted that the Spotsylvania array had issues with runoff. He said that there was an 800MW array that was recently approved.

Mr. Reamer noted that the County's climate action plan specified the ways that climate mitigation measures should take place. He said that the Woodridge Solar project accomplished three primary strategies of the County's climate action plan. He said that those strategies were to enable and incentivize utility-scale renewable energy projects in the County code and during Community Development regulatory processes; partner with utilities and renewable energy companies to increase local renewable energy and energy storage initiatives; and promote and facilitate investment in utility-scale renewable energy by the private sector.

Mr. Reamer said that the project would produce power for the equivalent of about 25,000 to 30,000 homes. He said that the visual impact was a concern for some. He explained that the panels were situated in a field and were usually about 8 feet tall, and sometimes they were taller. He said that the County's setback requirements were 25 to 75 feet depending on the location.

Mr. Reamer said that they provided a 200-foot setback from all external property lines. He said that of the 200-foot buffer, 100 feet would include existing vegetation around the perimeter, and in areas lacking vegetation, they would plant thick, fast-growing pine buffer. He noted the pine buffer would grow rapidly. He said that behind the first 100 feet would be another 100-foot buffer of tall-growing native meadow plants to provide pollinator habitat and further screening.

Mr. Reamer said that they had developed a pollinator mix in the vegetation management plan. He said that the state had the Virginia Pollinator Smart certification which was a review process and listing of species, and the state would then endorse and qualify a site as pollinator smart or not. He said that the vegetation management plan had been designed with the help of the engineer to be in compliance with the Smart Pollinator program. He mentioned that there was potential for commercial honey production on the site.

Mr. Reamer said that they complied with the Wetland Ordinance stream buffer, and there would be no activity in terms of construction save for existing stream crossings and locating powerlines across streams.

He said that they would not be within 100 feet of any delineated wetland, and the plan had been submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers. He said that the vegetation plan would enable wildlife corridors because different sections of the array were separated. He said that they did not anticipate notable disruption to the wildlife patterns.

Mr. Reamer said that they had been in discussions with local shepherds who were interested in keeping sheep on the site. He said that the vegetation management plan was designed to balance the dietary needs of sheep and the needs of pollinators with the vegetation around the panels, in the meadows, and in the stormwater management. He said that they had discussed a potential beekeeping and mead production partnership.

Mr. Reamer stated that the site was currently a commercial timber tract that had not been well maintained. He said the land was currently managed in 14 different tracts that were continually cleared. He said that the timber project was not the best use of the land. He said the proposal was a 35-year project that would allow the soils to rest.

Mr. Reamer said that there had been two formal meetings, and they had spent numerous hours providing site tours and canvassing. He said that there were two significant changes as a result of community feedback. He said that they had removed panels along Island Drive to minimize the proximity to residents who expressed concerns. He said that the vegetation management plan had also been developed as a response.

Mr. Reamer said that they had been in contact with the Sierra Club, C3, and Livable Cville, and all had provided a detailed review, produced factsheets, and endorsed the project. He noted that a hunt club currently hunted the property, and they would continue to be allowed to hunt on the property because there was about 1,800 acres of available space.

Mr. Reamer said that the project was allowed to interconnect because an old coal plant had been decommissioned and there was space on the grid for a large solar project to fulfill the need. He said that the coal plant had been decommissioned in Fluvanna County.

Mr. Reamer said that the condition of the site was degraded. He said that soil tests were performed across the whole area, and the results indicated the soil was acidic across the whole site. He said the soil would require a rehabilitation process of lime and fertilizer. He said that they had developed a seed mix and a maintenance plan for the soil.

Mr. Reamer suggested that a condition of approval be added that would require the applicant to work with a third party to help monitor the state of the vegetation as it was planted.

Mr. Murray clarified that there would be 100-foot buffers around all the streams on the property.

Mr. Reamer said that was correct.

Mr. Murray clarified that the condition as proposed by staff would allow the removal of invasive plants, the planting of native species, and stream restoration.

Mr. Fritz said that was correct. He said that the applicant would be able to perform any stream restoration as permitted under the Water Protection ordinance as long as it was not in conflict with the application plan. He said that stream restoration was permitted and consistent with the site plan. He said that he would work with the Zoning Administrator to ensure it was clearly understood.

Mr. Murray said that soil analysis skewed toward agricultural uses when determining needs. He said he wanted to ensure that the applicant could alter the vegetation management plan to add additional species and remove species, as necessary.

Mr. Fritz said that could be done.

Mr. Murray stated that the sheep, if there were to be any, should be fenced from the buffer.

Mr. Reamer responded that the sheep would be within the fences.

Mr. Clayborne asked for more information regarding lessons learned from other projects.

Mr. Reamer said that he learned of the benefit of community engagement. He said that projects were easier for the applicants and the community if there was an open dialogue from the beginning. He said that the need for vegetation was another lesson learned. He said the stormwater impacts had become evident, and the industry had done a disservice of not historically acknowledging the land-use issues and responding rapidly.

Mr. Bivins asked what the applicant would do with a portion of the landscape that had formed a deep gully from the timber use.

Mr. Reamer responded that the site would require grading. He said that slopes had to be leveled to a 15% grade. He noted there were concerns about the required grading and the health of the topsoil. He said that the vegetation management plan worked to integrate best practices in those areas. He said that the scour areas on the landscape would be smoothed, and they would reduce channeling and rapid runoff and erosion. He said that the site would no longer be a cutover site.

Mr. Bivins noted that there were a number of small tributaries on the property that had not been maintained by the timber use. He asked how the applicant would address the tributaries. He said that there were some species surviving in those tributaries.

Mr. Reamer noted the areas of delineated wetlands. He said that they had contracted with Wild Ginger Services out of Scottsville to do a wetland delineation. He said that they spent an entire summer delineating the wetlands on the property, and the site plan was based on the delineation. He said that they had to be setback 100 feet from any wetland. He said that they were not proposing to restore the wetlands, but they did propose to leave them open for restoration. He said that any tributary which had been delineated and approved by the Army Corps of Engineers would have to remain undisturbed.

Mr. Bivins asked what the highest and lowest elevation of the topography was.

Mr. Dan Jamison said that he was with Timmons Groups. He said that there was likely 50 to 60 feet of fall throughout the site. He said that there were some higher points in the site and that the transmission line was located on a ridge.

Mr. Reamer said that the elevation change was gradual throughout the site. He said that there would be no import or export of soil from the site.

Mr. Bivins clarified that the site was about 500 feet above sea level, and it ranged from 450 feet to 500 feet.

Mr. Reamer said it ranged from about 450 feet to 525 feet.

Mr. Bivins asked for more information regarding the interconnection agreement.

Mr. Reamer explained that they were within Dominion Energy's service area, but the grid management area extended north to New Jersey, west to Chicago, and south to North Carolina. He said the grid management area was called Pennsylvania-Jersey-Maryland. He said that the grid management managed the processes for Dominion and the other utility providers.

Mr. Reamer said that grid managers were called independent system operators (ISOs). He noted that the Pennsylvania-Jersey-Maryland ISO had historically been easier to connect to, but they had been overwhelmed with solar projects and put a two-year moratorium on any new interconnections.

Mr. Reamer explained that they had assumed the project would be delayed because of the moratorium. He stated that because of the decommissioned coal plant and other contributing factors, there was space on

the grid for the solar power system to connect without upgrading the infrastructure. He stated that they received the interconnect update on December 24, 2021.

Mr. Bivins clarified that the project had been approved to connect to Dominion Energy's service system.

Mr. Reamer explained that they only had a couple of years from the signing of the interconnection agreement to build the facility.

Mr. Carrazana asked for more information about how the soil conditions would be improved. He asked why the panels were considered impermeable and whether it should be reconsidered.

Mr. Reamer responded that there was a debate about whether solar panels were impermeable surfaces or not. He said that in Massachusetts, solar panels were not considered impermeable. He said that panels provided about 33% groundcover in the arrays, and they were not touching each other. He said that the drip edge from the water off the panels was not an issue at the site because the environment supported enough vegetation. He noted that water was able to flow under and around the panels.

Mr. Reamer mentioned that the state had undergone a major stormwater management revision, and one of the changes stipulated that solar power facilities had to be designed as if they were impermeable surfaces. He said that the state was currently trying to find a middle ground in the categorization. He said that the guidance to consider the panels as impermeable surfaces was withdrawn following public comment, and it was no longer a state mandate. He said that they intended to comply with state and local mandates. He noted that the site design took into account stormwater management infrastructure, and there would be space for it.

Mr. Missel clarified that there was one substation request. He asked whether additional substations would be needed in the future.

Mr. Reamer said that they only needed one substation. He said that the substation would be located in the interior of the site. He said that the point of the substation was to connect to the grid. He said that they may, in the future, request a battery storage amendment so that battery storage infrastructure could be installed. He said that battery storage had not been fast-tracked. He noted that the market was still unstable, and that the technology was constantly changing. He said that the battery storage would be the only potential addition to the substation, and it would be located at the substation facility.

Mr. Missel clarified that the applicant had two years from the signing of the interconnect agreement to get the solar facility live on the grid.

Mr. Reamer said it was about two years. He noted that if the extensions continued, then they would have more time, but it was unknown how long it would go.

Mr. Missel asked if the applicant planned to perform all of the grading and all of the installation within the first two years or if they planned a phased approach.

Mr. Reamer responded that they anticipated construction would only take between 12 to 18 months. He said that once the grading was complete, they had to install steel posts into the ground and secure the panels. He said that they would need to go before the state to receive a permit-by-rule which required a detailed cultural and historical study. He said that there was a three-year permit validity added. He requested that language be added to allow the timeframe to be extended due to extenuating circumstances.

Mr. Missel noted that supply chain issues may pose a challenge.

Mr. Reamer noted it was a factor. He said that a new judgment determined that the panels produced in southeast Asia would be subject to a tariff, and that would put burdens on supply. He said with the passage of the Inflation Recovery Act (IRA), local or US-based production was incentivized and increasing.

Mr. Missel asked what percentage of the transmission wires would be above ground.

Mr. Reamer responded that they would need to connect each of the subarrays to the substation. He said that each array would have an inverter, and those lines would be consolidated, and the consolidated line would be transferred to the substation. He noted the location where the wire would have to be above ground to cross a stream.

Mr. Missel noted that the runoff was cleaner than runoff from other uses. He stated that erosion control devices would have to be installed.

Mr. Reamer explained that sedimentation basins would be scattered throughout the site which would remain as stormwater management basins.

Ms. Firehock stated that the guidelines for public hearing participation were on the backside of the agenda. She noted that speakers would be provided extra time because two hearings were being combined. She said that support for public comments could be shown with raised hands of support. She said that remote speakers would follow the in-person speakers.

Mr. Matt Hantzmon said that he was the founder and CEO of Hexagon Energy. He said that he was a lifelong resident of Charlottesville. He said that the company worked nationally on solar power projects, and Virginia had only embraced renewable energy projects in recent years. He said that they wanted to ensure they used best practices for the project.

Mr. Hantzmon said that Hexagon Energy stressed stewardship as a company. He said that they wanted to ensure the project was well-received by the community. He said that the landowner was an old friend of his. He said that the project would improve the quality of the land and leave it in better condition once it was decommissioned.

Mr. Hantzmon said that he had worked in the industry for over 20 years, and the County's processes were some of the best and most thorough. He requested that the Commission vote in support of the project.

Mr. Billy Spradlin said he was with the Woodridge Sportsmen's Association. He said that they had leased the land for the proposed project for over 50 years. He said that the project was positive for the community, and it would better the land in the community. He said that he grew up in the County and had lived his whole life within two miles of the site. He said that the project would keep rural land rural. He said that the fenced-in area was insignificant compared to the amount of land which would be incorporated with the project and kept as forested land. He said he and his children hunted on the land. He said that they leased the land to preserve it for the use.

Mr. Spradlin noted that the community had several construction workers and planners, and they would benefit from the project. He stated that he ran a security company, and the site would need security. He said that he supported the project, and the Woodridge Sportsman Association was also in support.

Mr. Drew Price said that he lived in the Samuel Miller district and had lived in the County for 17 years. He said that his children attended ACPS. He said that he was in support of the project. He said that he was the president and co-founder of Hexagon Energy.

Mr. Price said that when they started Hexagon Energy, their goal was to build a local small-business and bring the benefits of renewable energy to the area. He said that they had spent the past seven and a half years working in Virginia and across the US to bring projects that delivered clean energy, environmental benefits, and economic opportunity.

Mr. Price said that they had worked to develop a well-sited and thoughtfully designed project that benefited the community. He said that his kids had shown more interest in his job due to this project, and his kids realized that their future depended on his job in many ways. He said that his kids continued to show more interest in solar power.

Mr. Price said he was proud to stand before the community to offer the project which would make the community and the world better. He said that the Woodridge Solar project received community input, engineering expertise, and environmental rigor, and it was designed with care for the community. He requested that the Commission recommend approval to the Board.

Ms. Christine Putnam said she lived on Secretary's Road. She noted that there was a need for alternative energy sources to address climate change. She said that she would rather see solar placed on rooftops and brownfields. She said that the project had advantages given its proximity to the transmission line. She said she was the chair of the Albemarle County Natural Heritage Committee. She said she was concerned about the protection of the County's natural resources. She said she was concerned about the impact of the solar project on the land.

Ms. Putnam said that Mr. Reamer had listened to the concerns and noted the commitment from Hexagon Energy to restore native vegetation and protect stream buffers. She said that she had reviewed the vegetative management plan and that the plan was sound. She said that the plan relied on active monitoring, and the active monitoring had to happen for the vegetative plan to be successful. She noted the difficulty of establishing plant cover in acidic soils impacted by decades of industrial timbering. She noted that the intensive grading could prove to be difficult.

Ms. Putnam said that there was a possibility that the weather was not cooperative and there would be places where the vegetation did not take. She said a third-party professional was required to make sure that the vegetative plan was properly implemented and monitored throughout the life of the project. She said that the developer has offered such a condition, so it should be included as a condition of approval. She said that the developer should provide funds for the monitoring and any needed remediation.

Ms. Putnam said that County staff or neighboring citizens should not be expected to take on the responsibility. She said that if the land were to be restored to support a biodiverse system, active monitoring had to take place. She said that the County was in the process of hiring a consultant to draft an ordinance for utility-scale solar power, and the model ordinance needed to require that projects met the Pollinator Smart certification and that they were properly monitored.

Mr. Danny Van Clief said that he lived in the White Hall district, and much of his family's history in the area included property ownership in southern Albemarle. He said that he was the founding CEO of a solar energy business based in Charlottesville called Sun Tribe Development. He said that his business was part of a growing collection of renewable energy companies in the County. He said that Hexagon Energy was a respected competitor, but he was speaking in support of the project.

Mr. Van Clief said that he had worked on more than 70 completed solar projects in 22 states over the past 15 years, including a successful special use permit application a year ago for a solar farm in the County called Midway Solar. He said that by the time an application came before the Commission, it had been thoroughly vetted by County staff, and the standards and conditions which had been imposed were of substantial quality and merit. He said that the County was one of the most rigorous localities to secure a land-use permit for solar power.

Mr. John Kluge said that he was a longtime resident of the County and a business owner. He said that he left his little girl at home. He said that he was in support of the Woodridge Solar project. He said that he was the co-founder of the Thistlerock Mead Company. He said that they hoped to open up the use within the next year. He explained that mead was a honey-derived product classified in the state as a farm winery. He said that they were a nature-based, emission-driven, social enterprise.

Mr. Kluge said that they produced a wine that was based on the production of honey. He said that the farm was currently located in the Milton area where they had a regenerative flower operation and apiary. He said that the work started during the COVID-19 pandemic to restore their soil. He noted the short-term improvements to the biodiversity from the soil restoration work. He noted that the quality of the soil and the ability to grow vegetables had changed.



Mr. Kluge said that because they produced honey as their fermentation ingredient, they had a requirement to produce at least 51% of their fermented sugars from the honey they produce. He said that they currently had 40 hives under their management. He said that they reinvested 50% of their pre-tax profits into climate action, conservation, biodiversity protection, and the livelihoods of disenfranchised beekeepers. He said that they were looking for ways to structure innovative partnerships. He said that their goal was to be the first net-zero meadery in the country and the first net-zero winery in the state.

Mr. Kluge explained that they would be able to relocate the bees to the Woodridge site and advise on the pollinator plan and land management practices. He said that they would be able to use the collected honey to produce a value-added product in the County. He said that he supported the project, and they had signed a letter of intent with Hexagon Energy stating their purpose.

Ms. Allison Wickham stated that she worked with Thistlerock Mead Company. She said she was the founder of the Siller Pollinator, a Charlottesville-area-based, pollinator-focused service provider and nectar share. She explained that a nectar share was a CSA-style beehive share program in collaboration with local non-profits. She explained she had an undergraduate degree in chemistry, environmental studies, and geography, and a master's degree in soil and crop science.

Ms. Wickham stated that the project would have a direct, positive impact on pollinator populations. She said that the project would provide clean energy, food, and nesting grounds for native pollinators. She said that there were over 400 species of bees native to the state. She said that the native pollinators relied on native species. She said that the vegetation plan was a good plan and explained that the applicant had allowed them to keep bees on the site which would greatly improve their honey yields.

Ms. Wickham said that the honey would be turned into mead to be enjoyed in the County. She said that the project could serve as a model for a cooperative piece of land. She said that the project model should be encouraged. She noted that she could not keep bees at a coal fire power plant. She said that she fully supported the project and requested that the Commission support it as well.

Ms. Jamie Piotrowski said she was a resident of the Rio district. She said that she was in support of the project. She requested the Commission recommend approval to the Board. She said that she was a recent graduate of the Virginia Cooperative Extension's Master Gardener training. She noted that the plans included extensive vegetation management for improved biodiversity with potential benefits for the local ecosystem. She mentioned that the project qualified for the Virginia Pollinator Smart program.

Ms. Piotrowski said that ongoing monitoring would be wise. She noted that the project was at a strategic location due to the existing transmission line. She said that the community needed to be involved in the local efforts for the climate action plan to move forward. She said that increased community involvement needed to be encouraged by the Board and by the Commission.

Ms. Piotrowski stated that they all required electricity and had a vested interest in replacing fossil fuels with renewable energies. She said that she had seven grandchildren, and she wanted them to have a livable community and a livable Earth. She said that she had solar panels on her roof, and she drove an electric vehicle. She said that they needed renewable energy at scale to make a difference. She requested the Commission recommend approval of the project to the Board.

Mr. Graham McLean stated that he was a County resident. He said that he agreed with the previous comments. He said that the state needed to deploy substantial renewable energy of all kinds in all sorts of configurations to decarbonize the electricity sector—distributed generation, solar on brownfields, and solar on reclaimed coalfields. He said that it would not be enough. He said that utility-scale solar was a critical piece of the solution, and they would not reach their goals without it.

Mr. McLean said that the existing transmission line was important to consider. He said that the less solar that was deployed in the County, the state, and the country meant that more solar energy had to be imported. He said that the County should approve sound, renewable energy projects that leveraged existing infrastructure. He requested the Commission support the proposal.

Mr. Matthew Gilligan said that he was the co-chair of Livable Cville. He explained that Livable Cville was a local, all-volunteer group whose mission was to advocate for policies to build an inclusive Charlottesville area with affordable housing, sustainable transportation, and healthy neighborhoods. He said that climate change and environmental justice were urgent matters that must be addressed at the local level. He said that he was in support of the special use permits for the Woodridge Solar project.

Mr. Gilligan said that their research had shown the project to be consistent with the County's environmental and land-use goals. He said that the project was an opportunity for the County to establish itself as a leader in utility-scale solar projects. He said that the project would produce local solar energy and preserve the ecological integrity of the site through a vegetation management plan.

Mr. Gilligan said that the project was consistent with Phase 1 of the County's climate action plan. He explained that the climate action plan recommended that when considering utility-scale renewable energy projects, the County should strive to maintain a holistic perspective that accounted for potential climate benefits and the health of the local ecosystem.

Mr. Gilligan said that the project maintained the balance through a combination of reduction in carbon emissions, room for effective stormwater management, and an extensive vegetative management plan. He said that Hexagon Energy had secured an interconnection agreement. He said that a rejection of the project could cause the County to miss a window of opportunity. He said that it could take decades for smaller community-scale and rooftop projects to provide an equivalent amount of renewable energy in the County. He said that the project represented a significant change in land use for the site.

Mr. Gilligan said that the project would give the County the chance to improve ecological diversity and act quickly on its goals to address climate change. He requested that the Commission recommend approval of the project.

Mr. Kendall Dix said that he lived in Esmont on the border of Scottsville in the County. He said that he was the national policy director for a climate justice organization based in Louisiana but operated internationally. He said that he moved to the area from Louisiana. He said that the climate problem meant any action taken now is more valuable than action taken later.

Mr. Dix noted that from a justice perspective, there was skepticism about utility-scale solar. He said that he reviewed the proposal looking for flaws. He said that the site had already been severely degraded. He said that the proposed site was appropriate for the use. He said that the remediation of the land and other conditions could be an example of utility-scale solar done right. He said that the County had the opportunity to provide a model project.

Mr. Dix said that studies were published detailing how larger projects were more efficient in terms of electricity generation. He noted that solar energy came with costs. He mentioned that there were mining impacts and manufacturing impacts. He said that the resources should be used efficiently so that other regions were not subject to environmental injustice. He said that he supported the project and requested that the Commission recommend approval.

Mr. Rich Allevi stated that he was a Charlottesville resident and the co-founder of Sun Tribe Solar. He said that he was the chair of the Charlottesville Renewable Energy Alliance, and he was a member of the Virginia Board for Workforce Development which advised the Governor on all matters related to workforce. He said that he was the co-chair of an organization called SHINE—Solar Hands-on Instructional Network of Excellence.

Mr. Allevi explained that SHINE was a nonprofit funded by the state, and they developed training labs so people can learn the skills required to be effective on a solar job site. He said that part of the program was an informational dashboard that used data to predict where projects would come up next and where they would need to roll out training labs funded by the state. He explained that PVCC agreed to deploy the program at its campus. He said that with the approval of the project, there would be the support of the state and SHINE to train local residents to obtain employment at the project.

Ms. Patricia Mata said she lived on Secretary's Road. She said that the solar panels would be built next to her home. She said she would be able to see them from her home. She said that they previously had distributed too much herbicide on the neighboring land, and it made it desolate. She said that there had been previous herbicide sprays and pine growth. She said she was concerned that more herbicides would be used to implement the solar panels.

Ms. Mata asked where the solar panels would be sourced. She noted that Mr. Reamer knew about the visual impacts. She said that US-made solar panels should be used. She noted that a fire station was supposed to have been built in the area. She said that currently, the closest station was near Monticello High School or Scottsville. She questioned the emergency response time to the site. She said that there was no clear-cut plan for how the panels would be decommissioned. She expressed concerns about the dismantling of the panels and the future uses of the site. She said she was against the solar panels being located next to her house.

Mr. Jim Allen said that he had lived in the County across the road from one of the original solar fields proposed by Hexagon Energy. He said he was speaking in opposition to the project. He said he was concerned about fire safety. He said Massachusetts was a colder environment and lush. He said that he moved here from Dallas, Texas. He said that in the summertime, it was dry and dusty, and there was a fire hazard. He said that they were about 30 minutes from emergency response.

Mr. Allen said that he had worked in the investment business for 40 years. He said that people without stakes often invested heavily in certain items which caused issues down the road. He said that the people who lived next to the proposed site were not necessarily in favor. He said that Hexagon Energy was good to work with. He said that they wanted to ensure that their lands were not changed from what they were when they moved to the area. He said that a solar facility should be put in western or northern Albemarle.

Ms. Laura Young said she was speaking in support of the project. She said that her grandmother lived off Secretary's Road, and her property bordered one of the proposed locations for the solar panels. She stated that her grandmother's driveway would become an access point to one of the service stations. She said that initially, she was excited about the potential renewable energy, but she was worried about the impact on her grandmother's property. She said that she met with Mr. Reamer, and he had received their feedback and assured them that they would be good neighbors.

Ms. Young mentioned that the County had set a goal to hit zero net emissions by 2050. She said that the project would get the County closer to the goal. She said she supported the project and encouraged the Commission to support it as well.

Mr. James Tameron said that he lived across the road from the proposed location on Secretary's Road. He said that he hoped the Commission would hold the applicant to the terms of the project.

Mr. Bryan Freidman said that he lived on Blenheim Road, about two miles from the proposed site. He said that he was in support of previous comments regarding the good working relationship with Hexagon Energy. He asked for clarification regarding the total area of panels. He said he was concerned about who would own the project and the land once the project was complete. He said that he was concerned about the ability to enforce the conditions.

Mr. Freedman asked where the power would be distributed from the facility. He asked whether the power from the facility would go to the County or if it would be exported. He said that he agreed solar energy was important to decarbonize the grid. He said that it should benefit the people living in the County.

Mr. Bruce Sullivan said he agreed with previous comments. He said that he had lived in the County since 1973. He said that his mother lived at 4503 Island Drive. He said that they supported the project. He said that they had concerns early on, but they had met with Mr. Reamer who addressed the concerns. He said that the biggest concern regarded who would care for the road. He said that the project was a great opportunity for the County. He said that it would be a model for a good solar project. He said that he supported the project.

Ms. Firehock asked if there were any public speakers signed up via Zoom.

Ms. Shaffer said yes. She read the protocol for the public speakers.

Mr. Kirk Bowers said that he was a 35-year resident of the Rivanna District and a native of Virginia. He said that he represented the Sierra Club as the Conservation Chair for the Piedmont group. He said that the executive committee of the Piedmont group endorsed support for the Woodbridge Solar Facility project. He said that the project site was suitable for a solar facility and would generate power for 25,000 homes, or over half of the homes in Albemarle County. He said the project also supported the goals of the County Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. He said that it would meet about 20% of the goals for all greenhouse gas emissions for the County, and the facility also fit into the County's Comprehensive Plan goals and the pending update. He said that it was a great project that they supported; however, they had a few recommendations and reservations.

Mr. Bowers said that they did not support a project without thorough research, and he had over 40 years of civil engineering experience and was a licensed professional engineer in addition to being Conservation Chair, with lots of experience with site development projects. He said that he was asking for several things, including specifics in construction plans to minimize construction-related compaction of on-site soils, share a high cover of perennial vegetation with minimal maintenance, to design the site with permeable space between solar panel rows to promote filtration of stormwater runoff. He said that solar farms could be designed to minimize the impact on landscape and eco-hydrological processes. He said that they were attempting to stop using conventional stormwater practices using stormwater basins by using infiltration and low-impact development design.

Mr. Bowers said that they recommended that Low Impact Development be used to the greatest extent possible on this site, partially to encourage the recharge of groundwater as part of the site development process, however, there were some competing interests. He said that they needed to develop a good stormwater plan that would use existing on-site soils and filtrate the water, which meant building infiltration cells between the panel rows. He said that during construction, site management practices should minimize adverse impacts to the soils. He said that the construction sequencing made him cringe when he heard that there would be two years to completion of this project, and even plans that were well-organized could become years behind schedule.

Mr. Bowers said that there were likely problems due to the steep slopes on this site, and slopes over a 15% gradient would create difficulty in getting anything to grow on the slopes. He said that when he looked at some of the soil characteristics, there were highly erodible soils on the site, and it could be a disaster like what was seen at the Locust Grove solar facility installation, where there were major erosion problems. He said that the Sierra Club supported the project.

Ms. Katie Ebinger said that she lived in Charlottesville. She said that she was the climate policy analyst for the community climate collaborative, or C3, a nonprofit in Charlottesville that specialized in local climate action. She said that she supported granting special use permits to the Woodridge Solar project. She said that over the past few weeks, the policy team at C3 had conducted an analysis of the proposed Woodridge site to assess the justice, environmental, economic, and climate impact of the project. She said that they were excited to comment on their support for the project.

Ms. Ebinger said that some of the positive aspects from their study were that the Woodridge project effectively engaged community groups. She said that one result was a well-thought-out design that centered on ecosystem health throughout every stage of the development process, and their community engagement went far beyond what was required, and some of the feedback was incorporated into the project's final design. She said that as this project progressed, she urged that community engagement be centered throughout. She said that about justice, whenever they were able to create clean energy, they could close a dirty power plant, which historically were located in environmental justice communities. She said that similarly, they could hope to slow climate change, which impacted communities of color most drastically.

Ms. Ebinger said this project's importance to climate change mitigation was also substantial; C3 had estimates to greenhouse gas emissions in the first year similar to what Hexagon projected, so this was to

the order of 100,000 times the amount of greenhouse gases mitigated in the first year, and even when accounting for emissions created during the manufacturing and other parts of the process, this project was still significantly favorable from a climate perspective. She said that they believed that inviting such a beneficial project to the County was the right decision for the community and the climate, and they urged the approval for the special use permits for the Woodridge Solar project.

Ms. Shaffer said that there were no other speakers online.

Ms. Firehock asked the applicant to make closing remarks and to address public comment.

Mr. Reamer said that he had enjoyed the time he had spent with citizens who both approved and disapproved of the project, because it indicated a special opportunity to get to know each other. He said that a consistent question that had been raised was how they would make sure that this excellent vegetation management plan would be enforced. He said that another question that had been raised was if they could work with one of the many qualified local environmental monitoring companies to do bi-annual or annual reports that they as a company, or put as a condition, that a regional qualified company produced an annual compliance report with the vegetation management plan. He said that they fully supported doing something like that and he wanted to ensure that they guaranteed their promises. He said that he hoped that this would appease much of the concern from the public, and his company supported that fully.

Ms. Firehock said that a citizen asked about decommissioning, which would be covered as a part of the plan. She asked if Mr. Reamer could address this issue for the public.

Mr. Reamer said that as part of their application, a decommissioning plan would be included, and he recalled that \$8M in current dollars was the cost of decommissioning the site and putting the site back to near-preexisting conditions, meaning that it would not be completely regraded and they would not remove the then-mature vegetation. He said that it would be set aside as a financial instrument with the County before any ground was broken so that the County had that fund to decommission it if the owner stopped the operation.

Mr. Reamer said that in regard to inflation, a stipulation of what was included in their plan, and one of the conditions was that it must be renewed every five years so that the amount was true to whatever inflation had affected. He said that he did not mean to avoid that information in his initial presentation, as it was a central feature of the plan and was part of the submitted application.

Ms. Firehock said that another question raised by the public was where the power went.

Mr. Reamer said that that was a good question that had been discussed at length in various community meetings. He said that the power itself was electrons pumped into this substation that flowed up and down these lines to other substations in the area, and they did not know exactly where the power went, but physically, the electrons were used locally. He said that the market that allowed them to build this project and sell the power was part of a virtual power purchase agreement. He said that that meant that someone with a large power bill who was interested in reducing their carbon footprint would contract with them to buy the power. He said that if they heard, for example, that the power was going to northern Virginia to a data center, the electrons actually were not, but the crediting of the system and the way the power was paid would be credited against someone who may want to contract to buy the power. He said that the electrons from the project would be going onto their grid in the area.

Ms. Firehock said that she would like to address the other question about erosion. She said that while they were spaced far apart, there was a series of panels angled in a certain direction, which created a certain volume of sheet flow and hit the ground at the same spots, which was explained by evidence of severe gullying at other solar sites. She asked if Mr. Reamer could address that more.

Mr. Reamer said that that happened when sheet flow from rain went across the ground, which was why it was important to have the vegetation management done correctly, because the deep-rooted system would help slow all of that runoff from the beginning. He said that that was not all that was needed to solve the issue, so they built in management ponds as a baseline. He said that they were tried and true, but were not

desirable, so they were looking into low-impact development features such as swales between panel rows, but they had to research the engineering and potential issues of the alternative solutions. He said that submitted was a concept plan that showed that at the bare minimum, they had what was required for stormwater pond management, and they were looking into other low-impact development and best management practices that they could. He asked if that answered Ms. Firehock's question.

Ms. Firehock said that she thought so. She said that she could not speak for all members of the public. She asked if Commissioners had other questions for the applicant.

Mr. Carrazana said that another concern raised was fire. He asked if Mr. Reamer could talk about the potential of fire hazard. He said there was another issue about the distance to a fire hydrant, due to there being a well on the site and not enough pressure for a hydrant.

Mr. Reamer said that it was an electrical facility that would be installed, and sometimes things would catch on fire. He said that most fires ended up happening due to poor construction, and they would work very hard and have County supervision to make sure that was done. He said that they would work before the site plan approval with the fire department to ensure their proposal was an acceptable plan. He said that they had ideas of dry wells or cisterns located throughout the site, and if there were sheep on the site, water would be required anyway, so there may be confluence for those water cisterns for the sheep to serve that other purpose.

Mr. Reamer said that pine forests were not immune to fire, and a lightning strike on a dry forest would pose a real problem. He said that because there was separation and use of low-height vegetation, there would be a fire break. He said that they would work with the fire department to address that more effectively, and a condition was to work with the fire department to ensure they had an acceptable plan.

Mr. Murray said that the location of the site was close to some popular running and cycling routes in the County. He said that he wondered about truck traffic and sensitivity to other users on the road.

Mr. Reamer said that the technical answer was that VDOT had reviewed the process and said that there was no adverse effect from their perspective. He said that he had not thought about the cycling perspective, but they would work with the community, the County, and VDOT to ensure that trucks were careful, and they would use flaggers and signs appropriately. He said that there was some established context for doing so and they would make sure it worked with flagging.

Mr. Bivins asked if Mr. Reamer knew what Hexagon's long-range planning for ownership of the property was.

Mr. Reamer said that historically, as a company, they worked as a front-end developer, meaning they went through entitlements phases, got everyone to sign everything off, then transferred ownership of whatever project to a company that had a balance sheet and a lower cost of construction financing than they did. He said that that allowed them to work across many markets, and their reputation would follow if they did a bad project. He said that they would love to eventually own and operate projects, and there was no project they would like to operate more than this particular one, and while he could not promise it, that was their hope for an ideal scenario. He said that there was no condition, and they could sell it to whomever they wanted to but were looking for every opportunity to own and operate it themselves.

Mr. Bivins said that clear options that sat before the company should be relayed to the Board of Supervisors and Mr. Reamer should consult his counsel for that.

Ms. Reamer thanked Mr. Bivins for the guidance.

Ms. Firehock thanked the applicant and said that the matter was now before the Commission for deliberation.

Mr. Murray said that overall, this was a great project that could be a good example for projects that may be seen in the future. He said that they should suggest a condition and place a condition of having ongoing monitoring, which was a great addition to this.

Mr. Missel asked Mr. Murray what kind of monitoring he was referring to.

Mr. Murray said that he mentioned ongoing monitoring.

Mr. Missel clarified that it was monitoring of the vegetation.

Mr. Murray said that was a great condition to add to this. He said that he would lean on treating the panels as impervious after seeing what happened in Louisa. He said that he did not think it would happen here, but there were some cautionary tales in the region.

Mr. Clayborne said that he supported the project presented tonight. He said that it aligned with the County's goals for sustainability and seemed a reasonable site for such a project. He said that in terms of the conditions, they may want to mention someone who was certified in the field of cost estimating in order to note that a professional was completing it. He said that as-builts should be made available for the decommissioning process, and it was important for them to be present.

Ms. Firehock said that she also was in support of this project. She said that she agreed with adding the condition, and the applicant mentioned third-party monitoring by a qualified firm that did that type of assessment bi-annually for the first five years and then annually thereafter, because the vegetation should be established. She commented that the Commission reviewed applications such as this because each one was unique, so she did not see it as all solar was good or all solar was bad, but this particular site seemed to have a high amount of erosion and a lot of gulying, and the soil appeared to be in poor condition. She said that her background was in natural resources management, so she was qualified in this area, and she believed that this project would improve the health of the soil and decrease the runoff occurring there.

Ms. Firehock said that she often was against solar projects that removed forests because the point of solar was to help with carbon release, and forests and their soils sequestered a tremendous amount of carbon. She said that in fact, it was the soils that sequestered even more carbon than the trees, but for that to be occurring and doing so well, there must be a thick layer from years of leaf fall from a mature forest. She said that if this were performing as a mature hardwood forest that was relatively undisturbed, she would be against a project removing a carbon sink to provide a carbon release. She said that because this particular site was highly impacted, the soils were in poor condition, and a lot of erosion was occurring, after the vegetation management plan was put in place, the site would be more stable and the soils would build and improve over time as the biomass decayed over the winter and new biomass came in. She said that it would be a net positive for this particular site.

Ms. Firehock said that she was certain that the power in the room they sat in was from coal, likely mined from a mountaintop in southwest Virginia, so they had a responsibility as a County to take care of solar. She said that she wanted to be clear that this did not mean that she would be in support of removing mature forests for solar, but for this particular site and the degraded condition it was in, and the fact that the applicant had maintained connectivity through the site by protecting streams, wildlife would continue to move through the site. She said that he did not mention that there would be small openings in the fence so that small animals could move through it. She said that it was a less impactful site than most she had seen throughout her career.

Mr. Bivins said that he was in support of the project. He said that the ground was in poor condition and likely would not be reforested, but the bulk of the 2,300 acres had a lot of forest that would likely be timbered. He said that also on the 1,500 acres would be a diversification of uses, so if the beekeeping and shepherding occurred there, along with the timbering and hunting, it would be more than the timbering with the hardwood-suppressing chemicals. He said that he was pleased to support this use for the diversification of uses and because the proposed use supported people.

Ms. Firehock said that the paneled acreage that it was impacting was 200 acres on a 1,500-acre site. She said that it was not a 1,500-acre solar panel development, and there was a lot of habitat being protected on that particular site.

Mr. Carrazana said that he appreciated the Chair's comments on forests' role in carbon capture. He said that he would also vote no if this project were to take down mature forests, because they simply did not have enough land if they were to convert everything to solar and drove electric vehicles. He said that this site was unique in some ways, and there were many cautionary tales about what solar fields had done to land, so this project was bringing in so many parts and creating an ecosystem. He said that from that standpoint, it was very much environmentally friendly to the economy and also brought in solar energy.

Mr. Carrazana said that two days ago, there was a net energy gain from fusion, so it was an interesting conversation they needed to have in terms of carbon neutrality. He said that they must manage their resources well, thinking about agriculture and farmlands, but this project brought so many things together that they all wanted to succeed. He said that they wanted to ensure it did succeed and how it kept their eyes on it, because there were many commitments and promises here, so they needed to make sure it was actually happening and that these activities were continuing to flourish on this land. He concluded that he would vote yes for this project.

Mr. Missel said that he was in support of the project and was prepared to make a motion. He said that he had proposed conditions he would like to review with his fellow Commissioners. He said that he agreed with the comments about the removal of mature forests, and he also would likely feel the same way. He said that this was a great test study for the climate action plan, and it would continue to be something monitored as they moved forward, as the vegetation would be. He said that it was important to consider the 25,000 homes was huge, and the electrons being local was a helpful insight to have. He said that it was an effective and logical use of the degraded land and would only improve the landscape. He said that he appreciated the public comment and understood the comments from the people who lived adjacent to this.

Mr. Missel said, noting it was a subjective statement, that he hoped it would be a nicer view than what was currently on the site. He commended the applicant for an outstanding community engagement process and thought it was a great model that potentially could be considered as they moved forward. He said that it met the mission of providing clean, renewable energy, and acknowledged the reality that there was a need for utility-grade solar, and that it was well-incorporated into the natural environment. He said that there were many positive aspects to this project that they all realized, and he was also aware that there was much to learn. He said that this group was still learning as they went through each project, but if they did not go through projects like this, they would never learn how to do better, and this was a huge leap forward to be able to do that.

Mr. Missel said that he had a few questions relating to conditions. He said that he appreciated Mr. Clayborne's comments about as-builts being required for the commissioning process, and he would be in support of a condition that stated it, although he imagined it would be done as part of the work regardless. He said that the third-party vegetation monitoring could be a condition, and some minor tweaks to incorporate into the motion. He asked Mr. Clayborne mentioned another item in addition to the as-builts.

Mr. Clayborne said that he had requested that the person who performed the cost estimation had a certification in that field.

Mr. Missel asked if that was in addition to something written.

Mr. Clayborne said that he had just thought of it.

Mr. Missel asked what the cost estimate was for.

Mr. Clayborne said that it was the cost of decommissioning. He said that there were different components to it.



Mr. Missel said that that was related to the five-year process that the County would go through. He asked if that was built into that process.

Mr. Fritz said that he would recommend for that that it be clarified that the decommissioning plan was done by qualified individuals, they could go back and make sure the condition already had it or come up with the appropriate language.

Mr. Missel said that in terms of the monitoring, something to the effect of third-party monitoring of vegetative plantings.

Ms. Firehock said that attainment of the vegetation management plan by a qualified professional. She said that the frequency should be specified as well.

Mr. Missel said for an initial period of two per year for the first five years following implementation of the plan, and once per year annually thereafter.

Ms. Firehock noted that there was also a special exception consideration for disturbance of steep slopes and the Commission did not have legal authority over special exceptions, but if they wanted to take that up they could make a recommendation to the Board on how they received that matter, but it was not necessary due to the lack of authority.

Mr. Missel asked for the consensus of the Commission on that matter.

Ms. Firehock said that her general practice was to not weigh in on special exceptions that they did not have a say over. She said that it was up to Mr. Missel.

Mr. Bivins said that there was another one as well.

Mr. Missel said yes.

Ms. Firehock said that they had the solar substation and the actual solar site itself, and then they had the potential for the special exception.

Mr. Missel said that he understood.

Mr. Herrick added that there was also the comprehensive plan review. He said that Mr. Fritz had sequenced the proposed motions in that order.

Ms. Firehock said that was whether it conformed with the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Fritz said that he had a sequence laid out for the Commission.

Mr. Missel asked if they should keep the sequence.

Mr. Fritz said yes. He asked if Mr. Missel could restate the condition he was talking about for the third-party inspection so that he could type it in and display it on the screen. He said that he also had a potential recommendation to add, which was that they should include the County to approve the qualifications of the third party.

Mr. Missel said yes. He asked if that was the same for the decommissioning plan.

Mr. Fritz said that he had included the decommissioning plan to have as-builts, and the development and updating decommissioning plan to be done by qualified individuals. He said that it may already have this information, but they would develop the appropriate language.

Ms. Firehock said that they did not need to craft specific recommendations for these details.

Mr. Fritz said there were three separate actions, one being compliance with the comprehensive plan, then SP202200015 Woodridge Solar, and third SP202200014 Woodridge Solar Substation.

Mr. Missel moved the Planning Commission to find the facility proposed in SP202200015 was in substantial compliance in the comprehensive plan. Mr. Clayborne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Mr. Missel moved the Planning Commission to recommend approval of SP202200015, Woodridge Solar, with the conditions outlined in the staff report and with changes to conditions 1, 3, and 14, presented tonight. Mr. Murray seconded the motion.

Mr. Bivins said that on the second point, the decommissioning plan to include as-built plans, he would like for it to be clearer on what those two plans were.

Mr. Clayborne said that as-builts were, at the end of a construction project, were the documents that depicted what was actually constructed as opposed to the design, including what was installed above and below ground.

Mr. Bivins asked if that was for after it was decommissioned.

Mr. Clayborne said that it was after it was constructed so that they had a map to go from.

Mr. Bivins said okay.

Ms. Firehock asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, she asked the Clerk to call the role.

The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Mr. Missel moved the Planning Commission to recommend approval of SP202200014 Woodridge Solar Substation, with the conditions outlined in the staff report and with the changes to conditions 1, 3, and 14, presented tonight, as well as the three on the slide. Mr. Murray seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Mr. Herrick said that before they dispensed this item for the evening, counsel for the applicant had pointed out that the wording of the compliance with the comprehensive plan motion may not have been sufficiently broad. He said that it was worded that the generation station was in compliance with the comprehensive plan, and out of an abundance of caution, it may be best to make another motion to indicate that the substation was in compliance with the comprehensive plan as well.

Ms. Firehock asked if that should be made as an additional motion.

Mr. Herrick said that it should if the Commission found that the substation as well was in substantial compliance with the comprehensive plan.

Ms. Firehock said that she understood that they both be in compliance.

Mr. Fritz asked if it should be a new motion.

Mr. Herrick said that since the first motion approved the generating facility, it should just be a separate motion.

Ms. Firehock said that they did not want to vote to undo the first one, so an additional motion should be made.

Mr. Missel moved the Planning Commission to find the facility proposed in SP202200014 was in substantial compliance with the comprehensive plan. Mr. Clayborne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

**Adjournment**

The Planning Commission adjourned to Tuesday, January 10, 2023.



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Kevin McDermott, Interim Director of Planning

(Recorded by Carolyn S. Shaffer, Clerk to Planning Commission & Planning Boards; transcribed by Golden Transcription Services)

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|---------------------------------|
| Approved by Planning Commission |
| Date: 01/24/2023                |
| Initials: CSS                   |