

Plat, Annexation and Zoning Committee Minutes

May 26, 2010

11:05 am – 12:00 pm

Missoula City Council Chambers, 140 W. Pine Street

Members Present: Bob Jaffe (Chair), Ed Childers, Lyn Hellegaard, Roy Houseman, Dick Haines, Marilyn Marler, Renee Mitchell, Stacy Rye, Dave Strohmaier, Pam Walzer, Jason Wiener, and Jon Wilkins.

Members Absent: Lyn Hellegaard, Marilyn Marler

Others Present: Lane Coulston, Mike Barton, John Hendrickson, Laval Means, Jim Nugent, Mike Sudik and Shelley Oly

I. Approval of Minutes

[May 19, 2010](#) approved as presented.

II. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda

Chair Jaffe made a brief announcement that as the Chair of the PAZ Committee any OPG staff that supports the PAZ Committee is invited to participate and/or be in the audience in the context of presenting an item, answering questions asked by the Committee or whenever the staff feels their attendance would benefit their work.

III. Staff Announcements

IV. Consent Agenda Items

V. Regular Agenda Items

- A. Consider a draft ordinance replacing the existing ban on wind energy conversion systems (MMC 20.45.80) with language allowing and regulating small-scale wind energy conversion systems an accessory use ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Jason Wiener) (Referred to committee: 05/24/10) ([Remove from Agenda](#))

MOTION: The Committee recommends that the City Council forward an amendment to revise MMC 20.085.80 to allow and regulate small scale wind energy conversion systems to the Planning Board for consideration.

Councilman Wiener brought this referral forward because the consultant who developed Title 20 had proposed adopting some regulations concerning wind energy conversion systems. This issue had generated concern and was set aside for future consideration.

Lane Coulston contacted Councilman Wiener about his desire to install a small scale wind generation system on his property. Councilman Wiener explained that the newly adopted regulations in Title 20 would not permit this project.

Councilman Wiener made a motion to forward an amendment to revise MMC 20.45.80 to allow and regulate small scale wind energy conversion systems to the Planning Board for consideration.

Mike Sudik, the contractor from Big Sky Solar and Wind, was available to answer questions. Mr. Sudik stated that the system he was proposing to install is an urban green energy system that includes a wind turbine that was made in China for low wind speeds. He noted it incorporates a vertical design to eliminate the three large blades and generate electricity at lower wind speeds.

There was much discussion on this item:

- What was the cost to install a windmill? Mr. Sudik replied the cost for this green urban system was about four thousand dollars for parts and installation.
- What is the 6% energy efficiency for a windmill? Mr. Sudik noted this number could be associated with the larger wind farms that sent their power for many miles. He stated that Mr. Coulston would probably get a 3-4% energy loss or 97% efficiency.
- Does one need a constant wind source to make these windmills efficient? Mr. Sudik pointed out that the goal was to find the right components to work with 1-3 mph wind speeds. The wind turbines on the market today work with 5-6 mph wind speeds.
- Was electricity required to keep these windmills primed when the wind source is unavailable? Mr. Sudik answered that windmills do not use energy; they produce energy.
- If one of these structures were placed on an adjacent parcel of land would property values be diminished or increased? Mr. Sudik reported that for every dollar of energy saved each year the home value goes up twenty dollars.
- What is the size of the windmill? Mr. Sudik stated that the small scale wind turbine was 4.5 feet tall and 1.5 feet wide.
- What was the noise level associated with windmills? Mr. Sudik explained the noise level was approximately 40 decibels if someone stood a meter away from the turbine, which was half the noise level of a vacuum cleaner and this was based on high wind speeds during storms. Mr. Sudik wondered if he could obtain the sound/noise level requirements for the city.
- Solar panels have become more efficient than in the past and are the costs equivalent to a windmill? Mr. Sudik pointed out the most efficient solar panel on the market is 14.5% efficient and wind is approximately 100% efficient.
- What about the horizontal wind systems in the city limits? Mr. Sudik shared that the ones on the market are not designed for low wind speeds.
- Does the vertical system address 'dirty wind'? Mr. Sudik replied that the benefit and the whole design behind the vertical wind turbines is utilize the 'dirty wind'
- What is an estimated height? Mr. Sudik indicated the height would be lower than what was required in Title 20. The bottom of the wind turbine would be between 12-15 feet from the ground.
- What was Mr. Sudik's experience? Mr. Sudik explained he has been in the renewable energy market for over six years and while he never actually installed a vertical wind turbine he was working closely with someone who was an expert in this field.
- Councilman Wilkins indicated that he would like to speak to other wind turbine experts.
- Councilman Wilkins said that the vibration is what affects most people and not the noise. What is the vibration and noise level for the small wind turbine? Mr. Sudik replied that small scale wind turbines produce small amounts of energy which do not create any vibration.
- Councilwoman Rue would like to see a demonstration and get some education on this product.
- What is the return on the investment? Mr. Sudik explained the net metering law, buys back the power back up to a net meter which is a zero amount. For example if Mr. Coulston is not using energy, his meter spins backwards and his electric bill is credited. The wind turbine is rated at 600 watts which is based on a wind speed of six miles per hour. Mr. Sudik explained he expects to acquire 300 kilowatt hours a month. Mr. Sudik clarified that there are certain shoulder months and days of those months that have 4-5 mph winds but this is not an everyday occurrence. So when we have the shoulder months is when the wind turbine would be the most efficient.

Councilman Wiener felt that all the questions are falling into two categories; what good is wind energy and what effects does this have in terms of being a nuisance. Mr. Wiener stated the opportunity to get expert comments is during the agency comment period. He pointed out that the OPG staff was aware of having an expanded list of agency commenters that will include experts.

Councilman Haines stated that agency comment should also come from the Audubon Society. He shared other areas of concern that should include limited density in certain areas, allowing citizens

the right to protest, a public hearing, and the wind turbine should be compatible with the neighborhood characteristics

The floor was open for public comment:

John Hendrickson emphasized the fact that wind generation was a compromise issue in Title 20. He stated that MBIA also had questions; however these should be worked out before it goes before the Planning Board:

- Would these wind turbines be limited to certain size lots?
- Would these be roof mounted and if mounted on top of commercial buildings is there a question of safety.
- How many wind turbines per household?
- Is there a height limit?
- The decibel level issue needs to be looked at because there is a noise ordinance.

Councilwoman Walzer called the question; it passed.

Councilman Wilkins stated he would research past minutes for answers to some of the questions that were raised.

The motion to send this item to Planning Board passed with 8 votes of 'aye' and 2 votes opposed (Councilman Wilkins and Councilwoman Mitchell). This will go on Committee Reports for Monday June 7, 2010.

- B.** Discussion of OPG's [task list](#) and workload.—Regular Agenda (Mike Barton) (Referred to committee: 06/12/06) Discussion of OPG's [task list](#) and workload./06) (**Held in Committee**)

This item was not discussed due to lack of time.

VI. Items to be Removed from the Agenda

VII. Held in Committee or Ongoing in Committee

1. Annexation. (see separate list at City Clerk's Office for pending annexations) (Ongoing in Committee)
2. Update the Rattlesnake Valley Comprehensive Plan Amendment ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Dave Strohmaier) (Referred to committee: 04/02/07)
3. Request to rezone the property legally described as Lot 3 of Scott Street Lots Subdivision, located in Section 16, T13N, R19W, P.M.M. form D (Industrial) to I-1 (Light Industrial), based on the finding of fact and conclusions of law. (PAZ [05/21/08](#)) (Returned from Council floor: 6/2/08)
4. Ongoing discussion of City planning issues with members of the Planning Board.—Regular Agenda (Bob Jaffe) (Referred to committee: 3/20/06)
5. Discuss the implications of the Sonata Park court case ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Bob Jaffe) (Referred to committee: 03/08/10)

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Shelley Oly

Administrative Secretary
Office of Planning and Grants

The recording of these minutes is available in the City Clerk's Office (for up to three months after approval of minutes). These minutes are summary and not verbatim.