PRESENT: C. Bragg, Chairman
R. Harris, Vice Chairman
L. Howdyshell
R. Thomas
K. Leonard
B. Schindler

J. Hensley, Planner II
E. Goodloe, Planner I
D. Wolfe, Director of Community Development

ABSENT:

VIRGINIA: At the Called Meeting of the Augusta County Planning Commission held on Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' Conference Room, Augusta County Government Center, Verona, Virginia.

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The Planning Commission was updated with the resignation of Mr. David Henderson from the Commission. Ms. Julia Hensley, Augusta County's new Planner II, was formally introduced to the Planning Commission.

Staff briefly went over the information the Planning Commission asked staff to gather on the twelve (12) Solar Policies in the Comprehensive Plan, and stated that they would be going over the research during October's Staff Briefing for the Planning Commission.

George Price and Nancy Varner from the Commissioner of Revenue's Office came to speak to the Commissioners to go over how agriculture land is assessed once it is taken out of land use for a solar facility to be constructed.

Finally, staff reviewed the Ordinance amendments to be considered for public hearing.

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Chairman

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Secretary

PRESENT: C. Bragg, Chairman
R. Harris, Vice Chairman
L. Howdyshell
R. Thomas
K. Leonard
B. Schindler

J. Hensley, Planner II
E. Goodloe, Planner I
D. Wolfe, Director of Community Development

ABSENT:

VIRGINIA: At the Regular Meeting of the Augusta County Planning Commission held on Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room, Augusta County Government Center, Verona, Virginia.

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DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mrs. Carolyn Bragg stated that there was a quorum. She stated she had a couple of notes to make. Mr. Henderson had stepped down so they had one position to be filled. She also introduced Julia Hensley, the new Planner for Augusta County.

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MINUTES

Mr. Larry Howdyshell moved to approve the minutes of the called and regular meeting held on August 8, 2023.

Mr. Randy Harris seconded the motion, which carried unanimously, 6-0.

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PUBLIC HEARINGS
Mrs. Bragg stated that they had two public hearings this evening.

Ms. Elizabeth Goodloe stated that the first requests were two proposed ordinance amendments to Section 25-70.5 Applications and Procedures for Small Energy Systems. The first amendment added the requirement for an applicant or representative to hold a conference with the Community Development Department prior to the formal submission of an application for a Special Use Permit for a Small Energy System.

Ms. Goodloe explained that a similar pre-application meeting is required prior to a rezoning request. Staff find that the pre-application meeting helps explain the staff process in evaluating requests, the public hearing process, and to discuss how to mitigate any concerns that may arise. Also, staff have come across several instances where solar companies have filled out the application incorrectly, sometimes causing a delay in the public hearing process in order for the applicant to correct the errors.

Ms. Goodloe stated that the second amendment was a housekeeping amendment that revised the incorrect reference to the Decommissioning section of the Solar Energy Systems Ordinance.

She asked if there were any questions from the Commission regarding the request.

Seeing none, Mrs. Bragg opened the public hearing for the request.

Mrs. Bragg asked the gentlemen in the audience if they understood the request and went on to introduce the one as a student from Riverheads present for school.

Mrs. Bragg closed the public hearing.

Mr. Robert Thomas made the motion to approve the changes.

Mr. Kyle Leonard seconded the motion, which carried unanimously, 6-0.

Ms. Goodloe stated that the second request is for two proposed ordinance amendments to Section 25-70.7 Applications and Procedures. The first amendment added the requirement for an applicant or representative to hold a conference with the Community Development Department prior to the formal submission of an application for a Special Use Permit for a Large Energy System.

Ms. Goodloe explained that this amendment was similar to the previous one, but for large energy systems. She stated that the second amendment was also a housekeeping amendment that revises the incorrect reference to the Decommissioning section of the Solar Energy Systems Ordinance.

She asked if there were any questions from the Commission regarding the request. Seeing none, Mrs. Bragg opened the public hearing for the request.

Seeing none, Mrs. Bragg opened the public hearing for the request.

Mrs. Bragg closed the public hearing.

Mr. Howdyshell made the motion to approve the amendment to Section 25-70.7.

Mr. Harris seconded the motion, which carried unanimously, 6-0.

Mrs. Bragg then explained the role of the Commission and the next steps for amendment process.

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NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Bragg stated that the bus trip to Charles County will be October 9th, and that three of the Commissioners will be going (and possibly a fourth member). Mrs. Bragg also stated that an invitation to members of the Board of Supervisors would be extended.

Mr. Leonard asked if they were going to meet with any of the planners from the locality.

Mrs. Bragg said staff would check on that.

Mr. Leonard stated that its always good to hear how it ended up and how it is going.

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STAFF REPORTS

Ms. Goodloe introduced the first staff report as an update for the Comprehensive Plan and Economic Strategic Plan RFP and stated that both plans had their kick-off meetings last week; the Economic Development meeting was held on Tuesday, September 5 and the COMP Plan meeting was held Friday, September 8. Both were productive and were a good start to this 18-month journey. During the Comprehensive Plan kick-off meeting, staff went through a couple of group exercises with Hill Studio. These included identifying potential stumbling blocks for the project, and creating goals and metrics to use to measure progress during the process. Hill Studio plans on repeating these group exercises with the Board of Supervisors when they meet at the end of the month.

Ms. Goodloe also stated a couple of notes from the meeting on Friday that the Community Input meetings would begin in October at each of the high schools. The Steering Committee for the Comprehensive Plan will begin meeting in early Spring of 2024. Another committee, the Project Action Committee, is comprised of County staff and will meet a minimum of once a month. Hill Studio is currently gathering background documents from staff, along with GIS data, to get a complete look at where they County

is now. The larger Comp Plan Committee will meet (tentatively) in March 2024, June 2024, and September 2024.
She asked if there were any questions from the Commission regarding the status of the Comprehensive Plan?

Mrs. Bragg stated that she had thought the Steering Committee would meet in October and November; what had changed?

Mr. Doug Wolfe stated that at the next Board of Supervisors meeting, the Board will decide if they want the Steering Committee to come to the work session where they will be charged and will meet at a minimum of quarterly.

Mrs. Bragg asked which committee was meeting next year?

Ms. Goodloe stated the Steering Committee that meets every three months.

Mr. Wolfe stated staff is meeting with the consultant at a minimum, monthly, at a staff level.

Ms. Julia Hensley stated that there are two committees. One is a staff/consultant committee where staff checks in with the consultant on a monthly basis, sometimes bi-weekly. The other one is tentatively being called the Steering or Project Action Committee, and that is the community level committee. Since a lot of the Public Engagement process is beginning first, we are not technically scheduled to meet with them until March, that entire committee, but we want to have them well informed and keep them updated throughout that process. We can find a way to integrate the public committee into monthly meetings if that is what the Commission would like.

Mr. Wolfe stated we are asking each Steering Committee member to attend at least one community input session at a minimum, and to attend the quarterly meetings. Staff will provide the Steering Committee information every month, and will review where we are and get feedback from them and from the citizens they have interacted with.

Ms. Goodloe reviewed the agenda items with the Commissioners for the October 2023 Board of Zoning Appeals meeting.

For the Verizon Wireless Special Use Permit Request and Request for a Variance-

Mr. Larry Howdyshell stated that the area needs cell service.

Mrs. Bragg stated that they would like their support passed onto the Board of Zoning Appeals.

For the Fishersville Road Solar Special Use Permit Request-

Mr. Leonard asked where the request was going now even though they had recommended it down.

Mrs. Bragg explained that they had recommended that it not be approved, but it is a special use permit and still goes to the deciding body, the BZA, who will have the final determination.

Mr. Wolfe stated staff will pass their recommendation that it was not in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, that will be passed to the BZA.

Wawa Inc, Special Use Permit Request and Request for a Variance

Mr. Leonard asked if this was the first Wawa in the area?

Mr. Wolfe stated that it was, and the reason that they needed to request for the special use permit was because they wanted four of their pumps to be diesel fuel, and the County ordinance defines anything with four or more diesel pumps as a travel plaza. They have asked for all of their pumps have diesel so that you can drive up to the pump, and it will have two handles, the regular black handle for three types of fuels and then the diesel pump. The orientation of the lot and the size of the lot makes it to where you cannot really get big rigs in there, so we do not anticipate having large trucks trying to get in.

Mr. Leonard said we did not anticipate large trucks coming into Pilot in Greeneville, but it happens all the time.

Mr. Wolfe explained that the Wawa does not have an actual truck stop behind it, but point taken.

Mr. Leonard asked if they had a conceptual plan.

Mr. Wolfe showed Mr. Leonard the plan and showed him where the entrances would be.
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Ms. Goodloe explained that this had been a rezoning to amend the proffers.

Mr. Leonard said the concept plan looked good.

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There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Harris made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Howdyshell seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. 6-0.

Chairman

Secretary