

TO: Redwood County Planning Commission
FROM: Nick Brozek *NB*
Land Use and Zoning Supervisor
Redwood County Environmental Office
DATE: May 15, 2019
RE: Planning Commission Hearing on May 20, 2019



A meeting of the Redwood County Planning Commission has been scheduled for Monday, the 20th day of May, 2019, beginning at 1:00 o'clock p.m. at the Board Room of the Redwood County Government Center located at 403 South Mill Street, Redwood Falls, MN 56283.

The meeting will involve four (4) public hearings. A brief summary of the subject matter of the hearings is set forth below.

1. Public hearing on Application for Extraction Conditional Use Permit submitted by Jeff Schmidt.

Jeff Schmidt, of Schmidt Construction, is seeking to re-permit and expand Schmidt's existing gravel pit, located at 29770 360th Street, Redwood Falls, in Section 28 of Delhi Township. The pit was originally permitted under Conditional Use Permit #67 in 1971. The pit was later expanded under Conditional Use Permit # 12-08, in 2008. CUP #12-08 expired in 2018.

The site lies between the cities of Redwood Falls and Delhi and is about two miles from each. 360th is a gravel county road (CSAH 25). Paved roads can be reached in all directions: CSAH 17 is 1.5 miles east on 360th, CSAH 6 is 1.5 miles west on 360th, CSAH 17 is 1 mile north on Kenwood Avenue, and State Hwy 19 is 2 miles south on Kenwood Avenue.

The site is located in the Agriculture District. Mining is a Conditional Use in the Agricultural District.

The topsoil will be scraped off and reserved for reclamation. Gravel material will be removed to a maximum average depth of 9.5 feet below existing grade. At the end of the permit term, the side slopes will be graded to 3 to 1 (run to rise) and the stockpiled topsoil will be replaced and the site will be reclaimed to farm or pasture use. The requested permit term is 10 years.

The pit will be about 40 acres in size, as shown on maps attached to the permit application, including the existing pit and an additional 10 acres land on the northwest side of the site, which is not currently mined.

The closest County Ditch to the site is JD 33, running west to east, about 4200 feet south of the site. Additionally, CD 12, Lat C runs south to north about 5800 feet west of the site.

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The closest County Tile to the site is an 8-inch branch of CD 40, located about 250 feet north of the site. Also a 16-inch branch of CD 40 is located about 300 feet west of the site, and a 6-inch branch is about 400 feet to the east.



According to the soil maps for the site, the soil types present are Estherville Sandy Loam, 0 to 2% slopes, Biscay Clay Loam, Depressional, 0-1% slopes, and Mayer Loam, 0 to 2 % slopes.

The three nearest dwellings to the proposed site are as follows: Shane Kramer, about 2200 feet south of the site; Preston & Ashley Preuss, about 3000 feet southwest of the site; and a farm site owned by Kerry Kramer, about 3200 feet northeast of the site. Additionally, an old abandoned farm site owned by Stan Brey is located just across 360th Street from the site, about 300 feet to the north.

The Environmental Office has not received complaints about hauling from the Schmidt site.

Pursuant to Redwood County Code of Ordinances, Title XV, Section 153.283, the applicant is required to post a bond, cash deposit, irrevocable letter of credit, or other security to Redwood County in the amount of \$2,000.00 per acre, a minimum of \$10,000.00, or 125% of the estimated/bid value to reclaim the property, whichever is greater. The Redwood County Board of Commissioners may require a higher surety amount, if in the reasonable discretion of the County, the unique characteristics of the proposed project require more substantial restoration or reclamation. Furthermore, the Ordinance states that “[s]ureties shall be for a minimum of one year beyond the ending date of Conditional Use Permit.” According to this section, the applicant is also required to provide proof of bodily injury, property damage, and public liability insurance in the amount of at least \$1,500,000.00 per occurrence.

A copy of the Conditional Use Permit application, maps, plans, and proposed permit conditions are enclosed.

2. Public hearing on Application for Conditional Use Permit submitted by David Watts of United States Solar Corporation.

United States Solar Corporation is requesting to construct a community solar garden on Minnesota State Hwy 68, about four miles west of the City of Morgan. The property is owned by Bobby & Beverly Hoffbeck. The Hoffbecks have signed off on the Conditional Use Permit application. US Solar has signed a long term lease for the site from the Hoffbecks. The proposed site is located in the East Half of the Northeast Quarter (E1/2 NE1/4), lying on the south side of State Hwy 68, in Section 23, Three Lakes Township, parcel number 69-023-1060. The site is in the Agricultural District.

The facility will consist of a one (1) megawatt solar array on approximately 10 acres. The project

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will generate enough electricity to power about 225 homes and will be open for subscription by Xcel Energy customers.

Equipment to be installed includes solar panels, inverters, and single-axis tracker racking installed on piles. The maximum height will be about 10’.

A 15’ wide unpaved access road will be constructed to serve the site from State Hwy 68. Temporary parking area and portable waste disposal containers will be provided during the construction phase. Two permanent parking spots will be provided for vegetation maintenance and other employees.

The ground underneath and between the solar panels will be seeded with a mix of pollinator-friendly, low-lying, deep-rooted plants. US Solar will control for noxious weeds during the life of the project (25 years).

An 8’ post and wire perimeter fence will be constructed around the solar array for security.

A permanent infiltration basin will be constructed in the north side of the site to collect surface runoff water.

The location of the proposed solar garden is currently a tilled field. The existing surface water drainage pattern is that most of the surface water flows north toward Hwy 68 (and the proposed basin), while water on the south end of the site flows south toward a County tile main. The County tile is a 6-inch line and is part of CD 24. It is located about 600 feet south of the project site. This is the closest county tile to the project site.

The site will be connected to the power grid via an existing Xcel distribution line located on the project side of Hwy 68.

The three nearest rural dwellings to the proposed solar garden are as follows: (1) Darren Hacker, about 335 feet west of the site; (2) Donald & Donna Reding, about 1500 feet northwest of the site; and (3) Kurt & Sandra Seifert, about 3700 feet south of the site.

This is the sixth solar garden application in Redwood County since 2015. Of the other five, one has been built and is operational (Jerry Huiras/Geronimo Energy) and two have expired and not been renewed (Sunshare – Green and Tauer sites). The two most recent were issued last year on other US Solar projects (Green and Peterson). These permits are still active, though construction has not started. The Huiras site is a 3 MW site and the other two active sites are 1 MW each. The proposed project would raise the total permitted MW in the Xcel territory to 6 MW.

The reason we have had multiple applications in the Morgan area and none elsewhere in the county is that Xcel Energy is mandated by state law to produce 1.5% of its energy via solar power by the year 2020. The Morgan substation is the only Xcel substation in Redwood County that can handle solar gardens. Most of the rest of Redwood County is in the territory of Redwood Electric Cooperative, which as a cooperative is not subject to the 1.5% mandate.



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The applicant has submitted a decommissioning plan addressing the disposition of the facility should it cease to be used for twelve months or reach the end of its useful life. At that time, the system will be shut down and the panels, racking, poles, cables, posts, inverters, transformers, concrete pads, fencing, and access driveway will be removed and properly disposed of. The site will then be restored to its pre-installation status as an agricultural field.



A copy of the Conditional Use Permit application, maps, plans, and proposed permit conditions are enclosed.

3. Public hearing on Application for Conditional Use Permit submitted by Northwestern Farm Management o/b/o Patricia Garrison.

A group of property owners in Gales Township Sections 7 and 8, in conjunction with Northwestern Farm Management, are proposing to clean out a private drainage ditch.

The ditch starts in the Northeast Quarter of Section 7, flows southeasterly and crosses underneath Aspen Avenue, cuts across the Southwest corner of the Northwest Quarter of Section 8, crosses under 205th Street, then continues in a southeasterly direction across the Southwest Quarter of Section 8, to the east line of said quarter, at which point it turns due south and flows in to the Cottonwood River. About 300 feet downstream of the 205th Street crossing, the ditch enters the Cottonwood River Floodplain District. Per Redwood County Ordinance, excavation projects of this size are a Conditional Use. Consequently, the parties were informed that this portion of the project required a Conditional Use Permit.

The plan is to restore the ditch to its original depth, by removing the 18 to 24 inches of sediment that has accumulated on the bottom. The ditch banks will not be touched. The ditch bottom is about 4 feet wide. An excavator will be used to remove the material. The material removed from the ditch bottom will be paced on the west bank of the ditch. After excavation is complete, the spoil piles will be leveled and seeded.

The project will be completed in July or August, allowing for the establishment of grass on the spoil material by fall.

The closest County Ditch to the site is JD 12, Branch 1, R&L, running roughly parallel to the private ditch. The two ditches are about 2000 feet apart at their closest point.

The closest County Tile to the site is a 6-inch branch of JD 12, about 1500 feet northeast of the project.

According to the soil maps for the site, the soil types present are Canisteo clay loam, 0 to 2 % slopes; and Havelock clay loam, 0 to 2% slopes, occasionally flooded.

concrete reinforced with #4 grade 60 rebar 12' on center, both vertical and horizontal. The pit will hold 1,000,000 gallons of manure, or 12 months storage.

The barn will have 4" perforated perimeter tile around the outside of the pit footing.

The closest county tile main is 630 feet northeast of the feedlot site. There is no county ditch within 2 miles of the site.

The site is located about 3200 feet south of the Redwood River.

The four nearest dwellings to the proposed site are as follows: David Fuhr, about 1640 feet west of the site; Delbert & Sharrol Kuehn, about 2600 feet east of the site; Aaron & Robyn Struntz, about 3100 feet north of the site; and Christopher Turbes, about 3200 feet north of the site. Additionally, the Maertens' family dwelling is located 445 feet north of the site.

Staff used the University of Minnesota OFFSET odor from feedlots setback estimation tool to calculate the Annoyance-free frequency for the following dwellings:

1. Fuhr – 94% annoyance free
2. Kuehn – 96% annoyance free
3. Struntz – 97% annoyance free
4. Turbes – 97% annoyance free
5. Maertens – 84% annoyance free

Mr. Maertens submitted an Odor Management Plan that includes the following strategies to control odor:

- Treat manure pits with additive
- Plant row of shrubs to extend existing grove to the south
- Maintain clean barn floors
- Clean up spilled feed promptly
- Maintain and clean exhaust fans
- Avoid manure pumping on holidays and special occasions
- Consult with MPCA to identify new strategies

Mr. Maertens has 769 acres listed on his manure management plan available for spreading the manure. These fields are located in Sheridan Township Section 34 and Vail Township Section 3.

A copy of the Conditional Use Permit application, maps, plans, and proposed permit conditions are enclosed.



The four nearest dwellings to the proposed site are as follows: Beau & Sarah Schlemmer, about 600 feet north of the site; Jamie & Kimberly Jenniges, about 1800 feet east of the site; Jon & Becky Hensch, about 2000 feet west of the site, and Courtney Lau, about 2100 feet east of the site.



The parties have hired a private contractor to conduct the work

A copy of the Conditional Use Permit application, maps, plans, and proposed permit conditions are enclosed.

4. Public hearing on Application for Animal Confinement Feedlot Conditional Use Permit submitted by Tyler Maertens

Tyler Maertens is proposing to expand an existing swine feedlot consisting of one 102' x 200' total confinement barn with 8' deep under floor manure storage pit, housing 2400 head of finishing swine. The proposed expansion will double the size of the feedlot, and will consist of one additional 102' x 200' total confinement barn with 8' deep under floor manure storage pit, housing 2400 head of finishing swine. The total number of head on the feedlot site after the proposed expansion will be 4800 head of finishing swine.

Redwood County Feedlot Ordinance requires that a Conditional Use Permit be obtained for the expansion of an existing feedlot by 200 or more animal units or when constructing a new manure storage structure. The proposed expansion will add 720 animal units, per the Redwood County Feedlot Ordinance, for a total of 1440 animal units.

The feedlot is located in Section 34 of Sheridan Township, on the south side of 290th Street. The site is owned by Mr. Maertens. The surrounding farm land is owned by Maertens' family, and includes Mr. Maerten's residence.

An estimated 1,900,800 gallons of water will be used by the feedlot annually. The applicant will need to apply for a Water Appropriations Permit from the DNR. There are two wells on the site, located about 150 feet north of the existing barn, and about 300 feet north of the existing barn, respectively.

The barn will have an 8' deep manure pit divided into two sections by a 12" thick divider wall on a 8" x 24" footing reinforced with two continuous #4 grade 60 rebar. There will be 2 manure pump-outs in each section, on the south and north sides of the barn, for a total of 4 pump-outs. The feed bins will be on the west side of the barn.

Footings, walls, and floor will be made from 4000 psi concrete. The floor will have 1.5 lbs. of fiber mesh per cubic yard. The pit floor will be 5" thick with 8" x 16" footings, reinforced with #4 grade 60 rebar, under the end and side walls. The end and side walls will be 8" thick poured

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