

# Approved

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## FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES November 4, 2021

**Call to Order:** The meeting was held remotely via Zoom. Chairman Dave Hoffman called the meeting to order at Time 7:04 p.m. In attendance were Planning Commission (PC) members Chairman Dave Hoffman, Vice Chairman Mark Harris (joined after meeting started), Chuck Phillips, Matt Goin, Secretary John Gontarz and PC Alternates Paul Lagasse and Dave Gerstenhaber. Also in attendance was Township Engineer Pete Eisenbrown; Interim Township Manager Jeff Eastburn and Township Secretary Sarah Patton. There were 4 members of the public.

**Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

**Approval of Minutes:**

- a. *August 5, 2021 PC Meeting Minutes:* Mr. Chuck Phillips moved, seconded by Matt Goin to approve the August 5, 2021, PC v1.0 minutes as submitted. Motion passed 3-0.

**Digital Meeting Books:** All PC members were in favor to keep using digital books

**Avon Grove Charter School:** The Avon Grove Charter School would like to submit the preliminary and final plan all at one time to turn temporary parking into permanent parking. All planning commission members were in favor if the submitted plan meets the requirements of final plan. Interim Township Manager Eastburn will put the charter school representatives in contact with PennDOT to make sure there are no conflicts with the Charter school improvements and PennDOT plans for improving PA 896.

**Green Ordinance:** The PC discussed the Green ordinance. The Board of Supervisors and Planning commission will meet to discuss the inclusion of proper wording in the Green Ordinance for the proper construction , maintenance, removal and disposal of solar panels.

A: We discussed three categories of solar panels

- 1: Residential panel array to satisfy part or full electrical needs for a residence
- 2: Large solar array to satisfy the internal electrical needs for a large electricity consumer.
- 3: Large solar array whose main purpose it to sell electricity to a community or the power grid.

B: We discussed whether a solar grid should be considered an impervious surface for stormwater runoff purposes. The PA DEP views solar panels as pervious surfaces, but there are reasons, particularly in sloped areas, to consider them as impervious surfaces to control runoff.

NOTE; Here is a reference to a solar farm in Indiana containing 13,000 acres with 20% solar panel coverage. This land looks to be flat:

<https://www.indystar.com/story/news/environment/2021/11/09/indiana-solar-panel-farm-largest-united-states-doral-renewables-energy-mammoth-starke-county/8529759002/>

C. We discussed design criteria for solar panels

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1 Roof, side of building mount

2 Ground Mount

- a. Use of helical anchors to allow land to be more easily changed back to agricultural use.
- b. Concrete Foundations – more difficult to remove – higher removal and disposal costs.
- c. Maintenance of the grounds (mowing, etc.) under and around the solar panels

D: We discussed End of life removal and disposal of solar panels.

1. Broken solar panels allow water to wash away heavy metals including cadmium. RCRA regulations regulate damaged and waste solar panels as hazardous waste.
  - a. Local landfills can receive residential quantities of solar panels
  - b. Local landfills are not prepared to accept truckloads of solar panels
2. California has reclassified solar panel as “universal waste” and not hazardous waste starting Jan 1 2021. <https://www.wastetodaymagazine.com/article/new-california-rule-will-facilitate-the-recycling-of-solar-panels/>
3. Federal regulations still classify solar waste as hazardous waste which restrict movement across state lines.
4. Only about 10% of solar panels are recycled. An article discussing solar panel recycling more fully is: <https://www.technologyreview.com/2021/08/19/1032215/solar-panels-recycling>.

E: We discussed the use of the conditional use ordinance to review the installation, decommissioning and removal of decommissioned and damaged solar cell to ensure their proper disposal as well as limiting possible introduction of heavy metals into local ground and eventually into local drinking water.

**Act 167:** Storm water management. The provisions of Act 167 are being revised and may require separate collection of primary residence run off and other impermeable surface run-off. The impact on township ordinances is currently uncertain.

**Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

**Adjourn:** Vice Chairman Harris adjourned the meeting at 8:47 p.m. TIME

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Patton  
Township Secretary