

MINUTES
JAMES CITY COUNTY AFD ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER BOARD ROOM
101 MOUNTS BAY ROAD, WILLIAMSBURG, VA 23185
October 17, 2024
4:00 PM

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Chris Taylor called the Agricultural and Forestal District (AFD) Advisory Committee meeting to order at 4 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Present:

Chris Taylor, Chair
Bruce Abbott, Vice Chair
Richard Bradshaw
David Hogue
Sandy Wanner
Payton Harcum
William Harcum
Will McElfresh

Absent:

Barbara Null
Loretta Garrett

Staff:

Josh Crump, Principal Planner

Others Present:

Ester Rekhelman, Senior Project Developer for Hexagon Energy

C. MINUTES

Mr. Abbott made a motion to Approve the minutes.

Mr. Wanner seconded the motion.

On a voice vote, the Committee voted to approve the Minutes of the July 18, 2024, Regular Meeting.

1. Minutes of the July 18, 2024, Regular Meeting

D. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. AFD-24-0004, 101 & 121 Ivy Hill Road, Mill Creek AFD Withdrawal

Mr. Josh Crump, Principal Planner, stated that Ms. Ester Rekhelman, Senior Project Developer for Hexagon Energy, has applied on behalf of Hexagon Energy, to withdraw approximately 60.6 acres out of a total 101.36 acres from the Mill Creek AFD. Mr. Crump stated that the applicant has also applied for a Special Use Permit to permit a 3-megawatt solar facility at this site. Mr. Crump noted that the site has been used for industrial timbering for over 60 years, with its last clearing occurring in 2022.

Mr. Crump stated that in 2010, the Board of Supervisors adopted a policy for withdrawing AFD parcels outside of renewal periods. Mr. Crump stated that this request does not fully meet all four of the criteria set forth in the policy.

Mr. Crump stated that because the request does not fully comply with the Board of Supervisors' policy, staff recommends that the AFD Advisory Committee recommend denial of this request to the Planning Commission and to the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Ester Rekhelman, Senior Project Developer for Hexagon Energy, made a presentation to the Committee on the proposed AFD withdrawal and solar energy facility. Ms. Rekhelman discussed the timeline of discussion with the property owners, the reason for the size of the proposed AFD withdrawal, and the draft master plan for the solar facility.

The Committee discussed the criteria in the Board of Supervisors' policy governing the withdrawal of parcels outside of renewal periods. The Committee found that the request did not fully meet three of the criteria. The Committee noted that the property owners had ample opportunity to decide about the future use of the property during the renewal process.

The Committee discussed the need to evaluate applications based on the criteria in the Board of Supervisors policy and be consistent in making recommendations.

Mr. Abbott made a motion to recommend denial of the application.

Mr. Wanner seconded the motion.

On a voice vote, the Committed voted unanimously to recommend denial of the application.

F. DISCUSSION ITEMS

There were no items for discussion.

G. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Taylor made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Abbott seconded the motion.

On a voice vote, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:36 p.m.

Susan Istenes, Secretary

Chris Taylor, Chair