

Shawnee Township Zoning Board of Appeals

2530 Fort Amanda Road Lima, Ohio 45804 (419) 991-8706

Board Members: *Thomas Bowman, Chet Ebling, Earl Weigt, David Ryan*

Alternates: *Lynn Krohn, Richard Morrisey*

Zoning Inspector: *John Gosnell*

Meeting of March 24, 2011

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tom Bowman at 7:30 PM.

Members present:

Tom Bowman

David Ryan

Lynn Krohn

Present for Petitioner Dr. Henry Gerad:

Dr. & Mrs. Henry Gerad

Paul Wren, CEO, Yellow Springs Renewable Energy, LLC

Also present:

Neighbors: Jeff Pisel, Lewis & Norma Gossard, Temple Wright

Trustee: Russell Holly

Mr. Bowman introduced the members of the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Mr. Bowman read the legal notice as follows:

The Shawnee Township Board of Zoning Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, March 24 at 7:30 PM in the Shawnee Township Administration Building, 2530 Fort Amanda Road, Lima, Ohio 45804 for the purpose of hearing a Variance petition from Dr. Henry Gerad, 77 Hawthorne Road, Lima, Ohio 45805. Dr. Gerad is represented by Paul Wren, CEO, Yellow Springs Renewable Energy, LLC, 9629 West SR 185, Covington, Ohio 45318.

Dr. Gerad wishes to install a Solar Photovoltaic System and a Solar Thermal System on his property. The Shawnee Township Zoning Resolution makes no provision for solar installations. Dr. Gerad is requesting a Variance to allow his solar installation to be treated as an Accessory structure which is permitted by the Zoning Resolution.

Mr. Bowman asked if any of the Board members had an opportunity to inspect the site. All had done so.

Mr. Bowman then asked if someone would care to make a presentation for Dr. Gerad's petition.

Paul Wren stated that the Gerads wished to construct a solar panel array and a solar thermal system on their property. The solar panels would occupy 6,400 square feet, less than 1/6 of an acre, (on their nearly five acre parcel). He noted the panels are quite dark with little, or no, reflection. The maximum height would be 4.6 feet. Mr. Wren noted that American Electric Power has no problem with the installation. He said they would be following the National Electric Code during construction.

Mr. Bowman asked if any of the Board members had any questions. None did.

Jeff Pisel asked how the location had been selected for the panels. He noted that the panels were closer to the Imler's house than they were to the Gerad's house.

Mr. Wren said that he and Dr. Gerad had selected the location, in part, based on the number of trees that would have to be cut. They would have to remove more trees if the panels were closer to the (Gerad) house. The Gerads have agreed to put up nice buffer between the panels and the Imlers.

David Ryan asked if there was a homeowner's association.

Mr. Pisel said yes.

Mr. Ryan stated that the homeowner's association would be the place to address concerns over things like this.

Mr. Wren said that the homeowner's association had been contacted and had given its blessing.

Lynn Krohn noted that he lives in a similar setting (to the Gerad's) and would have a problem if his neighbors wanted to put up a solar panel.

Mr. Bowman said the Board of Zoning Appeals had received a letter from the Imlers (neighbors adjacent to the Gerads on the east). The Imlers expressed concern about the changes to the natural setting, reflection from the panels, and the impact on wildlife.

Mr. Bowman asked again about the location.

Mr. Wren said the location was chosen to minimize cutting trees. He stated that, in order to further minimize tree removal, the location of the panels might be moved slightly to the west (away from the Imler's).

Mr. Bowman asked how the size of the 80' X 80' grid was chosen and if it might be expanded.

Mr. Wren answered that after plugging leaks and insulating, an energy audit was conducted of the Gerad's house. It was determined that 25 KW of power would be needed from the solar panels to meet the Gerad's long run needs. The size of the grid was determined by the size of the individual panels and the number of panels required to generate that amount of power. Expansion is not likely.

Lewis Gossard asked if there was any problem with lightning and if there were problems in the winter.

Mr. Wren answered that the panels are designed to AEP requirements so lightning is not a problem. He said that he knows of no solar installation that has been hit by lightning. In the winter, the black panels melt any snow with only a minimum amount of light.

A general discussion was held on the operation of solar panels. Mr. Bowman asked about Net Energy Metering and Interconnection Application, and Mr. Wren explained how the inverters are wired and connected to the main panel supplying power to the home.

David Ryan made a motion that Dr. Gerad's petition be accepted. Motion was seconded by Tom Bowman. Mr. Ryan and Mr. Bowman voted for the petition. Mr. Krohn voted against the petition. Motion passed.

Motion to adjourn was made by David Ryan, seconded by Lynn Krohn. Vote was unanimous: 3 – 0. Meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
John R. Gosnell
Zoning Inspector
Shawnee Township

cc: BOA
Trustees
Attorney Balyeat

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