

Weare Township

Planning Commission

Special meeting August 25, 2025 7 p.m.

Consumers Energy Representatives in Attendance

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mr. Duncan

B. The Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance

C. Roll Call

Board members present included: Mr. Brodrick, Mrs. Lauber, Mr. Duncan, Mrs. Green, Mr. Stotler, Mr. Daly, and Mrs. Anderson secretary.
Absent: Adam Kokx

D. Attendance

Audience members present: Consumers Energy Representatives Joe Lawson, Kristy Baker, Rich Ottman, Township Treasurer Jill VanDerZanden, Township Supervisor Larry Doran, Zoning Administrator Andrew Clark, Marc Daneman Lawyer, Kevin Stevenson, Paul Oomen, Gayle Forner, Penny Burillo, Ralph Aerts, Paula Aerts, Karen Alvesteffer, Derek Alvesteffer, Daryl & Elizabeth Alvesteffer, Den & Roxanne Potter, Melanie Sayles, James & Miranda Tuljus, Angela Aerts, Energy ,Mike & Bonnie Villadsen, Tom McGuire, Jon Bowen, Gerrit Herrygers, Jonda Greiner, Dave Cozart, Robert Vink, Jeremy Gage and Jeffrey Anderson

E. Approval of the Minutes

Minutes were accepted with the following changes: Under G. Old Business Remove 1. Weare Township Solar Energy Ordinance to read "NONE". New Business the word "adopt" was changed to "Draft" and the word "county" was changed to Township. The sentence will read: Going over the Weare Township Solar Energy Ordinance and making the following changes to the draft to fit our Township.

Mrs. Green made a motion to accept the changes, seconded by Mr. Stotler. Minutes approved.

F. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Broderick made a motion to approve the agenda was seconded by Mr. Stotler. Agenda approved.

G. Old Business

None

H. New Business

Marc Daneman discussed his position as Lawyer for Weare and Hart Township for the Solar Energy project. Ordinance sections were discussed and gave a brief summary. Some changes were made to the language and wording that were in the 1st draft.

1. Need to Add a definition/ description for the word "Adjacent" in the Non-adjacent properties section.
2. Review Landscape language section 7.
3. Clarify Bond vs letter of credit.

Consumers Energy was represented by Rich Ottman, Kristy Baker and Joe Lawson. They received their draft of the Ordinance on this day and were unable to comment on everything in it. They did highlight a few items that are recorded in the Public Section of the minutes.

I. Correspondance

None

J. Public Comments

Ralph Aerts is concerned about property taxes being raised because of the price per acre that Consumer's Energy paid for the land.

The question also came up about what kind of taxes Consumer's Energy would pay. School? etc

Bonnie Villadsen concern was about the electric bills increasing. Consumers Energy preferred not to comment about pricing and wanted to stick to items in the ordinance.

Miranda Tuljus noticed the ordinance was like Hart's Solar Ordinance. Consumers replied that the ordinance is similar to all the Ordinances across the state (of Michigan)

Joe Lawson from Consumers Energy brought up the setbacks in section 4A. If the property line crosses multiple projects, setbacks between contiguous parcels

or 65 ft separation between separate projects? Marc replied that it was to have some separation between projects and Consumers Energy was concerned that it would just spread the project out even further. It was noted that separate owners would be treated differently, and if an adjacent property was decommissioned then there would be some separation already in place.

Joe Lawson also commented on Section 22 Host Community Agreement. Consumers Energy is NOT permitted to give the Township an established amount. MRRCA has grant money available, but it's not known how long it will last.

Consumers Energy also stated that they are bound to PA 233 & PA 235 stating they must have 65% of their projects for Clean Energy completed by 2030 and 100% Clean by 2040.

Estimated timeline for the Weare Solar Project is to have site plan approved in 2027, start construction in 2028 and complete 2029.

Mike Villadsen asked about the deconstruction process. Consumers Energy replied that they plant a pollinator mix under the panels to help the soil and said when the Solar field is decommissioned, they pull everything out. Panels, wiring everything is pulled out.

Mike Villadsen is also concerned about the taxes going up as well.

Lane Stotler asked about fencing height requirements and what do they do about the deer that get inside with the panels. Consumers Energy said they plant the 15 feet tall grass to deter the deer and use cattle panels to let the smaller animals come in and out freely. Consumers Energy will also check with their environmental project group and get back with the Planning commission about how to handle the deer that get inside the Solar project.

After some discussion about State mandated Solar ordinances and Township written "agreeable" ordinances Lane Stotler explained how the Planning commission is looking for a good ordinance for the residents that Consumers Energy can work with.

Kevin Stevenson brought up how zoning is going to handle the migrant housing that was subsidized under strict guidelines from the state and is being sold by Consumers Energy. Andrew Clark Zoning Administrator researched and could not find a permit that was written originally and filed for a Special Use permit so the housing cannot be used for anything other than migrant housing.

James Tuljus is concerned with screening. His property has approximately 100 ft plus elevation. His concern is that grass and trees will not screen his view.

Lane Stotler directed the question to Consumers Energy about the degree of elevation that they can use or cannot use in some cases, and how they screen for those. Consumers Energy replied that they need layout of the site plan so they were unable to give that information but will get with the engineers to get the workable slope degree number.

A question was asked about how efficient Solar panels are. Consumers Energy replied 22% and stated All energy generated goes to the MISO grid and then redistributed.

The question was brought up “why use valuable farmland?” Why not Arizona? Consumers Energy replied that the panels are more efficient in cold weather and can collect energy from the white snow reflection on the back. The Weare area was picked because of the location of the transmission lines for the power to be transferred to and from the MISO grid.

Miranda Tuljus asked Consumers Energy if the soil is tested for metal, plastics or pollutants at decommissioning. How will they prove to the community that they will be returning the land/soil back to its original condition. Also, how do they test the noise levels. What is the appropriate level and who’s responsible for checking and documenting the levels. How often is the level checked and to who do they report a noise complaint to? She also asked what Consumers Energy is going to do for its neighbors and the Community? She would like to see wording to protect the soil and people/neighbors for 25-30 years in the Ordinance.

The public was asked to write down any suggestions that they had for the Planning commission and the Solar Ordinance. All suggestions will be looked at and considered.

Angela Aerts wanted to know how the public knows when the ordinance is done, how does the public get to see the final draft, and will there be other informational meetings?

K. Board Member Comments:

Mr. Duncan informed the public to contact their Representatives and Senators if they do not approve of the way the Solar Projects are mandated and driven by the states. Our Township is trying to form a workable ordinance between the Energy companies and the landowners that don’t want them.

L. Adjournment

Motion was made by Mrs. Green and was seconded by Mr. Brodrick

Meeting adjourned 8:27pm.

