

**MINUTES  
CITY OF AMES  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

Date: September 16, 2009	Norman Cloud	2010
	Keith Barnes, Chairperson	2010
Call to Order: 7:00 p.m.	* Kori Heuss, Vice-Chairperson	2011
	* Jeff Johnson	2011
Place: Ames City Hall	Justin Platts	2012
Council Chambers	Chuck Jons	2012
	*Elizabeth Beck	2012
Adjournment: 7:25 p.m.		
	*Absent	

**MAJOR TOPICS DISCUSSED:**

1. Public Hearing on Zoning Ordinance Regulations Pertaining to Solar Energy Systems
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CALL TO ORDER: Keith Barnes, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

MOTION: (JONS/PLATTS) to approve the Agenda for the meeting of September 16, 2009.

MOTION PASSED: 4-0

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF AUGUST 19, 2009:**

MOTION: (CLOUD/PLATTS) to approve the Minutes of the meeting of August 19, 2009.

MOTION PASSED: 4-0

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**PUBLIC FORUM:** There were no public comments.

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**Public Hearing on Zoning Ordinance Regulations Pertaining to Solar Energy Systems**

Sam Perry, Planner, reminded the Commission that this process started a year ago when the City Council received a letter from an individual expressing interest in a solar energy system for their property. He said the Council then referred this item to staff because the zoning code does not allow solar energy production as a permitted use. He then gave a timeline of events that occurred since that referral, which lead to the creation of the proposed ordinance for solar energy systems. He gave a brief synopsis of the proposed ordinance language, stating that staff is recommending approval of the zoning code amendments to Section 29.201(116), Section 29.501(4)-4, Section 29.501(4)-7, and Section 29.1309.

Steve Osguthorpe, Planning Director, said before this language is finalized for Council, he and Sam will go through the language again to make sure that the language is simple and succinct. He said they will not be making any substantive changes; they will only be looking at it for form and style purposes.

Jim Lohr, 4247 Stonebrook Road, Ames, Iowa, complimented staff for what they are doing with this topic. He said his particular interest is not so with much wind and solar at this time, but with geothermal, explaining that he has been working with Senator Quirmbach on legislation to enhance geothermal energy systems. He inquired if geothermal would fall under the purview of the

proposed regulations since it is an alternative energy source, or if the focus here is primarily on the aesthetics of alternative energy on the community and geothermal energy systems are located underground and not visible.

Mr. Perry said the intent of these regulations is to only regulate systems that are external or visible, and geothermal systems are not visible. He further clarified that the code was written specifically for solar energy systems and not as a renewable energy regulation.

Chuck Jons asked Mr. Lohr what happened with the legislation once it passed the Senate.

Mr. Lohr said it was introduced into the House in mid-April -- and then they ran out of April. He said they do anticipate that this topic will come back up again in the Legislature, with the hope that something will be approved for individual property owners in residential areas this coming year.

MOTION: (CLOUD/PLATTS) to accept Alternative #1, which states:

The Planning and Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council adopt the zoning code text amendments to Section 29.201(116), Section 29.501(4)-4, Section 29.501(4)-7, and Section 29.1309 as described above and illustrated in the attached draft ordinance dated September 16, 2009.

MOTION PASSED: 4-0

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COMMISSION COMMENTS: Mr. Jons asked staff about the status of updating the data in the Land Use Policy Plan that was discussed at the joint meeting between the Commission and Council several months ago.

Mr. Osguthorpe said staff met with the City Manager yesterday to confirm the direction the Commission and the Council wanted to take for updating the data. He said staff hopes to bring this information back to the City Council at an upcoming meeting.

Justin Platts thanked Sam for continuing to move forward with the code language for solar energy systems.

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STAFF COMMENTS: Staff reviewed the tentative agenda for the meeting of October 7, 2009, as well as other items scheduled to be coming before the Commission at future meetings.

Mr. Perry brought to the Commission's attention an e-mail sent by Rich Webb, from the Story County Community Housing Corporation, expressing his support of the newly proposed solar energy ordinance.

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With no further business coming before the Commission, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

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Keith Barnes, Chairperson  
Planning & Zoning Commission

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Cindy L. Hollar, Recording Secretary  
Department of Planning & Housing