

**MUNICIPAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2023**

**TO ORDER AT  
1:00 P.M.**

A Municipal Planning Commission Meeting of the Municipal District of Provost No. 52 was held in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building, 4504 – 53 Avenue, Provost, Alberta on Thursday, October 26, 2023, and was called to order by Reeve Allan Murray at 1:00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

**PRESENT:**  
Councillors A.G. Murray, L. Almberg, M.R. Angelqvist, L. D. Kozlinski, D. Motley, B.N. Olson, and G. Vetter.

**ALSO PRESENT**

**ALSO PRESENT:**  
Administrator Tyler Lawrason  
Carly Wilkes, Legislative Assistant  
Julianna Lakevold, Executive Assistant to the CAO  
Ryan Tripp, Assistant Development Officer

Brandon Penman, Kelli Penman, Geneva Waring, Murray Waring, Dean Kemper, Dave Nelson, Owen Almberg, Brandon Butt, Jennifer Traichel, Robert Henry, Barbra Swanson, Dennis Swanson, Sterling Cuthbert, Byron Johnson, Tim McAlley, Jennifer Kraft, Stewart Crone, Kathy Crone, Lee Hayes, Dave Wight, Lina Gilbertson, Greg Gilbertson, Victor Beda, Anthony Palichuck, Trina Sather, Corinne Butt, Myles Butt, Darryl Butt, Percy Ecklund, Jack McAlley, Marie Anholt, Ardiene Anholt, Tammy Sather, Darryl Carson, Blair Mackie, Mark Wight.

**AGENDA**

Consideration of the Agenda.

23/14. Moved by Cr. Angelqvist to accept the agenda as presented.  
(Carried)

Reeve Murray began by explaining the process of the Consultation.

The Administrator, Tyler Lawrason, explained the regulatory guidelines and the relationship between the AUC and the Municipality.

Jack Roworth present.

Jennifer Traichel gave a presentation regarding the Eastervale Project, including the size of the project, and the expected timelines associated with the project.

Ms. Traichel described the project layout and the expected location of the various panels, batteries, collector lines, and substations.

Ms. Traichel explained how the project has changed in order to address the issues brought forward by the general public and affected land owners. She expressed a desire to continue working with the stakeholders as the project progresses.

Robert Henry then addressed the end-of-life plans for the project and explained the regulations regarding this issue.

Mr. Henry then described the value of this project to the community, including employment, economic growth, and the tax implications for the municipality.

**PRESENT  
1:08 P.M.**

**OPENING  
STATEMENTS**

WRITTEN  
SUBMISSIONS

Cr. Murray called for written submissions.

A written submission from Keith and Terry-Lee Degenhardt was noted as received.

A written submission from Craig and Frances Holte was noted as received.

A written submission from Mark Wight, representing a group, was noted as received.

STATEMENTS IN  
SUPPORT

Cr. Murray called for statements in support.

Second call for statements in support.

Final call for statements in support.

STATEMENTS IN  
OPPOSITION

Cr. Murray Called for statements in opposition.

Lee Hayes described the project's proximity to his home and his concerns regarding noise and affected viewscapes as a result of his proximity to the project.

Mr. Hayes expressed concerns regarding solar glare and the harm this project may cause to larger wildlife species, like deer or elk.

Mr. Hayes stated as an affected landowner he felt the project holds no value for him.

Tim McNalley conveyed his concern with using productive agricultural land for mega-projects and expressed concern regarding the potential for more land to be occupied by these sorts of projects.

Jennifer Kraft stated she wished to know where the collected energy was going to be used and that she was concerned with the municipality becoming an energy supplier to larger urban centres.

Dave Nelson stated there is a need to know who will be responsible for the reclamation costs if the company were to no longer be able to afford to care for the project site.

Mark Wight described his proximity to the project site. He described how the project is at fundamental odds with the mission statement of the M.D., which is to preserve agricultural land.

Mr. Wight then posed a series of questions to the Eastervale Solar Project Managers regarding the validity of the environmental reports, the impact this project will have on migratory animals and larger ground animals, his concerns over the lack of legal framework regarding reclamation, and the risk that is placed on the land owners. He also spoke to concerns regarding maintaining soil quality levels.

Myles Butt asked for clarification regarding the height of the solar panels and the type of agricultural land that will be occupied by the project. He poses the question of whether or not this type can effectively developed elsewhere without imposing on agricultural land. He also expressed concerns regarding end-of-life plans and responsibilities.

Stewart Crone requested clarification regarding the approval process through the AUC.

Tyler Lawrason clarified the process involved with the AUC approval process of these sorts of projects.

Ms. Traichel further clarified the AUC will reach out to stakeholders within 800 meters of the project with a request to submit an intention to participate. However, she stated any individual who feels they are affected by this development can submit an intention to participate. The AUC will go through the submissions and individuals will be given standing based on the validity of their concerns and a hearing will be held.

Tammy Sather expressed concerns regarding the loss of 700 acres of productive agriculture land and the impact this will have on food production and cost.

Dave Wight stated his opposition to solar development and states this project will not meet the power needs of the M.D. He expresses the impact this project will have on his ability to enjoy his land and the impacts of light reflection.

Mr. Wight is skeptical regarding the location of the power storing batteries and expressed concern over the lack of engineered drawings that are publicly available. He also expressed concerns over whether or not the local fire departments will be capable of responding to emergencies occurring within and surrounding the batteries.

Last Call for Statements in Opposition.

#### REBUTTALS

Cr. Murray called for Rebuttals from the Applicant.

#### APPLICANT

Ms. Traichel addressed the concern regarding the validity of the environmental studies, stating Environment Alberta provides a risk assessment to the AUC and do not either approve or decline the project based on the environmental studies alone. These studies factor into the AUC decision.

Robert Henry clarified this is common practice for all industrial and environmental projects that solicit reports from Environment Alberta.

Ms. Traichel addressed the concerns regarding noise and glare, stating the project is in the final stages of these reviews and they are looking to address these issues for the neighboring properties.

Ms. Traichel explained they have engaged an engineering company and have project drawings. She states they are happy to provide these drawings to anyone who would like them and that they will be in the AUC application and available on the project website in the future.

Mr. Henry addressed concerns regarding the use of carbon credits and subsidies. He stated the building of the project will be completed with private capital.

#### RECESS

2:05 P.M.

Cr. Murray recessed the meeting for five minutes.

#### RECONVENE

2:08 P.M.

Cr. Murray reconvened the meeting.



OPPOSITION

Cr. Murray called for Rebuttals in Opposition.

Dave Nelson expressed concerns regarding the issue of decommissioning the panels and the costs associated with this. He believed the project is a liability for the land owners and the municipality. He stated if the project wasn't a liability the developers would buy the land the projects is occupying rather than rent it.

Final Call for Rebuttals in Opposition.

FINAL STATEMENTS  
IN SUPPORT

Cr. Murray called for Final Statements in Support

Final Call for Final Statements in Support

FINAL STATEMENTS  
IN OPPOSITION

Cr. Murray called for Final Statements in Opposition

Tammy Sather, Tim McNaalley, and Dave Nelson delivered final statements regarding the project.

DELIBERATION

Cr. AlMBERG asked for clarification regarding the soil quality located at the project site. She cited reports that indicate the soil is Class 2 at the location rather than Class 3 as was indicated in the development application.

Jennifer Traichel clarified it is both Class 2 and Class 3, however, the majority of the soil is considered Class 2.

Cr. Motley asked if there was a breakdown of the project costs.

Robert Henry indicated there was.

Cr. Motley expressed his belief that the clean-up costs will be larger than the expected cost and his concern regarding the loss of farmland to accommodate these projects. He indicated there should be a bond put in place to fund the reclamation.

Cr. Murray asked if there was a plan/process in place for the reclamation.

Mr. Henry stated he welcomes the standardization of reclamation. He stated there is reclamation security built into the land leases. They provide for a third-party evaluation at the 15-year mark in order to plan the costs associated with the reclamation of the site.

Cr. Murray asked for clarification regarding whether they will be putting money away for reclamation immediately or if they will wait until the 15-year evaluation to being saving for these costs.

Mr. Henry stated the current process they use for saving for reclamation and understands the landowner's preference for a bond system. He states he is advocating for more clarity regarding reclamation.

Mr. Henry stated the panels themselves and the panel components will still have value at the end-of-life and the reclamation fund takes into account the inherent value of salvage. He states he appreciates the concern of the landowners as it keeps companies accountable during the process.

Cr. Motley asked for the exact numbers of the construction costs. He also asks how much the panels will be worth in 30 years.



Mr. Henry reiterated the inherent value of the metals involved in the project construction. He estimates materials could be worth 10-20 cents on the dollar at the end of the project's life and they could be worth 20-30 million dollars.

Cr. Motley expressed an opinion that this amount not be enough to cover all the cleanup costs.

Mr. Henry disagreed that the reclamation will be expensive, however, he agreed it will be time consuming.

Cr. Motley asked how the land will be brought back into production.

Ms. Traichel stated the reclamation of this site will be easier than that of an oil well because the land will continue to be used as pasture land although it will be taken out of production for crops. She states this is why reclamation costs will be lower. She stated they will not be doing any site grading so this will not impact the soil quality.

Cr. Motley stated they have dealt with issues regarding reclamation with oil wells and they have no way of knowing the state of the company or reclamation fund in 30 years. He also stated there is unproductive land available in Alberta that would be better suited for this kind of development.

Mr. Henry stated the development of a project along Stoney Trail is occurring. He stated the location for this specific project was chosen due to proximity to a transmission line.

Cr. Motley asked why they can't use transmission lines in another County.

Ms. Traichel stated that not every transmission line has the capacity to support the project and they were limited in their choices.

Cr. Motley asked about the environmental impact of the project and expresses concern with using agricultural land for large scale developments.

Ms. Traichel stated they are aware of the tensions between farmland and development and are considering these issues. Stated these issues may guide the use of land in the future.

Mr. Henry stated there are solar projects proposed next to every transmission line in the province.

Cr. Almborg asked how the Georgetown project is progressing.

Mr. Henry stated it is progressing as expected.

The Administrator, Tyler Lawrason, posed a question regarding whether all the interim regulations will have been met before the submission of a proposal to the AUC in accordance with the initial timelines.

Ms. Traichel stated they are implementing the interim rules into their proposal and they will amend the application as needed.

Mr. Lawrason asked more specifically about the impact the interim rules will have on the expected timeline.



Ms. Traichel stated that she does not expect the interim rules will impact the timeline presented for submitting the application. She reiterates that they will amend the application as needed.

Cr. Murray asked if the reclamation plan they will be submitting is based on the confidential information from the leases.

Ms. Traichel stated it is not and they will be directing addressing these regulations as needed. She stated they may receive conditional approval.

Cr. Murray asked if it would help to streamline the process if there was a group dedicated to the reclamation concerns.

Ms. Traichel stated there is already a development group that works on addressing these issues.

Cr. Murray asked if they will be able to submit the application by February.

Ms. Traichel stated they hope to have the application submitted for the inquiry.

Mr. Henry stated the AUC will be holding a hearing in Red Deer regarding the inquiry.

Cr. Alnberg asked if the project currently meets current AUC regulations.

Ms. Traichel stated it currently does meet all AUC regulations. She also stated they have received a variance regarding one property which will allow them to monitor during construction and adapt as needed.

Mr. Henry stated they are noise compliant during daytime hours, however, they are having issues gathering solid night time data.

Cr. Angelvedt asked how they determine the life expectancy of the project.

Mr. Henry stated they base the expected life time off of the expected guarantee of the panel, which is currently 30 years. However, there is an expectation that they will need to change the panels out at the half way mark. The panels may also be repowered later in life.

Cr. Angelvedt reiterated that the life cycle of the project is based on equipment life expectancy. He asked if it's fair to state that the project may continue if the project profitable and equipment can be replaced.

Mr. Henry stated the life cycle will depend on needs and profitability.

Cr. Vetter asked about the height and spacing of panels in relation to other agricultural uses.

Ms. Traichel stated the spacing is approximately 8 to 9 meters between panels. She indicated they are taking baby steps to try and include agricultural activities within the project. The panels are 1 meter high on the low end and 3 ½ meters high on the high end.

Cr. Vetter asked if sheep will be able to graze.

Ms. Traichel confirmed sheep will be able to graze.



Cr. AlMBERG asked if grazing on land intended for crop production will degrade the land.

Ms. Traichel stated there will be no impact on land use and through the introduction of grazing they will continue to maintain the viability of the land for future use.

Mr. Henry further stated Class 2 soil will be able to support as many or more sheep as other classes of soil through grazing.

Cr. Kozlinski expressed concern regarding the battery farm and asked for confirmation regarding the size.

Ms. Traichel confirmed there will be 68 battery modules.

Mr. Henry confirmed it will not be small and the battery storage area will be 200 meters by 150 meters.

Cr. Kozlinski expressed concerns regarding the local fire department's ability to respond to fires and other emergencies located in the battery storage area.

Mr. Henry confirmed the batteries will have fire suppression and detection technology. The batteries will be able to contain the fire and cut off oxygen to the source of the fire.

Ms. Traichel further confirmed they have developed an Emergency Response Plan. She also confirmed that most volunteer fire fighter departments do not consider themselves able to respond to these types of emergencies. She stated the most effective means of addressing a fire is to try and contain it and let it burn itself out. However, she stated the batteries that have started on fire do give off emissions that are harmful to human health and will likely cause evacuations.

Mr. Henry compared the frequency in which these sorts of issues happen as being similar to sour gas wells. As a result, he wants to ensure proper plans are in place to respond to these emergencies.

Ms. Traichel stated technology has developed as a result of a battery fire that occurred in Australia.

Cr. Olson asked if the fire department will require special training to be able to respond to these emergencies.

Ms. Traichel stated the requirements to safely respond to these emergencies will be included in the ERP to ensure fire departments know how to safely respond to incidents occurring on or around the solar farm.

Mr. Henry also stated there will be special training for fire departments as well as a coordinated response to contain these fires.

Cr. Olson stated it's difficult for volunteers to receive this training.

Cr. Murray expressed concerns regarding the loss of agricultural land and the timing of the application.

DEVELOPMENT  
PERMIT  
SW 35-39-08-W4M

23/15. Moved by Cr. Murray to deny the development application for SW 35-39-08-W4M. (Carried)



DEVELOPMENT  
PERMIT  
SE 35-39-08-W4M

23/16. Moved by Cr. Murray to deny the development application for SE 35-39-08-W4M. (Carried)

DEVELOPMENT  
PERMIT  
SW 36-39-08-W4M

23/17. Moved by Cr. Murray to deny the development application for SW 36-39-08-W4M. (Carried)

DEVELOPMENT  
PERMIT  
NW 02-40-08-W4M

23/18. Moved by Cr. Murray to deny the development application for NW 02-40-08-W4M. (Carried)

DEVELOPMENT  
PERMIT  
SW 02-40-08-W4M

23/19. Moved by Cr. Murray to deny the development application for SW 02-40-08-W4M. (Carried)

DEVELOPMENT  
PERMIT  
NW 25-39-08-W4M

23/20. Moved by Cr. Murray to deny the development application for NW 25-39-08-W4M. (Carried)

DEVELOPMENT  
PERMIT  
NW 35-39-08-W4M

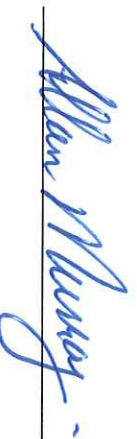
23/21. Moved by Cr. Murray to deny the development application for NW 35-39-08-W4M. (Carried)

DEVELOPMENT  
PERMIT  
SW 11-40-08-W4M

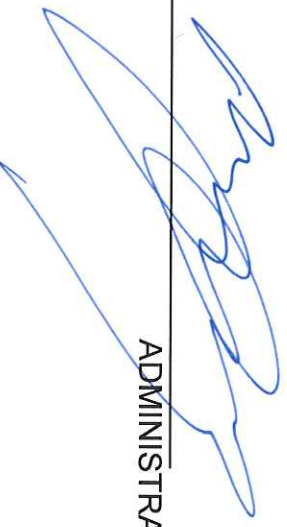
23/22. Moved by Cr. Murray to deny the development application for SW 11-40-08-W4M. (Carried)

ADJOURN  
3:03 P.M.

23/23. Moved by Cr. Murray to adjourn. (Carried)



REEVE



ADMINISTRATOR