

Agenda

Parchment Planning Commission

November 30, 2022 – 6:00 pm

Kent DeBoer, Chairperson
Sandy Bliesener

Cheryl Lyon-Jenness
Sara Dean

John Tecca

Nancy Stoddard, City Manager

Rebecca Harvey, Zoning Administrator

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Minutes**
 - a. Minutes from October 26, 2022
4. **Citizen Comments** – When called upon by the Chairperson, state your name, address, and you will be allowed up to 3 minutes for your comments.
Reminder: You will be making a statement, without discussion from the Planning Commission.
5. **Old Business**
 - A. WP Item #4: Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Supplemental Standards (Article 12 – Solar Energy Facilities)
 - Section 12.32 – Solar Panels (Draft #2)
 - Section 12.33 – Solar Panels (Draft #1)
6. **New Business**
 - A. Updated Work Plan – Review
 - B. WP Item #1 – Residential Districts (Outline will be presented at the meeting by ZA Harvey)
7. **Next Meeting – January 25, 2023**
8. **Adjournment**

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
October 26, 2022

1. Call to Order at 6:03pm

2. Roll Call – Chairperson DeBoer, Commissioners Lyon-Jenness, Tecca, and Bliesener, City Manager Stoddard, and ZA Harvey.

- Motion to excuse Sara Dean by DeBoer, support by Bliesener – All ayes, motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes – September 28, 2022

- Lyon-Jenness asked about page 2, #1 of the minutes – A provision that gives the PC the ability to accept maximum created parking standards for flexibility. She asked, does that give latitude to the PC? Harvey stated that it would.
- Motion by Tecca to accept the minutes, support by Bliesener - All ayes

4. Citizen Comments

- No comments

5. Old Business

A. Work Plan Item #3: Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Riverfront

- Review Revised Riverfront property Map
 - DeBoer stated that the PC had looked at a map previously.
 - Harvey reported that she just received the map that day. She has been working with the County to make corrections. The County did not have the correct zoning map for the City of Parchment. The County was using a general map. She sent the recent zoning map to them to match the existing zoning. For the most part the map matches now with only a few small spots that don't quite match.
 - Harvey stated that the County's goal was to implement a new server. The County said that they were behind with the implementation and that it was not coming easily due to the all the retirements and COVID. They would like to get maps for all the municipalities.
 - The mill Planned Unit Development (PUD) was not outlined originally but now is a yellow dotted boundary according to Harvey.
 - Per Harvey, when the PC saw the map initially, they liked it all but needed land use data and the PUD to be included on it. The County fixed the PUD portion but not the land use information. The land use should be a column in the maps chart. Harvey will make sure that it gets added to the map if the PC wants it put on the map. It is just needed for the 21 riverfront parcels. The PC may have to generate that land use their selves.
 - Harvey stated that the County put property classification in the chart to the right (residential, commercial, industrial)

- Harvey said the PC was starting with the map before anything was done with the riverfront. Only a handful of properties were affected, most are within an industrial district and all are in the PUD district. The map provided is giving the PC what it needs.
- Bliesener stated that the pink district is confusing with it matching the C1 Business District.
- Harvey said that it is hard to see when printed so small. Not sure why the County did not use the City of Parchment colors. She thinks that maybe the County is working from some other zoning database. The County color schemes are for their general zoning. Harvey will ask if it could be made to match the City of Parchment colors.
- DeBoer asked if it could be enlarged and he offered the name of Kal Blue as a business that could do that work.
- Bliesener asked if it could be mounted on a board. The City Manager said that she would have it printed at Kal Blue.

B. Work Plan Item #4: Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Supplemental Standards (1st 3 bullet points on Work Plan) Sidewalks/Parking

- Harvey reissued the draft to the PC. The PC needed to resolve the housing for the elderly language. Harvey made the changes provided a clean copy of the proposed text.
- Harvey stated that the City of Parchment has the following language in their zoning ordinances:
 - House for Elderly
 - Convalescent or Nursing Homes
 - Adult Foster Care Facility
 - Home for the Aged

Harvey also stated that they needed to add parking standards to this part of the ordinance.

- Harvey wanted to make sure that terms matched what the PC wanted. All changes were struck out and in bold print. Adding section 14 & 15. Bullets 1-3 are in clean copy.
- Bliesener expressed her thanks for sorting out the terminology.
- Bliesener motioned to accept the final draft amendment for Article 12 Sidewalks and Off Street Parking, support by Tecca. Roll call vote with all members present voting Aye.

C. Confirm boundaries of the Special Parking District and establish on Zoning Map

- Harvey referenced Section 12.11 On Street Parking – Special Parking Districts. She asked if this section was on the existing zoning map. The City Manager will check with the attorney.

- Harvey said as a result of the PC's conversation, she looked at the current zoning map but does not see it on there. If there are no special parking districts, then the PC will have to establish them and update the zoning map.
- Tecca asked Harvey to explain what is a Special Parking District?
- Harvey stated Section 12.11 has provisions that allow for property owners to use property within the district to meet their parking requirements (parking ramps, street parking, lots, etc.).
- Tecca asked that if a facility was too far from the alternate parking then it could not help the business?
- Harvey said that the City of Parchment's version of the public parking was designated in the business district. She said that there is not a lot of familiarity with a Special Parking District.
- Tecca asked if #15 was necessary and how likely would this come up?
- Harvey stated that businesses demonstrate why it is ok to have fewer parking spaces. Section 12.11 allows businesses to use different angles to fulfil requirements. Businesses may say we only need 15 spaces and have 10 on site but because the business is within the special parking district, they do not need to add more spaces. Section 15 reduces the amount that is required. The use of Section 12.11 is used as a way to meet the standards. It may have been added later but did not get off the ground; the City Manager will check with the City's attorney.
- Tecca stated that the City Hall parking lot is the only public lot in Parchment.
- Bliesener commented that this provision is for new development even though it doesn't apply now, it could into the future.
- DeBoer mentioned the former Bellisle Building lot that could be a potential parking lot. He asked for more research into this.

6. New Business

A. WP Item #4: Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Supplemental Standards (4th bullet point on Work Plan)

- Harvey stated that the last bullet point in the Work Plan allows for solar power generation on rooftops. Looking at other language from other communities, the PC needs to know what is and isn't allowed.
- Harvey continues – Assuming language is about solar panels, the PC may want solar panels in general in the City of Parchment. Residential and Non-residential, Industrial vs. Commercial use within the community (Accessory use). Different standards are provided about solar panels. Each Community has different attitudes about them. Some may like reduced regulations or they may not like free standing, seen from road models, etc. Others may not mind seeing them. The PC may look at language and take things out if not wanted (free standing, attached to buildings, roof or wall attachment, side wall, rear wall, seen or not seen, etc.) The PC may not want to allow them on small lots.

- #7 Regulations established but add a caveat if a proposal fails to meet standards; they make it a special land use criteria. Standards impact tied to adjacent properties (#7, Page 2)
- Bliesener asked if it would be safe to say that #7 could be used as a Conditional Use.
- Harvey replied yes, when someone goes for a variance. They know a city will look at their regulations to see if it is possible. Conditions such as 3 acres, 200 feet back from the road, and placement of a solar panel on the façade could be put into place.
- Bliesener asked if the PC should strike language that limits solar panels. Do we remove free standing language and use conditional zoning instead?
- Lyon-Jenness agrees that the PC should encourage people to use solar panels. Panels do need to face sunlight. Would they use accessory structure because they don't like to look at them?
- Harvey replied that it is about the aesthetics. She could show the PC photos of solar panels that now look like roof tiles. Most communities have aesthetic concerns and no one else in neighborhood should see the panels.
- Bliesener asked what's the difference if the accessory structure is a solar panel or a shed.
- DeBoer - #7 would give the PC quite a bit of leeway.
- Lyon-Jenness asked the group if they are worried about the description of how and where the solar panels are mounted.
- DeBoer – If the panels were painted a strange color a resident may tire of how they look or not all residents would like the look.
- Lyon-Jenness would like to be as liberal and supportive as possible. She asked how these requests would come before the PC.
- Harvey replied that they would be considered as accessory structures. They would meet the standards with permits that could be administratively approved.
- Tecca asked would it be required for them to have an electrical permit.
- Lyon-Jenness and Bliesener both stated that they would keep #7.
- DeBoer said that he would be ok with keeping solar panels as Accessory Structures. Also, including free standing language.
- Lyon-Jenness noted that there was nothing in this document that speaks to larger panels (mill site use) or is this just for residential.
- Harvey stated that this ordinance was not for utility grid facilities; she could add solar farm if the PC is interested.
- DeBoer stated that the lagoons may be a good place for a solar farm. He would like to see language regarding a mini solar farm.
- Harvey stated that last month the PC identified 1. Work Plan and 2. Housing. She feels by December 1 the Public Hearing site plan review text for parking and solar panels could be ready. PC may want to see revisions in November and wait for the Public Hearing until 2023.

- Tecca stated that he would like to forego the December meeting for the holidays. The other PC members agreed.
- DeBoer talked about the future land use map that is lacking in the Master Plan.
- Harvey said that Adams should be contacted for that future land use map so that it could be included with the Master Plan. City Manager Stoddard said that she would contact him.
- DeBoer reiterated that there would not be a December 2022 meeting.

7. **Next Meeting** – The next meeting will be on Wednesday, November 30, 2022 at 6pm.

8. **Adjournment** – Motion by Lyon-Jenness, supported by Tecca. All ayes. Meeting ended at 7:06pm.



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WORK PLAN: Zoning Amendments for Consistency w/ Master Plan
Z.O. Amendments – Supplemental Standards

- ✓ Allow for installations of solar power generating facilities on rooftops
-

ARTICLE 12. – GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 12.32. -- Solar Panels

Solar panels, either attached to principal or accessory buildings, shall be allowed in all zoning districts, subject to the following requirements:

1. *Attached to a building.* Solar panels may be attached to the roof and/or the wall.
 - a. Building-mounted solar panels shall be subject to the height and setback requirements applicable to the building to which they are attached.
 - b. Roof-mounted solar panels shall include solar panels integrated as the surface layer of the roof structure with no additional apparent change in relief or projections (the preferred installation), or separate flush-mounted solar panels attached to the roof surface.
 - 1) Flush-mounted solar panels installed on a sloped roof surface shall not project vertically above the peak of the roof to which they are attached.
 - 2) Flush-mounted solar panels installed on a flat roof shall not project vertically higher than the height of the parapet wall surrounding the roof or shall be screened by architectural features.
 - 3) Roof-mounted solar panels shall be only of such weight as can safely be supported by the roof. Proof thereof shall be submitted to the City Building Official prior to installation and shall be subject to the Building Official's approval.
 - c. Wall-mounted solar panels shall not exceed the height of the wall to which they are attached.



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- d. Building-mounted solar panels shall be permanently and safely attached to the building or structure. Proof thereof shall be submitted to the City Building Official prior to installation and shall be subject to the Building Official's approval.
2. The exterior surfaces of solar panels and associated structures/equipment shall be generally neutral in color and substantially non-reflective of light.
3. Solar panel-related energy storage systems shall be located within a secure temperature-controlled enclosure when in use. When no longer in use, such energy storage systems must be disposed of in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
4. Solar panels shall conform to applicable industry standards and shall be installed, maintained and used only in accordance with the manufacturer's directions. The City Building Official may inspect the completed installation to verify compliance.
5. Solar panels shall comply with all applicable City construction-related codes and permitting requirements.
6. Solar panels allowed as a permitted accessory use shall require an Administrative Review.
7. Solar panels failing to meet the height or setback requirements set forth herein may be allowed as a conditional use, in accordance with Section 13.3.
8. Solar panels attached to a building that is lawfully nonconforming do not constitute an expansion of a nonconforming building. For building-mounted solar panels on a building that is lawfully nonconforming due to setback, the setback of the lawful nonconforming building shall be considered the applicable setback requirement.

ARTICLE 2. – CONSTRUCTION OF LANGUAGE AND DEFINITIONS

Section 2.2 - Definitions

Solar Panel: a solar panel, a photovoltaic panel, solar hot air or hot water panel collector device or other type of energy system which relies on solar radiation as the source for the generation of electricity or the transfer of stored heat. A solar panel is an accessory use in all zoning districts subject to Section 12.32.

A 'solar panel', accessory to a principal use, is distinct from a 'solar panel energy system' designed and intended to provide electricity to off-site customers or the electric grid.



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ARTICLE 12. – GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 12.33. – Solar Farms

1. *Purpose:* The purpose of this section is to establish guidelines for the siting of solar panel energy systems designed and intended to provide electricity to off-site customers or the electric grid which shall hereafter be referred to as a solar farm. It is further the purpose and intent of this Section to:
 - Allow the safe, effective, and efficient use of a renewable energy system consistent with the goals and objectives set forth in the City of Parchment Master Plan.
 - Preserve and protect public health, safety, welfare, and quality of life by minimizing the potential adverse effects of solar farms, including aesthetic impacts and risks to the values of adjoining properties.
 - Establish standards and procedures by which the siting, design, engineering, installation, operation, and maintenance of solar farms shall be governed.
2. *Scope:* Solar farms shall be allowed as a Conditional Use in the _____ District as the principal use on a lot.
3. *Solar Farm Requirements:*
 - a. All solar farm structures and equipment shall conform to the minimum front, side, and rear building setback requirements of the zoning district.
 - b. Freestanding solar panels within a solar farm shall not exceed the maximum building height requirements of the zoning district, as measured from the grade where the support structure of the solar panel is affixed to the ground to the top of the panel when oriented at maximum tilt.
 - c. Area covered by solar panels shall not be included in the lot coverage calculations for the lot.
 - d. All power transmission lines shall be located underground, unless otherwise modified by the Planning Commission in consideration of the Conditional Use Criteria established by Section 13.3.



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4. *Glare:* Solar panels shall be placed and arranged such that reflected solar radiation or glare shall not be directed onto adjacent buildings, properties, or roadways. The exterior surfaces of solar panels and associated structures/equipment shall be generally neutral in color and substantially non-reflective of light.

The solar farm shall meet any applicable Federal Aviation Administration guidelines for glare and placement in connection with any airports.

5. *Energy Storage System:* When an energy storage system is included as part of the solar farm, it must be placed in a secure temperature-controlled enclosure when in use. When no longer in use, such energy storage system must be disposed of in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Energy storage system enclosures shall conform to the solar farm requirements set forth in subsection 3.

6. *Buffering:* Screening shall be provided along the perimeter of a solar farm, including along the adjacent road right-of-way, in accordance with the greenbelt buffer requirements of Section 12.20.

Buffering should be at a height to obstruct the view at ground level but not inhibit solar production caused by shading. Required buffering is not intended to screen every part of the solar farm.

7. *Permits:* Solar farms shall conform to applicable industry standards and shall be installed, maintained and used only in accordance with the manufacturer's directions. The City Building Official may inspect the completed installation to verify compliance.

Solar farms shall be required to obtain all necessary federal, state and local permits and comply with all applicable Township construction-related codes and requirements.

8. *Removal:*

- a. A documented decommissioning plan shall be provided and shall:

- 1) State the anticipated life of the project;
- 2) Describe estimated decommissioning costs in current dollars and provide that this figure will be updated every fifth (5th) year after commercial operation of the utility-scale solar panel energy system;



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- 3) Be signed by the party responsible for decommissioning and the landowner (if different);
 - 4) Define the conditions upon which decommissioning will be initiated (e.g.; end of land lease, no power production for 12 months, etc.);
 - 5) State that all equipment, conduit, structures, fencing, roads, and foundations will be removed by the end of the decommissioning period;
 - 6) Require property to be restored to the condition it was in prior to the development of the solar farm;
 - 7) Describe the timeframe for completion of decommissioning activities;
 - 8) Describe any agreement (e.g. lease) with the landowner regarding decommissioning;
 - 9) State the party currently responsible for decommissioning; and
 - 10) Describe any plans or circumstances requiring an update of the decommissioning plan.
- b. A recorded copy of the decommissioning plan shall be submitted to the City.
 - c. Decommissioning shall be completed within 12 months of determination by the Zoning Administrator that the solar farm is no longer being maintained in an operable state of good repair, unless the current responsible party with ownership interest in the facility provides substantial evidence to the Planning Commission of the intent to maintain and reinstate operation of the solar farm.
 - d. A cash deposit, certified check, irrevocable bank letter of credit, surety bond, corporate guaranty, or other similar financial instrument acceptable to the Planning Commission that is equal to the cost of decommissioning is required. The amount of security shall be adjusted to equal the latest estimated net decommissioning costs under subsection 8.a.2) above.

ARTICLE 2. – CONSTRUCTION OF LANGUAGE AND DEFINITIONS

Section 2.2 - Definitions

Solar Farm: a solar panel energy system designed and intended to provide electricity to off-site customers or the electric grid.



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2022 Work Plan

Work Plan Item	Priority	Status	Schedule
Required 5-Year Review of City Master Plan			
MP Adopted 2021			Required Review - 2026
Zoning Ordinance Updates			
Zoning Amendments for Consistency w/ Master Plan			
MP/ZO Review – Select/Prioritize Work Items for 2022	1	Completed	5.25.22
WP Item #3 – Riverfront - Riverfront Map	1	Completed	Map Review – 6.22.22 Revised Map – 7.27.22 Revised Map – 10.26.22 Accepted – 10.26.22
WP Item #4 – Supplemental Standards - Sidewalks	3		Draft #1 – 7.27.22 P.H. – January, 2023
WP Item #4 – Supplemental Standards - Bike Racks	3		Draft #1 – 7.27.22 P.H. – January, 2023
WP Item #4 – Supplemental Standards - Off-Street Parking Requirements	3		Assessment – 8.24.22 Draft #1 – 9.28.22 Draft #2 – 10.26.22 P.H. – January, 2023



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WP Item #4 – Supplemental Standards - Solar Energy Facilities	3		Draft #1 – 10.26.22 Draft #2 – 11.30.22 P.H. – January, 2023
WP Item #5 – Site Plan Review	2		Draft #1 – 6.22.22 Draft #2 – 7.27.22 P.H. – January, 2023
Planning Commission Education/Training			
PC Training Session	1	Completed	2.23.22
Joint CC/PC/ZBA Training Session	1	Completed	4.27.22