

TAMA COUNTY ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES

Utility Scale Solar Ordinance Review

Wednesday June 11, 2025

Board members present: Doug Dvorak, Wade Mitchell, Steve Peterson, Carol Meyer (via Teams)

Eight community members were present in the room, two additional people were present on Teams

MINUTES:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Dvorak, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by Mitchell, second by Petersen to approve the tentative agenda. All Ayes, motion carried.

Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed. Motion by Petersen, second by Mitchell to approve the minutes from April 16, 2025. All Ayes, motion carried.

Opening remarks were made by Zoning Administrator Laura Wilson.

Discussion of Eminent Domain restrictions, planning to insert under “permitting and review” section. After discussion of the restriction on total acreage, the Board returned to this topic for a vote. Motion by Petersen that the “issuance of a construction permit shall be conditioned on the permit holder’s enforceable promise supported by the consideration of the issuance of a construction permit, that the permit holder shall never or seek to use eminent domain to acquire any real property interests to construct or operate the project”, seconded by Mitchell. All Ayes, motion carried.

Discussion of restrictions on total acreage for Utility Solar projects in Tama County, deciding to limit the total to 500 acres. Public Comment was included in the discussion. Motion by Mitchell to “have a limit of 500 total acres of [utility] solar in Tama County and add it to the ordinance [draft]”, second by Petersen. All Ayes, motion carried.

Discussion of adding a “Notice of Intent”, where a failure to notify the Supervisors or Zoning Administrator before proceeding with contacting citizen could result in a denial of a permit. Exceptions could be made at the discretion of the Supervisors and the Zoning Administrator if there was a failure to notify. Motioned by Petersen to add the Notice of Intent, Second by Mitchell. All Aye, motion carried.

Discussion of adding a \$2500 non-refundable Application Fee, in addition to the fees charged for an approved zoning certificate. This item would be placed toward the beginning of the ordinance. Motion by Petersen, Second by Mitchell. All Ayes, motion carried.

Review of Definitions for the ordinance.

Review of storm water runoff and retention. The Board discussed not wanting any increase from what natural vegetation on the land would produce. Comment from a citizen in attendance. Decision by the Board that more research was needed.

The next meeting of the Tama County Zoning Commission was set for June 25, 2025 at 6pm.

Discussion of future Agenda topics.

Comments from the Public were allowed. Discussion included a comment that came from a utility solar company representative that indicated that they and other companies were stepping back and waiting for the State to change legislation that could override any County ordinances relating to renewable energy.

Motion to adjourn by Mitchell, second by Petersen. All Ayes, Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:26 PM.

PLEASE NOTE THAT VIDEO RECORDING OF THE TAMA COUNTY ZONING BOARD MEETING HELD JUNE 11, 2025 IS ALSO AVAILABLE ON THE TAMA COUNTY YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Wilson