



**COHOCTAH PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING HEADLAND SOLAR LLC
SPECIAL USE PERMIT
July 16, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Livingston County EMS Building, 1911 Tooley
Rd., Howell, MI 48855**

The Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to individuals with disabilities at the meeting upon 72 hour advance notice by contacting Barb Fear, Township Clerk, by email: bfearclerk@gmail.com, phone: (517) 546-0655, or mail: 10518 N Antcliff Rd Fowlerville MI 48836.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Order was called at 6:08pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – *Moment of Silence*

ROLL CALL

All Planning Commission members were in attendance

Present: Mark Cican, Ken Carmack, Phil Charette, Jessica Buttermore, Clint Beach, Sarah Newton, and Kyle Engel.
Township attorney Michael Homier was also present

Absent: None

a full quorum was met.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve agenda as presented made by Charette, supported by Newton. Motion carried.

MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Planning Commission Chair Buttermore stated the Public Hearing Ground Rules. She then read a statement:

“Welcome

We are here this evening to listen to your comments, opinions, and views in regard to the Ranger Power industrial solar complex in Cohoctah Township. A similar application was also filed in Conway Township. I ask that you be courteous to all speakers and let them speak without interruption. Everyone who wants to speak will be given 3 minutes. Address the Planning Commission and not the audience. Any questions you have, we will endeavor to seek answers.

“Public Act 233 of 2023 controls what a township planning commission can and cannot do when an application is filed for 50 megawatt or more industrial solar facility. PA 233 preempts the township’s authority to regulate these industrial facilities and requires 120 days for the planning commission to make a decision on the application. The 120 days expires on August 28. The State of Michigan, in its infinite wisdom legislated the 120 days to review an over 2,000-page document that was not fully submitted when the application was filed on April 30. We intend to comply with the provisions of PA 233. “

1. Public Hearing- Headland Solar LLC Special Use Permit

Public Hearing- Headland Solar LLC application and Special Use Permit

Motion to open public hearing regarding the Headland Solar LLC Special Use Permit was made by Charette, supported by Newton. Motion carried. The hearing was opened at 6:12 p.m.

The Public Hearing was started with a Slide Presentation by Ranger Power representing the Headland Solar Project LLC with a brief explanation of the proposed Headland Solar LLC project. Their attorney demanded that because the proposed Ranger Power/Headland Solar LLC project was not within Cohoctah Townships Renewable Energy Overlay Districts, that the township Planning Commission vote to deny the Special Use Permit today.

Five letters were received, and 22 members of the public spoke out against the proposed Headland Solar LLC project

0 members of the public spoke in favor of the project

Public Comments were as follows:

Steve Smith: Spoke against the project. He stated that it came out at the Conway Township hearing that Ranger Power sells project when its ready for construction and that D.E. Shaw, a multi-billionaire hedge fund in New York. He states that Ranger Power has not been transparent or forth rights through this whole process. If they would have acknowledged the harmful aspects of the project and worked with us on how to minimize them instead of denying or ignoring, this would have all been done a long time ago. He encouraged the omission to follow Mr. Homier's advice. There is some risk in whatever we do, but don't be intimidated.

He does not believe that a hedge fund from New York has our rural community best interest at heart, who commented on his appreciation to Conway Public Hearing and Cohoctah Twp for their due diligence of reviewing the application, he believes that this is another Gov't & "Boondoggle" and does not believe that Ranger Power has been forthright nor transparent in dealing with the Townships.

Joseph James Offerman: A Cohoctah born resident and lived here all his life. This is a country of the people, for the people, and by the people. The government has no right to take over our land and tell us what we can and cannot do with it.

Connie Johnson: A Cohoctah resident and was speaking for her five neighbors. She moved back here, after growing up here, last fall. She purposely did not buy a parcel because it was too close to an overlay. We don't want the blight of these solar installations. You say the first year may generate \$3.5 million and \$26 million over the course of 25 years. This is not enough to destroy thousands of acres of farmland. Decommissioning, how much is a bond with the company goes bankrupt. What's going to happen when the wildlife is destroyed, the natural resources is destroyed because of the leaching when a tornado hits, or a hail storm. You gave a 2,000-page application with 120 days, knowing it will take a team of attorneys to take hours and hours to go through that at taxpayer's expense to go through that. This is an abomination, this is a waste of the taxpayer money, and is not what the people in Cohoctah Township want. She contacted a state representative in Canton who indicated to her that he would not want to live next to it, but everyone should take one for team. She also mentioned the St. Clair County Health Regulation they passed. The farmer's legacy will be the ruin of the land.

At this point someone (unknown) spoke up stating the map submitted to the township is not the map shown on the screen by the Ranger Power representative. Chair Buttermore gave him a map on the screen.

Joann Haas: Thanked the Planning Commission and Board for fighting for us and not against us. She also thanked Mr. Homier for being a good counsel to our members. She stated that solar panel have lead and cadmium and when damaged can leach into the ground and contaminate our drinking water.

Solar panels have rain runoff that cause channeling of water and will cause floods. Our drains cannot handle this. We already have an issue with Sprague Creek. I cannot imagine what will happen in that area. Our wildlife will be greatly affected. The land Ranger Power wants is a deer and turkey crossing. Where are they going to go, where are they going to feed? Our bald Eagle family feeds in that exact field. The heavy panels and construction material will affect our property values. Nobody wants a house in the country if it's next to an industrial site. With construction from sun up to sundown it will have devastating health effect on people. After this we will have noise from the inverters for the next 40 years. What is their emergency response? Once the shovel hits the ground, they are selling it and we are dealing with a whole different company. DESRI. Bring DESRI in, they are going to construct and own it. They need to stand here and answer our questions. Send us people who are really going to be in charge. We want answers and we deserve answers.

Roman Yaremych: Spoke against the project, commenting he has been here for 30 years for the rural atmosphere. The township has prime agricultural land that should be kept in agriculture and not a solar farm. He would hope every delay, every thorn in their side, everything within your power to make it more difficult for them to move forward and would encourage you to do that and believes most of the township residents agree.

Mary Ratelle: Spoke against the project, commenting on past experience with EMS and FIRE departments with safety issues regarding solar installations. Concerned about migratory birds because solar panels look like water from above and can injure or kill the birds, also concerned about 300 proposed workers on the local roads for construction. She stated that we don't want this on dirt roads. Also stating that many medical night workers sleep during the day with the noise created from the invertors, how will they sleep? We don't want outsiders telling us what to do.

Kurt Sacker: Spoke against the project, commenting that how efficient is solar in Mid-Michigan? He states he is an engineer by background and Mid-Michigan only gets 18 to 20 percent efficient use of solar. Also states that heat reflection from the solar panels cause an increase in thunderstorms and is concerned with migratory birds and deer population being pushed out.

Frank Kersanti: Lives on Hayner Road and spoke against the project, commenting that he moved here, raised his kids and horses, then moved away, hated it, then moved back again. He states he is impressed with the townspeople here. Was approached by DTE to lease his land to solar and said "No" to DTE. He states that he values the rhythm of life out here and that he doesn't want to have to move away again.

Tom Emery: an attorney in Perry, Michigan, and a former Shiawassee County Commissioner, spoke against the project. He indicated that the Michigan Constitution, Article 4, section 52, provides protection and that it prohibits pollution of farmland and natural resources in the State. This is a provision in our State Constitution that's not in other state constitutions.

Megan Beach: Lives in Conway but was born in Cohoctah. She spoke against the project. She thanked the planning commission for the work involved and that the Ranger Power lawyer was belligerent and bullying at Conway Township Public Hearing. She suggested that the planning commission take the full 120 days to protect the health and environment of the community. Has many concerns including the wildlife, environment, roads and our future children.

Sarah Porter: Spoke against the project. Conway Township us the only Livingston County township to drain water to adjacent townships. Cohoctah Township residents should be concerned for any additional water runoff created by the project. She has compared the Ingham County project, which is a Ranger project. The Ingham County project has two drains. There are 10 drains in this project. The developers will only do what the Livingston County Drain Commissioner says. The minimize, mitigate, and repair approach to issues seems more reactionary than advanced planning and implementation of

procedures. The Application is riddled with boiler plate terms like “industry best practices.” The application shows \$42 million for life of the project. However, in a different section of the application she found same report dated 8-15-2022 with same benchmarks showing a lifetime benefit of only \$18 million. She compared participating and nonparticipating parcels in the application. There are 192 parcels that are participating and nonparticipating directly adjacent to the project. The directly non-adjacent nonparticipating parcels make up 71 percent of the project. There are 47 participating parcels and of those 60 percent of the acreage is owned by taxpayer who do not reside in Conway or Cohoctah. They do not live here. They do not vote here. They will not see it. Of the 60 percent of the acreage, 44 percent is owned by relatives of the developer. Ranger Power will sell this development to a construction company at pre-construction base. Listen to how they respond and answer, “we,” “we this,” “we that.” The “we” they refer to will not be here. They will be long gone. When it comes to drainage, they will be gone. When it comes to complaints, they will be gone. When it comes to decommissioning, they will be gone! The community does not want this project.

Stephen Barron: Spoke against the project, commenting that was new to area, only been here 10 years. He moved here because of the property, and the people. My wife is from here. The nature is overwhelming. That’s why I moved here. After seeing this, I don’t know if I want to stay here. I fought for the Constitution.

Linda Brown: Lives in Conway and spoke against the project, commenting that she will probably have to move. Already cannot sell in Conway because of the proposed Headland Solar LLC project. She states that people are already turning around instead of buying in the area and it is already affecting the property values.

Deanna Torigian: Spoke against the project, commenting that she was a GI brat and moved all over the country. She graduated in Howell. Ther are better places for solar projects than here. She states that she moved back here for the solitude, beauty, animals, country atmosphere, for the agriculture. These panels will be next to my house and across the street and will be the only thing I see. It is not what we want.

Jim Dannemiller: Lives in Conway and spoke against the project, commenting that solar doesn't work in Michigan, it is not reliable, most expensive source of power, points to issues in Europe with renewable energy failing and outages, California rates high due to the solar push, states that Peter Sinclair came and said that the solar panels were safe and you could crush them and eat them on your cereal, hopes for a special meeting to see that they eat solar panels on their cereal.

Steve Weiss: Lives in Conway and spoke against the project, commenting that Ranger Power Headland Solar LLC said at the Conway Township Public Hearing that they will decommission only to a depth of about 3 feet, which contradicts what is stated in the application that all underground cables will be removed. He also raised concern over the application’s conflict resolutions, claim proactive but see no plan. He cited the Assembly Solar Project by Ranger Power that took over a year to fix flooding issues. Concerns over deep rooted plants will need to be removed in order to cultivate later. States issues in Europe where they have now restricted solar projects on farmland because the farmland is finite and precious. He states that Ranger Power uses tactics of bullying townships and farmers to sign leases and throwing money around. Urges the planning commission to ask for an extension to review application.

William Klender: Spoke against project, commenting Why solar projects were not built between roadways? Leave farmland, farmland.

Gordon Maleitzke: He spoke against project, commenting there are 2,000 panels per 10 acres, 220 megawatts, 200 million per range is \$278,000 per acre plus, to reclaim farmland. Said it is cheap to maintain, unless a catastrophe, then expensive. Ranger Power won't be here. Michigan is 7th shady/cloudiest state in U.S.. 75 days of sun, 150 only partial sunny, with no battery banks. Robert Frost: Cohoctah Township, spoke against project commenting on the bully tactics of Ranger Power's Attorney, telling the Planning Commission "don't be bullied" they are just people too. States that he found the perfect land in township, a dream come true, then this. He states that Ranger Power doesn't need to be here, they had a board room laugh how easy to roll over us hicks. He further states that he is concerned about fencing to keep animals out and the state and federal tax subsidies when they're gone, again states don't be bullied.

Gordon Maleitzke Uncle: who lives in Oregon spoke against the project, commenting that he was 92 years of age born on Owosso Road. Solar power is the most expensive power source. Doesn't last, don't last at night. The west has lots of land, not here. He states that he has come back to the family farm and wants to live without being surrounded by solar. He also states that we will never get prime farmland back.

Maryanne Barger: Spoke against project, commenting that we have to repeat ourselves. We have Eagles in our area, why is it okay to kill three Eagles a year? She also states that if the infrastructure goes down, then we get no power. It's not right.

Ken Recker (from Livingston County Drain Commissioner's Office): commenting that Ranger Power has had preliminary meetings with the Livingston County Drains office, but has not given the office enough information to make any determinations regarding the Headland Solar LLC Project. He also states that the Livingston County Drain Commission has been in contact with surrounding counties regarding this project. They intend to hold developer accountable and will have to minimize, mitigate and repair any and all drains damaged.

Wes Nakagiri (Livingston County Commissioner District 4): spoke against the project, commenting that he just returned from the Livingston County Health Advisory Committee meeting, and are actively looking into noise pollution from solar project invertors. He stated that California has a lower dB threshold of 45 dB versus Michigan's 55 dB. He states that 55 dB is too high, and states that many other States are moving their limit to 40 - 45 db. When we put this in, we want to be erroring on the side of health and safety of the community. He states that he is also concerned with the costs of decommissioning, and that St. Clair County reported Federal versus State costs are 10x higher. He also stated that we don't want a mini-super fund to saddle future generations with the cost of decommissioning.

Kelly Ralko: Former Planning Commission member of Conway Township spoke against the project, commenting that they have experienced flooding in their home. Conway puts a lot of water out of township through drains; Developers need to mitigate flooding potential from project to non-participating neighboring properties. She visited Assembly Solar by Ranger Power in Shiawassee County, and it was flooded. The neighboring properties were flooded and homes were flooded. There is a real danger of the same flooding happening here due to this project. She states that there is a reason many developers don't build out here, flooding issues. Ranger Power doesn't listen. They should find a more suitable place. She states that Ranger Power has no ethics, they don't listen to people.

Mary Ratelle: Spoke against the project again as time allowed, commenting that the Sprague Creek in Cohoctah township floods, and it's a mess with trees down, bridges flooding, there is no more room for water to flow. The area's drainage issues are very real.

Steve Smith: Spoke against the project again as time allowed, commenting that Headland Solar LLC project maps show prime farmland, that Ranger Power has all the data, and is still siting the project on prime farmland. He states that neighboring properties are still not being able to sell. He also states that this solar project will be considered; and Michigan state law states that you may not discharge a firearm while hunting within 400 feet of structures and many residents will not be able to hunt their own land.

Connie Johnson: Spoke against project again as time allowed, commenting that she spoke to a state legislator and states that they are targeting conservative communities.

Tom Emery: Spoke against project again as time allowed, commenting that the township and the residents should look at the Michigan State Constitution, the Environmental department protects against destruction of farmland and resources, real or likely.

William Klender: Spoke against project as time allowed, commenting that DTE has also leased another 1,600 acres in the township.

Steve Weiss: Spoke against project again as time allowed, commenting that Ranger Power Headland Solar LLC has done very little in terms of community outreach, "How many are for solar in our community?"

Kelly Ralko: Spoke against project again as time allowed, commenting PC should look at St Clair County Health Dept as they are regulating solar projects. Also states the numerous issues in Shiawassee County Assembly Solar project and the septic flooding.

Planning Commission member **Phil Charette** stated that to be fair, any participating landowners who want to testify for the project?

No one came forward.

There were no comments in favor of the Headland Solar LLC Project.

Planning Commission Chair Buttermore stated that five letters were received, all in opposition, and would be added to the minutes.

See the attached letters.

The Public Hearing was closed at 8:00 p.m.

2. Schedule Additional Meetings for Application Review

Schedule Additional Meetings for Application Review

It was discussed that extra meetings will be required to discuss the Special Land Use Application.

Tentative dates discussed were:

July 29, August 7, August 19, and August 26.

Planning Commission Chair Buttermore stated she knew Ranger Power wants us to make a decision tonight. That is not going to happen. We want to take the 120 days. We just heard all the public comments and need to go over it. The only question was there was a lag in receiving the escrow fee. Will you give us an extension of at least three weeks due to the escrow fee not being paid.

Ranger Power indicated that they would take it under consideration and advise the township within three days.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments not pertaining to the Public Hearing

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Newton, supported by Engel.

Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:13pm