

**RECOMMENDATION LETTER AND FINDINGS OF FACT
TO THE TOWN OF CORTLAND BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PC 25-02**

TO: Cortland Board of Trustees
FROM: Cortland Planning Commission
DATE: April 20, 2026

SUBJECT: PC 25-02: Request a Special Use Permit on the subject property to, upon annexation, construct operate, and maintain a Solar Garden on PINS 09-27-100-002 and 09-27-300-004 located at Illinois Route 38

APPLICANT: SolarStone Partners
125 SE Main St
Minneapolis, MN 55414

OWNERS: James R. Walter and James E. Walter
16513 Lynch Rd
DeKalb, IL 60115

The Cortland Planning Commission conducted a second Public Hearing on April 2, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. at the Cortland Fire Station, 30 W. North Avenue, Cortland, Illinois. The purpose of the Public Hearing involved consideration of the request by SolarStone Partners as applicant, for request of a Special Use Permit in accordance with Title 9, Chapter 10, Section 6B of the Cortland Town Code regarding the property located at Route 38, Cortland, Illinois. The 80.33-acre site is located on the north side of Route 38 between South Hahn Drive and Airport Road comprised of PIN 09-27-100-002 and PIN 09-27-300-004. The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit on the subject property to, upon annexation, construct, operate, and maintain a Solar Garden as set forth in Title 9, Chapter 4, Section 34 of the Cortland Town Code.

The Planning Commission reviewed and considered the material, information, and testimony presented at the public hearing.

Review of Standards for Special Use Permit (9-10-3)

The standards were presented which are as follows:

- A. The proposed structure or use at the particular location requested is necessary or desirable to provide a service or a facility which is in the interest of the public and will contribute to the general welfare of the neighborhood or community.
- B. The proposed structure or use will not have a substantial adverse effect upon the adjacent property, the character of the neighborhood, traffic conditions, utility facilities and other matters affecting the public health, safety and general welfare.

- C. The proposed structure or use will be designed, arranged, and operated so as to permit the development and use of neighboring property in accordance with the applicable district regulations.
- D. Such other standards and criteria as are established by the ordinance for a particular special use as set forth in section 9-10-4 of this chapter and as applied to planned developments as set forth in chapter 7 of this title (Ord. 2008-03, 1-28-2008).

Findings of Fact

Commissioners deliberated, discussed, and reviewed the standards associated with approval of a special use. Upon deliberation of the relevant standards with respect to the proposed special use to operate a solar garden at the subject location, the Commissioners find as follows:

- A. The proposed structure or use at the particular location requested is necessary or desirable to provide a service or a facility which is in the interest of the public and will contribute to the general welfare of the neighborhood or community.
The commission finds that the proposed location is desirable if constructed as proposed; the project increases energy supply and could lower some electric rates, there is potential revenue increase for the town and the library
- B. The proposed structure or use will not have substantial adverse effect upon the adjacent property, the character of the neighborhood, traffic conditions, utility facilities and other matters affecting the public health, safety and general welfare;
The commission finds that the design mitigates any adverse affects on adjacent properties, character of the neighboring properties is not impacted, the proposed location is desirable if constructed as proposed, traffic conditions would increase for short-term construction, the negative impact is considered minimal; there is no public health, safety or general welfare issues found.
- C. The proposed structure or use will be designed, arranged, and operated so as to permit the development and use of neighboring property in accordance with the applicable district regulations.
The commission finds the design is comprehensive, there are no red flags by looking at external sources, the design has appropriate fauna and flora, appropriate screening and the Commission has been given confidence the management company will comply with necessary maintenance as required in a timely manner.
- D. Such other standards and criteria as are established by the ordinance for a particular special use as set forth in section 9-10-4 of this chapter and as applied to planned developments as set forth in chapter 7 of this title (Ord. 2008-23, 1-28-2008)
Not applicable.

Ms. Torres moved to approve the Findings of Fact, seconded by Ms. Kaminski

Roll call vote:

Yea: Commissioners Lawson, Torres, Steadman, Moser, Kaminski

Nay: None

Absent: Commissioner Hedrick

Motion carried.

Recommendation

Ms. Torres moved to approve the request from SolarStone Partners for a Special Use Permit, regarding property located north of IL Route 38, and south of the Union Pacific Railroad, De Kalb County, IL (80.33 ac) PINs 09-27-100-002 and 09-27-300-004, to Construct, Operate and Maintain a Solar Garden as set forth in Title 9, Chapter 4, Section 34 of the Cortland Town Code. Ms. Steadman seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Yea: Commissioners Lawson, Torres, Steadman, Moser, Kaminski

Nay: None

Absent: Commissioner Hedrick

Motion carried, and the recommendation of approval of the proposed special use permit shall be forwarded to the Town Board for consideration at its April 27, 2026 meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,



Mark Hedrick, Chairman
CORTLAND PLANNING COMMISSION