

Staff Report

Subject: Site Plan (Third District)
Author: Kimberly Barlett, Community Planner
Department: Development Services
Meeting Date: July 15, 2025
Item Description: **Will Jernigan** requests approval of a **Site Plan** for “Effingham Rahn Solar Farm.” Located on Little McCall Road, zoned **AR-1**. **[Map# 345 Parcel# 37]**

Summary Recommendation

Staff has reviewed the application and recommends **approval** of a **Site Plan** for “Effingham Rahn Solar Farm.”

Executive Summary/Background

- The request to approve a site plan is a requirement of Section 14-56 – Site Plan.
In addition to the requirements of the building codes adopted in the Official Code of Effingham County, Georgia, an applicant shall submit a Site Plan of the proposed development for non-residential properties located in B-1, B-2, B-3, PD-Manufacturing, PD-Commercial, Light-Industrial, and Heavy-Industrial zonings.
- A conditional use to allow for a solar farm in AR-1 was approved on February 18, 2025, by the Board of Commissioners.
- The Planned Installation Completion is March 2026, and the expected Decommissioning is March 2056.
- The Solar Facility is comprised of approximately 9,125 modules on two individual portions (63 acres total) of an 87-acre parcel.
- Of the total 75-foot property setback, 55 feet will remain uncleared and serve as a natural buffer along Little McCall Road and a fence around the solar array.
- Since proposed wetland impacts are less than 0.1 acre, the Army Corps of Engineers does not require notification. Therefore, the applicant will submit a Nationwide Permit 51 as their approval from the Army Corps of Engineers. This permit authorizes "construction, expansion, or modification of land-based renewable energy production facilities," provided that the collective activity does not cause the loss of greater than 1/2-acre of non-tidal waters of the United States.
- The two phases of development will be constructed and operated concurrently.
- The Decommissioning plan has been received with the application.

Alternatives

Staff has reviewed the application and recommends **approval** of a **Site Plan** for “Effingham Rahn Solar Farm.”

1. Approve the Site Plan for “Effingham Rahn Solar Farm” with the following stipulations:

- The applicant will adhere to the current Georgia law “The solar farm shall comply with all requirements set forth in O.C.G.A §§ 46-3-67 – 46 -3- 69.1, "Solar Power Facility Agreements. “

2. Deny the Site Plan for “Effingham Rahn Solar Farm”

Recommended Alternative: 1

Other Alternatives: 2

Department Review: Development Services

FUNDING: N/A

Attachments: 1. Site Plan Application 2. Site Plan 3. Wetlands Permit
4. Floodplain Letter