



**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF ROCHELLE**  
**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**

**Monday, May 05, 2025 at 6:00 PM**

**City of Rochelle Council Chambers—420 North 6th Street, Rochelle, IL 61068**

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- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. ROLL CALL:** Present were Commissioners Colwill, Hickey, McKibben, Myers, Bowerman and Wolter. Absent: Charnock. Non-voting Commissioners present were: Tenggren. Absent: Barber. There was a quorum of six present. Also present were Michelle Knight, Michelle Pease and Mayor Bearrows.
- III. APPROVE/ACCEPT MINUTES:** McKibben moved, seconded by Colwill, **"I move the minutes of the April 7, 2025 Planning and Zoning Commission meeting as presented be approved."** Ayes: Colwill, Hickey, McKibben Myers, Bowerman and Wolter. Nays: None. Motion carried 6-0.
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENTARY:** None
- V. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:** None
- VI. BUSINESS ITEMS:**

**PZC-04-25 Petition of Elion Business Center LLC for a special use for a Childcare Center for the property located at 450 E. Coronado Drive.** Pease stated that a notice was published in the paper and property owners were notified. Motion made by Myers, seconded by Hickey, **"I move the Planning and Zoning Commission open the Public Hearing regarding the proposed special use for a childcare center in a PUD - Planned Unit Development zoning district for the property located at 450 E. Coronado Drive."** Ayes: Colwill, Hickey, McKibben, Myers, Bowerman and Wolter. Nays: None. Motion carried 6-0. The petitioner is seeking a special use permit for a childcare center. The subject property is zoned PUD, Planned Unit Development and is located at 450 E. Coronado Drive. This currently is a vacant building which was previously a medical facility and has been vacant for a few years. Article VII – Planned Unit Developments Sec. 110-251 – Objectives. The PUD, as a subdivision of land, is intended to encourage improved design in the development of land by providing relief from traditional zoning requirements which may cause undue hardship or complication for desirable but unconventional development, and to establish standards and procedures for the issuance of a special use permit (section 110-31, special uses) for a PUD in order to achieve the following objectives: 1. To stimulate creative approaches to residential, commercial and industrial development of land. 2. To provide for more efficient use of land. 3. To preserve or enhance natural features and provide open space areas. Sec. 110-252. - Modification of district regulations. Sec. 110-253. - General standards and criteria for PUDs. Sec. 110-254. - Permitted uses and density. Kendra Elion with Elion Business Center, LLC d.b.a. Mothers Little Helper Learning Center was present to answer questions. Steve Howlett, current building owner, was also present. Motion made by McKibben, seconded by Myers, **"I move the Planning and Zoning Commission close the Public Hearing."** Ayes: Colwill, Hickey, McKibben, Myers, Bowerman and Wolter. Nays: None. Motion carried 6-0.

**Findings: Special Use**

1. Is the proposed use allowed in the proposed zoning district, but only with a special use permit?  
Yes: 6 No: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is the proposed special use detrimental or dangerous to public health?  
Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: 6
3. Will the proposed special use impair property value in the neighborhood?  
Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: 6
4. Will the proposed special use impede the normal development of the surrounding properties?  
Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: 6
5. Will the proposed special use:
  - (a) impair light and air to adjacent property;
  - (b) congest public streets;
  - (c) increase the risk of fire;
  - (d) substantially diminish property values within the vicinity; or

(e) endanger the public health?

Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: 6

Based on the report of findings above, the Planning and Zoning Commission hereby recommends to the Rochelle City Council: That the Petitioner be granted a special use permit for the proposed use at the Subject Property, without conditions other than the other applicable requirements of the Rochelle Municipal Code.

Motion made by McKibben, seconded by Hickey, **"I move the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend to the City Council that it Approve the proposed special use for a childcare center in a PUD - Planned Unit Development zoning district for the property located at 450 E. Coronado Drive, based on the report of findings."** Ayes: Colwill, Hickey, McKibben, Myers, Bowerman and Wolter. Nays: None. Motion carried 6-0.

**PZC-05-25 Petition of Willis Senior Lofts for a variance of setback and vision clearance for a fence for the property located at 410 Willis Ave.** Pease stated that a notice was published in the paper and property owners were notified. Motion made by Myers, seconded by Hickey, **"I move the Planning and Zoning Commission open the Public Hearing regarding the proposed variance of setbacks and vision clearance for a fence for the property located at 410 Willis Avenue."** Ayes: Colwill, Hickey, McKibben, Myers, Bowerman and

Wolter. Nays: None. Motion carried 6-0. The petitioner is seeking a variance of setbacks to construct a proposed five-foot black vinyl coated chain link fence, including three 6' wide walk gates beyond the building line at 410 Willis Avenue. The property is zoned R5, Multi Family High Density Residential. The petitioner is requesting to extend the fence beyond the building line from the northeast corner of the building, east up to the public sidewalk, south parallel along the public sidewalk, then west along the entrance drive, then back north to the rear southeast corner of the building. Sec. 110-545- Residential, Security and Farm Fences (1). On corner lots, no fence or wall will extend beyond the street setback requirements, or building line, whichever is greater. The petitioner's request for a variance from Sec. 110-545 is to "ensure the safety of their residents and the general public" by fencing around the stormwater detention area to prevent someone from accidentally entering. This is a senior apartment building that will run 24/7 and will have two employees. A site manager and a building technician. The building will have 60 units (45 one-bedroom units and 15 two-bedroom units). Sec. 110-58 Vision Clearance Triangle - In each quadrant of every intersection of any arterial street shown on the city's comprehensive plan or master plan and any other streets not located in the B-1 central business district with a private or public driveway or accessway or alley providing egress for parking area of 1,000 square feet or more, there shall be designed a vision clearance triangle, bounded by the inner street lines (right-of-way), or the street line and driveway lines, as the case may be, and a line connecting them 25 feet from their intersection. Within this triangle no object shall be allowed above the height of 2.5 feet above the streets and/or driveways if it obstructs the view across the triangle. This provision shall not apply to tree trunks, posts or wire fences. Although the petitioner is requesting a five-foot fence within the vision clearance triangle, the material of the proposed fence is chain link, which could be considered a wire fence and would therefore be excluded from the provisions of section 110-58. The chain link fence should not present a hazard or obstruction of vision. Mariela Martinez with VP Architecture was present to represent Willis Senior Lofts and answer any questions. Motion made by Myers, seconded by Colwill, **"I move the Planning and Zoning Commission close the Public Hearing."** Ayes: Colwill, Hickey, McKibben, Myers, Bowerman and Wolter. Nays: None. Motion carried 6-0.

**Findings:**

1. Is the proposed variance allowed in the proposed zoning district?  
Yes: 6 No: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is the proposed variance detrimental or dangerous to public health?  
Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: 6
3. Will the proposed variance impair property value in the neighborhood?  
Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: 6
4. Will the proposed variance impede the normal development of the surrounding properties?  
Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: 6
5. Will the proposed variance:
  - (a) impair light and air to adjacent property;
  - (b) congest public streets;
  - (c) increase the risk of fire;
  - (d) substantially diminish property values within the vicinity; or
  - (e) endanger the public health?Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: 6

Based on the findings above, the Planning and Zoning Commission hereby recommends to the Rochelle City Council that: the Petitioner be granted a variance for the proposed use at the Subject Property, without conditions other than the other applicable requirements of the Rochelle Municipal Code. Motion made by McKibben, seconded by Hickey, **"I move the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend to the City Council that it Approve the proposed variance of setbacks and vision clearance for a fence for the property located at 410 Willis Avenue, based on the report of findings."** Ayes: Colwill, Hickey, McKibben, Myers, Bowerman and Wolter. Nays: None. Motion carried 6-0.

**PZC-07-25 Petition of Rochelle Solar, LLC for a special use for the construction and operation of a utility scale solar farm for parcel number 25-18-100-009.** Pease stated that a notice was published in the paper and property owners were notified. Motion made by Myers, seconded by Hickey, **"I move the Planning and Zoning Commission open the Public Hearing regarding the proposed special use for the construction and operation of a utility scale solar farm for parcel number 25-18-100-009."** Ayes: Colwill, Hickey, McKibben, Myers, Bowerman and Wolter. Nays: None. Motion carried 6-0. Rochelle Solar entered into an annexation agreement for 87.89 +/- acres with the City of Rochelle at the southeast corner of Twombly Road and North Caron proposed extension road (part of parcel 25-18-100-009) to develop a solar farm. The property was zoned RD, Rural Development at the time of annexation, which requires a special use for a Solar Farm. A special use was granted at that time as follows: Conditions of the special use for a solar farm would include the following:

- 1) Dedication of City easements (15' width minimum), as approved by the City Engineer, for a shared use path along the westerly boundary of the subdivision.
- 2) Dedication of right-of-way (ROW), as approved by the City Engineer, along the southerly and northerly boundary lines of the subdivision for existing and/or future roadway or utility improvements or extensions along Twombly Rd and future Flagg Road east of Caron Road.
- 3) Posting of the necessary surety as per the City Engineers estimate of cost for said roadway and/or utility improvements (ie, public improvements) and as per section 86-51 through 86-56 of the Rochelle Municipal Code in the amount of \$1,125,000. If the developer/petitioner fails to complete the improvements the City may draw upon the surety and use said funds for the public improvements within the ROW.
- 4) Dedication of a City/drainage easement for the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) also known as the floodplain/floodway as depicted on the FEMA FIRM maps #17141C0483E City of Rochelle and Ogle County effective dated 8/17/2016.
- 5) The internal light duty maintenance driveways may be chip sealed due to the limited Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 10 vehicles per day (VPD) within the solar field perimeter. However, any and all access driveways from Twombly Road or other City owned ROW's shall meet the requirements for driveway approaches from a street and hard surfacing of driveway as measured 130 feet from the applicable ROW line.
- 6) All final site plans and applications for permits shall be reviewed and approved by City staff as the development proceeds forward in accordance with the Rochelle Municipal Code except as may be varied from herein.
- 7) All landscaping shall be maintained by the petitioner/developer in accordance with all Rochelle Municipal Codes and as required by City staff. Annual inspections shall be performed by City staff to determine if damaged, dead or diseased plantings need to be removed and replaced to ensure the landscape buffer remains as shown on the plan.
- 8) All stormwater impact fees, in accordance with Chapter 22 of the Rochelle Municipal Code, shall be paid at \$1300/Acre of the subdivision prior to the issuance of a special use permit or recording of the Final Plat of the Rochelle Northeast Subdivision.

Rochelle Solar later petitioned to add the terms of 40 years to their special use for a solar farm. By adding these terms, the language of their special use was consistent with the language in their annexation

agreement. More than three years have passed since the original special use was granted and the petitioner has not moved forward with the project; therefore, they are now required to apply for a new special use. The petitioner, Rochelle Solar, is requesting a special use with the same conditions as previously granted. Jim Rodriguez, Attorney with Crow Law, LLC and Jacqueline Fedida with Greenbacker Capital were present to answer any questions. Fedida did explain that construction would not begin until 2028. Motion made by Bowerman, seconded by Hickey, **“I move the Planning and Zoning Commission close the Public Hearing.”** Ayes: Colwill, Hickey, McKibben, Myers, Bowerman and Wolter. Nays: None. Motion carried 6-0.

**Findings: Special Use**

1. Is the proposed use allowed in the proposed zoning district, but only with a special use permit?

Yes: 6 No:         

2. Is the proposed special use detrimental or dangerous to public health?

Yes:          No: 6

3. Will the proposed special use impair property value in the neighborhood?

Yes:          No: 6

4. Will the proposed special use impede the normal development of the surrounding properties?

Yes:          No: 6

5. Will the proposed special use:

- (a) impair light and air to adjacent property;
- (b) congest public streets;
- (c) increase the risk of fire;
- (d) substantially diminish property values within the vicinity; or
- (e) endanger the public health?

Yes:          No: 6

Based on the findings above, the Planning and Zoning Commission hereby recommends to the Rochelle City Council that: the Petitioner be granted a special use permit for the proposed use at the Subject Property, with the following conditions attached thereto, in addition to the requirements of the Rochelle Municipal Code:

1. Dedication of City easements (15' width minimum), as approved by the City Engineer, for a shared use path along the easterly boundary of the subdivision.

2. Dedication of right-of-way (ROW), as approved by the City Engineer, along the southerly and northerly boundary lines of the subdivision for existing and/or future roadway or utility improvements or extensions along Twombly Rd and future Flagg Road east of Caron Road.

3. Posting of the necessary surety as per the City Engineers estimate of cost for said roadway and/or utility improvements (ie, public improvements) and as per section 86-51 through 86-56 of the Rochelle Municipal Code in the amount of \$1,100,000. If the developer/petitioner fails to complete the improvements the City may draw upon the surety and use said funds for the public improvements within the ROW.

4. Dedication of a City/drainage easement for the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) also known as the floodplain/floodway as depicted on the FEMA FIRM maps #17141C0483E City of Rochelle and Ogle County effective dated 8/17/2016.

5. The internal light duty maintenance driveways may be chip sealed due to the limited Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 10 vehicles per day (VPD) within the solar field perimeter. However, any and all access driveways from Twombly Road or other City owned ROW's shall meet the requirements for driveway approaches from a street and hard surfacing of driveway as measured 130 feet from the applicable ROW line.

6. All final site plans and applications for permits shall be reviewed and approved by City staff as the development proceeds forward in accordance with the Rochelle Municipal Code except as may be varied from herein.

7. All landscaping shall be maintained by the petitioner/developer in accordance with all Rochelle Municipal Codes and as required by City staff. Annual inspections shall be performed by City staff to

determine if damaged, dead or diseased plantings need to be removed and replaced to ensure the landscape buffer remains as shown on the plan.

8) All stormwater impact fees, in accordance with Chapter 22 of the Rochelle Municipal Code, shall be paid at \$1300/Acre of the subdivision prior to the issuance of a special use permit or recording of the Final Plat of the Rochelle Northeast Subdivision.

9) 40 year term for the use of a solar farm.

Motion made by Myers, seconded by McKibben, **“I move the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend to the City Council that it Approve the proposed special use for the construction and operation of a utility scale solar farm for the parcel number 25-18-100-009, based on the report of findings.”** Ayes: Colwill, Hickey, McKibben, Myers, Bowerman and Wolter. Nays: None. Motion carried 6-0.

**VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS:** None

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT:** Motion made by Myers, seconded by Hickey, **“I move to adjourn the regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission of May 5, 2025.”** Ayes: Colwill, Hickey, McKibben, Myers, Bowerman and Wolter. Nays: None. Motion carried 6-0. The Planning and Zoning Commission adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Michelle Knight  
Community Development Specialist