



Town of Westminster

MASSACHUSETTS 01473
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
PLANNING BOARD

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Jon Wyman, chairman

Marie N. Auger, vice chairman

Dan Barkus

Andrew Rice

Linda Wiest

July 10, 2018

Planning Board Meeting Minutes - Meeting Room 222

Members present: Jon Wyman, Andrew Rice, Linda Wiest, Dan Barkus and Town Planner, Stephen Wallace.

Staff: Andrea Mastro, Recording Secretary

Additional Attendees: Steve Ballard, Chris Mossman, Paul Aldrich, Paula Michaud, Darlene Wildes, Ross Barber, Matt Costa, Pat, Keith Akers, Abby Pices, Larry Beals, Paul & Paula Perla, Pamela Duval, Elizabeth Thompson, Jon Hanson, Ron L'Ecuyer, Heidi & Petry Puutio, Gweneth Shopalovich and Ernest Russell.

J. Wyman, Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00PM and informed those present the meeting was being recorded.

First order of business, D. Barkus made a motion to accept the minutes for June 12, 2018, L. Wiest seconded, All in favor, motion carried (4-0)

Next order of business: ANR plan for Lead the Way Development Corporation, lot line adjustment for two lots on Worcester Road. The lot lines are being moved to allow for the entire driveway to be located on lot B. The Town Planner noted the Building Commissioner was good with the adjusted plan.

A. Rice made a motion to endorse the plan, L. Wiest seconded, all in favor, motion carried (4-0)

Next order of business: ANR plan for Jason Guertin and Patricia Casey, lot line adjustment with abutter for 236 & 238 Bragg Hill Road. S. Ballard presented the plan. L. Wiest made a motion to endorse the plan as presented, D. Barkus seconded, all in favor, motion carried (4-0)

Next on the agenda: ANR plan for JEKN LLC, lot line adjustment for two properties on Minott Road. C. Mossman explained the line is being moved to accommodate the septic system setback. D. Barkus made a motion to endorse the plan as presented, L. Wiest seconded, all in favor, motion carried (4-0)

Next on the agenda, continued Public Hearing for fill permit for property located at 39 Carter Road. The Town Planner stated the revised plan has not been submitted.

L. Wiest made a motion to continue the public hearing until July 24, 2018,
D. Barkus seconded, All in favor, motion carried (4-0)

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Next order of business, the Planning Board to vote on the removal of a parcel at 88 State Road West from 61 B land.

D. Barkus made a motion not to exercise the Right of First Refusal, A. Rice seconded, all in favor, motion carried (4-0)

Next order of business, The Town Planner's report for June.

Last order of business, Site Plan review for Syncarpha Solar Westminster, LLC and JP Dell, LLC for a ground-mount solar array on Bean Porridge Hill Road. D. Barkus will abstain from questions/comments, he is an abutter.

L. Beals presented the project and stated the following aspects of the project;

- The entire parcel is 113 acres.
- The Solar Array will be on a 35 acre parcel in the corner of the large parcel.
- There are wetlands within the Array
- The Array will be a maximum of 5 megawatts.
- There will be 19 acres of panels
- The access road will be off Bean Porridge Hill Road.
- The access road will be gravel.
- There are two service roads.
- There will be a 7 foot chain link fence around the perimeter of the Array with a 4 inch gap at the bottom.
- The 3 transformers will be pad mounted.
- The panels are fixed panels.
- The signage will be on the fence near access gate.
- The Array vegetation/grounds will be maintained a few times a year.
- There is a Stormwater Management System implemented.

The Town Planner asked if the panels were non-reflective. L. Beals stated yes.

The Town Planner read the comments from the other Town departments into the minutes, they are as follows;

- The DPW will require a driveway permit for the access road.
- The DPW will require the access road to have a paved apron from the street to the property line.
- Conservation Commission determined no Order of Conditions is required.
- The Mass DEP will issue a Superseding Negative Determination.
- The Fire Department requires a knox box cabinet on the front with emergency contact information and a commercial grade box on the rear gate.
- Tetra-Tech will review the site plan, stormwater management and decommissioning plan.

The Town Planner asked if Syncarpha Solar has received the Interconnection Service Agreement. K. Akers stated it was in process.

L. Wiest asked what was involved in the site preparation. L. Beals stated there will be tree removal and some rough grading.

L. Wiest asked what the life expectancy is for the Array. K. Akers of Syncarpha Solar noted the panels can have a warranty up to 30 years. He also noted they have a 20 year lease on the property with 3 optional 5 years extensions.

L. Wiest asked what will be done when the Array wears out. K. Akers stated they will then decommission the Array. A. Rice asked what the cost of the decommissioning would be.

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K. Akers stated approximately \$36,000 but Tetra-Tech will need to review the decommissioning plan.

K. Akers noted 2 key points of the project. First the Array is a Community Solar project which is promoted by the DOER (Department of Energy Resources) and the DPU (Department of Public Utilities) and enables residents and any National Grid customers the opportunity to receive a discount on their electricity through a contract agreement.

The Town Planner asked how the residents are notified of this discount benefit. K. Akers stated they can put a link on the website or use community events to reach out to the residents.

Secondly Syncarpha Solar put an article on the Annual Town Meeting warrant for a PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) agreement with the Town. The agreement will have Syncarpha Solar pay \$5000 per megawatt (mW) DC power per year.

A. Rice questioned the batteries on site. K. Akers stated the batteries are for energy storage and are part of a SMART (Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target) program through the DOER (Department of Energy Resources) and the DPU (Department of Public Utilities).

J. Wyman asked what National Grid will have to do to get the power there. K. Akers stated the poles are there but it is only single phase power and will have to be converted to three phase power at the expense of Syncarpha Solar.

Public Comments:

A resident asked about the noise being emitted from the Array. K. Akers stated the panels don't move, only the inverter and the transformer make noise during the day. K. Akers stated the noise is inaudible. The Town Planner stated the Board of Health which regulates noise has visited the other arrays in Town and in the surrounding areas and don't have an issue with the noise emitted.

A resident asked how long the construction would take. K. Akers stated 5 months and it is done in stages and the truck traffic is not constant.

A resident had concerns with children getting into the Array. K. Akers noted there is no chance of electrocution if the panels were touched.

A resident had concerns with the stumps. K. Akers stated the stumps will be ground down.

A resident had questioned the wiring. K. Akers noted the wiring is all underground.

A resident had concerns with the setback of the Array from the street and would like the Board to reconsider the requirement. The Town Planner and the Board discussed the issue. The Town Planner will look into putting together a solar power bylaw.

A resident had concerns with the tree-line along Bean Porridge Hill Road and the lack of low level landscaping. L. Beals noted the concern and will look into the change.

A. Rice made a motion to continue the public hearing until 7:15 pm July 24, 2018,
L. Wiest seconded, All in favor, motion carried (3-0)

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

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