

NORTHFIELD PLANNING BOARD

THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2021

PUBLIC HEARING - 4:00PM

REMOTE LOCATION

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Chair Stephen Seredynski (SS), Joe Graveline (JG), Meg Riordan (MR), Tammy Pelletier (TP), Homer Stavely (HS)

Members Absent: none

Others in Attendance: Beth Greenblatt, Cate Woolner, Beth Bazler, Jenny Tufts, Jane Kilgore, Mike Zimmer, Eugene L'Etoile, Bonnie L'Etoile, Jackie Firsty, Joe Strzegowski, Theodore Bakas, Nathan L'Etoile, Bee Jacque, Peggy Kocoras, Jesse Robertson-DuBois, Rich Holschuh, Jerry Scott, Zack DeLuca, George Pervere, Ann Pervere, Deb Giard, Melissa Gamache, Rachel Beck, Chad Nichols, Tom McDonald, Kris McDonald, Rich Riccio, Drew Pierson, Mike Marsch, Sydney Yonack, Tom Shearer, Pat Shearer, Madison Porter, Jood AlShirawi, Tracy Norman, Chris Kalinowski.

I. CALL TO ORDER

[This meeting was not called to order during the recorded portion of the meeting; MR called the meeting to order at 4:02, prior to beginning the recording]

***II. SITE PLAN REVIEW AND SPECIAL PERMIT: MAP 53, LOT E1 7 MAP 54, LOT B7
0 PINE MEADOW ROAD, AKA : ARRAY "A"***

MR reminded attendees that this is a public hearing. The Planning Board will not make a decision on the project at this meeting.

MR reviewed a list of documents the Planning Board has received since the February 18, 2021 public hearing.

SS noted the Planning Board received revised plans for this array.

SS announced the Planning Board received a request to read a list of questions at this public hearing. Under advisement from town officials, SS will not read those questions during the public hearing. Those questions were shared with all Planning Board members, and are on permanent record at Town Hall.

Jackie Firsty, representing the applicants, reported on recent work she has done with a variety of stakeholders, and possible changes to the plans.

Rich Riccio of Field Engineering shared a document detailing revisions to the Array A plan. He noted the changes to the point of interconnection, and provided details, including the historical and archaeological considerations.

Jackie noted the applicants are submitting a notification of the project to the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Once they receive a response, they will share it with the Planning Board.

SS mentioned a possible MOU/MOA with the town's Historical Commission and the Abenaki representatives. A discussion on this subject ensued.

A discussion among the Planning Board, the board's consultant, Beth Greenblatt, and the applicants ensued. Subjects included:

- Possible effects on the soils beneath the proposed array, and during decommissioning.
- Geological surveys and geotechnical reports.
- Organic certification.
- Crop cover.
- Land management and stewardship practices.
- Research, data, and practicalities regarding farming and crop management under solar arrays.
- The construction process, including staging areas.
- Plans for minimizing soil compaction on this dual-use project.
- Operation and maintenance plans for the solar panels, and who is responsible for monitoring conditions.
- Fire-suppression plans for the site, and the involvement of the Northfield Fire Department.
- The height of snow piles and their effect on soil compaction and erosion.
- The solar panels' drip-edges and their effect on erosion, and observations of this effect on other existing arrays.
- The access road to the array.

SS opened up discussion to the public on Solar Array A. A discussion ensued among the Planning Board, Beth Greenblatt, the applicants, and members of the public.

Subjects included:

- The access road.
- Stormwater runoff.
- Trenches.
- Tree removal.
- Grass.
- Tillage and plowing.
- Removal of underground components after decommissioning.
- Concrete pads.
- A decommissioning fund.
- Disposal fees for decommissioning.
- Trees and shrubs.
- Grazing areas.
- Site visits.
- That this is a better use of this land than an array of "McMansions."
- The new owners of the solar array, and their relationship with abutters and the Planning Board.

SS closed public comment.

III. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

SS scheduled a deliberative hearing when the Planning Board will vote on the entire project. It is tentatively for Thursday, April 1, 2021 at 4pm, contingent upon the applicants submitting additional

information on the alternative plans for the interconnection point. Beth recommended the applicants submit this information—and the response from the Massachusetts DEP—to the Planning Board a week in advance of the April 1 meeting. Jackie and Rich noted that this is contingent upon EverSource providing information to them about poles along Pine Meadow Road.

If the Planning Board has not received this information in time, the alternative meeting date is at the Planning Board's regularly-scheduled meeting on Thursday, April 15, 2021, at 4pm.

SS asked the Planning Board for their opinion on which interconnection plan they prefer. A discussion ensued on the appearance of the project visible by abutters, including poles, topography, tree clearing, and how EverSource relates to this. SS noted he prefers plans that have the least visible effect on abutters. MR and TP agreed. HS and JG abstained from deciding because they wanted more information.

HS asked about archaeological surveys. Jackie reported they are trying to secure the services of one, but with springtime, they are in-demand. Thus, this information will not likely be submitted by the deliberative meeting, but the process can include stipulations about that. A discussion ensued.

IV. ADJOURN

MOTION BY JG TO ADJOURN. SS SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 6:18pm.

Respectfully submitted by Wendy M. Levy from minutes taken by Wendy M. Levy.

Approves 4/15/2021 [Signature] - Chair