

MINUTES
Business Meeting
Sanbornton Planning Board

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, January 21st 2021 at 7:00 PM

Meeting Place: By Teleconference only

The meeting was called to order by Chair Andy Sanborn at 7:00 PM

Roll Call

Regular Members present: Will Ellis, Don Bormes (arrived late), Selectman John Olmstead, Andy Sanborn, Jody Slack

Alternate Members present: Tom Lynch, Kalena Graham (seated as voting member as Don Bormes was in late)

Others Present: Town Planning Assistant, Stephen Laurin

Minutes of 1/7– Selectman Olmstead made a motion to approve the draft minutes of 1/7 with corrections. Jody Slack seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously with votes as follows: Sanborn/Yes; Graham/Yes; Olmstead/Yes; Bormes/Yes; Slack/Yes

Old Business

a. Site Plan Application continued from 12/17/2020 - Property Owner/Applicant Guy J. Jr. & Marie Giunta, and Anthony & Joseph Giunta/Michael Redding of New England Solar Garden; 63 and 71 Tower Hill Rd, Tax Map 22/Lots 14, 19-2, 19-3 and 19-5; proposal for ground-mounted solar arrays for generation of 13 mW of solar power.

The Planning Board's engineer, Kevin Leonard walked through his technical review comments on previously submitted plans for this project. Michael Redding stated that the special exception application to the ZBA for access road construction in wetlands ended up being postponed until Planning Board approval at the request of the ZBA. Audry (ZBA Clerk) stated that this was not at the request of the ZBA but of the applicant. Chair Sanborn stated that he does agree that this should receive approval at Planning Board first rather than being passed back and forth. It was agreed that a special exception from the ZBA will be a conditional approval item for the Planning Board. Wetland areas of concern related to the special exception will be shown on the new plans per Michael.

Michael stated the new plans outline Parsonage Brook. Conservation Commission Chair Brady Crosby explained that he does not see any issues with the proposal and believes it is a good use of the property as long as best management practices are used. Michael stated that the Alteration of Terrain permit requires a wildlife habitat and vernal pool assessment but these will need to be done in the spring. He noted the AOT permit is extensive and would be above and beyond and local regulations; he requested that the AOT permit also be part of the conditional approval. Will stated that he feels the applicant is putting off providing information until after approval. Selectman Olmstead stated that a conditional approval means that an approval isn't granted until certain conditions are met so he does not see an issue with this; Kalena agreed. Don noted that that the Board cannot deny an application because of a pending permit with the State. Clay Mitchell of NE Solar Garden explained that they planned on getting some of these studies done last spring but this was difficult due to the pandemic and not being able to get a scientist for the job.

Historic District Commission Chair Franz Vail stated that there are no solar panels in the Historic District but the Commission is concerned about visual impact of the stormwater management basin which is in the district. Michael responded that there will be some berming

that can be seen but this will be vegetative, along with plantings and fencing but no other structural components.

Will asked if the HSD has concerns about upgraded poles through the Historic District. Franz responded that he doesn't believe the Commission has any authority over poles as this is in the public utility's purview and could be upgraded at any time as the utility sees fit. Jody asked if Michael has an idea of what this will look like; Michael responded that this would be discussed with the utility as part of the interconnect agreement which has been discussed as an item of conditional approval. He did note that the HSD could have input on this; Andy requested that any information they could have before the approval regarding this would be helpful. Michael agreed to reach out to the utility about this.

Tree and shrub alignment and species will be shown on the plan per Michael. Kevin explained that soil scientist Randy Shuey who has spoken with the Board before will want to have input on the plans; they should meet the requirements of Article 4M of the Zoning Ordinance. Michael stated that storage will be shown on the revised plan as well as contours, access roads and proposed grading details. An operation maintenance safety plan has been submitted to the Fire Dept; Chief Paul Dexter stated he has no issues and supports the proposal.

Michal stated square footage of solar arrays will be shown as well as more details for screening. Color of the poly screening should be shown as well per Kevin and this will be addressed on the plan as well. The solar array showing in the Historical Preservation zone will be removed. Members did not require that buffering needs to be located around the Highway garage on Hunkins Pond Rd. The cemetery in the southeast corner of the property should be shown on the plan and no construction is allowed within 25' of the property, and Michael agreed to identify this on the plan.

Will stated that Michael had previously offered to show on Google Earth what the arrays would look like from certain angles; Michael stated that he can provide this if the Board provides addresses to use. Clay explained that he will check with Eversource about providing input from the Historic District before approval, as well as timing of getting vernal pool/habitat assessment completed. Kalena asked when new plans will actually be submitted and Michael responded that they should be available late next week. Kevin will then review those and provide comments for the February meeting.

Kalena Graham made a motion to continue the public hearing to February 18th. Selectman Olmstead seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously with votes as follows:

Sanborn/Yes; Graham/Yes; Olmstead/Yes; Bormes/Yes; Slack/Yes

Other Business

a. Belmont notices – Steve provided a notice from the Belmont ZBA; Chair Sanborn asked if members want to spend time hearing this information in the future and suggested only presenting notices if they are projects of regional impact.

b. NH Housing Appeal Board – Steve explained that this new board is available to speak to the Planning Board regarding their role in hearing PB/ZBA appealed cases that normally would go to superior court. Members agreed that this was a good idea and Steve will put on the agenda for the February 4th workshop meeting.

c. Agenda items – Fire Chief Paul Dexter commented that some of the PB future agenda items include issues that will be of concern for his department, mainly short-term rentals, home

occupation levels I and II and driveway regulations. Chair Sanborn stated that the Board is working on chipping away at these items and will take his comments under advisement.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 4th 2021 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Audry Barriault