

DRAFT
TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT
MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, 13 January, 2020

I. Call to Order by Vice-Chair, Paul Tillman at 7:12pm
Planning Commission: Howard Beach, Sven Fedorow (Land Use Administrator), Paul Tillman, Michael Todd, Julia Lloyd Wright (Energy Coordinator, ex-officio)

Visitors: Fred Kowalik, Nikita Lenahan (Residents)

II. Agenda Review - 13 January, 2020

A motion was made by Michael Todd to move Item 5. Proposed 500kW solar project: 1465 Route 106/Waters, Developer: Green Lantern Solar to Item 4. Seconded by Howard Beach. Voted: Unanimously

III. Comments from Citizens - None

V. Proposed 500kW solar project: 1465 Route 106/Walters, Developer: Green Lantern Solar
On 25 November, 2019 at a Planning Commission hearing, Ralph Meima, Green Lantern Solar Director of Development, introduced a proposed 500kW installation off Route 106 in Perkinsville. Green Lantern are seeking a "Preferred Site" letter from the Town Planning Commission when the company files for a Certificate of Public Good with the PUC (Public Utility Commission).

At a regular meeting on 9 December, 2019 the Commission reviewed the request from Green Lantern Solar and unanimously passed a motion withholding their support. Land Use Administrator, Sven Fedorow was instructed to write a letter conveying the decision not to support the "Pegasus" site for a solar project. Vice-Chair Paul Tillman asked Ralph Meima if Green Lantern had hired an attorney for the project, they have hired a general counsel for their projects but not retained a law firm. Sven Fedorow confirmed that the issue has not been submitted to the Town attorney.

Ralph Meima said that none of the in-depth analyses regarding natural resources impacts and aesthetics had been completed and would need to be reviewed, the same would need to be undertaken for historic impacts. If neighbors have screening concerns that would need to be discussed.

By the Town designating the "Pegasus" property as a "Preferred Site" Ralph Meima said it "...does not lock the Town into supporting the project." It allows the Town to approve a location that is not a superfund site. By denying Green Lantern a preferred status the Town "effectively eliminates the possibility" of the property being used for a solar project. Sven Fedorow said the Town has not approved the State Energy Plan. Designating preferred sites throughout the town the town loses a trump card which can have an impact and it is very important tool it retains as to what would not be a preferred site. He cited scenarios that need to be put in place such as installing solar panels over wetlands and how the Town can determine that.

Ralph Meima called the town decision "unfair and arbitrary" treating the private property and the Town's property in terms of "Preferred Sites" differently and denying taxpayers the same benefits from lease payments and Green Lantern could possibly look at another area at the site.

The Town has two 500kW solar applications currently under review with the PUC.

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes - 9 December, 2019

A motion was made by Michael Todd to approve the Minutes of 9 December, 2019, seconded by Howard Beach. Voted: Unanimously.

VI. Zoning Bylaw Updates

- (a) Conservation of Natural Resources bylaw
 - Riparian buffers
- (b) Changes to zoning map/districts

Jason Rasmussen, Senior Planner, (SWCRPC) Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission will update the the Town Zoning map when all the proposed changes have been received.

- (c) Evaluation of and possible changes to definitions in zoning bylaws

VII. Bylaw updates - Status spreadsheet review

VIII. Next meeting agenda - 27 January, 2020

- Proposed 500kW solar project, 1465 Rte. 106/ Walters
- Zoning Bylaw Updates, (a) Conservation of Natural Resources bylaw - riparian buffers (b)

Change to zoning map/districts (c) Evaluation of and possible changes to definitions in zoning bylaws.

- Bylaw updates - Status spreadsheet review
- Planning - part/time position - scan docs - digitize for Planning Office

IX. Adjourn

A motion was made by Michel Todd to adjourn at 8:30pm, seconded by Howard Beach.