

FINAL
TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT
MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, 25 November, 2019

I. Call to Order by Vice-Chair, Paul Tillman at 7:08pm

Planning Commission: Howard Beach, Sven Fedorow (Land Use Administrator), Tyler Harwell, Paul Tillman, Michael Todd, Julia Lloyd Wright (Energy Coordinator, ex-officio)

Visitors: Fred Kowalik, (Resident), Ralph Meima, (Director of Development, Green Lantern Solar Group)

II. Agenda Review - 25 November, 2019

A motion was made by Howard Beach to move Item VI. Bylaw hearing to Item III. and move Item

V. Proposed 500kW solar project: 1465 Route 106/Walters, Developer: Green Lantern Solar to Item IV., seconded by Michael Todd. Voted: Unanimously.

VI. Bylaw hearing:

- (1) Removal of "Contractor's Storage" use
- (2) Signs
- (3) Outdoor Lighting
- (4) Waivers
- (5) Small Enterprise
- (6) Formula Businesses
- (7) Off-Street Parking
- (8) Home-Based Occupation and Home-Based Business

Paul Tillman opened the Public Hearing at 7:14pm and read the Notice of Public Hearing: In accordance with the provisions of 24 V.S.A. s/s4441(d) and 4444, of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, the Planning Commission for the Town of Weathersfield, Vermont, will hold a public hearing on Monday, November 25, 2019, at 7:00P.M., in the Weathersfield Town Office, at 5259 Route 5 in Ascutney, Vermont, to hear public comment on the adoption of the following bylaws:

- (1) Removal of "Contractor's Storage" use
- (2) Signs
- (3) Outdoor Lighting
- (4) Waivers
- (5) Small Enterprise
- (6) Formula Businesses
- (7) Off-Street Parking
- (8) Home-Based Occupation and Home-Based Business

Statement of Purpose

The Planning Commission is proposing the above listed bylaws in order to better achieve the objectives in the 2017 Weathersfield Town Plan, and revitalize the village centers in Ascutney and Perkinsville, areas that have been identified in the Plan as growth centers.

Geographic Areas Affected

The entire Town of Weathersfield is affected by this amendment.

Sections Headings

Amendment and adoption of the foregoing Bylaws.

Persons wishing to be heard may do so in person, be represented by an agent, or may file written comments with the Planning Commission prior to the hearing.

Dated at Town of Weathersfield, Windsor County, State of Vermont, this 7th day of November, 2019.

Sven Fedorow said there had been no notices received and no public comments.

At 7:30pm Paul Tillman left to attend another meeting. Clerk, Howard Beach, took over to Chair the meeting leaving the hearing open.

V. Proposed 500kW solar project: 1465 Route 106/Walters Developer: Green Lantern Solar
Ralph Meima, Director of Development for Green Lantern Solar Group, from Brattleboro, Vermont introduced the Commission to several projects the company has completed in the area working with municipalities and commercial offices. He said he met Brian Walters, owner of the proposed Route 106 site, in March. The Commission reviewed an array sketch of the site on the west side of the property showing new power poles and access to the array and perimeter fence with class II wetland buffers. Ralph Meima said the company was not ready to begin the 45-day notice for the PUC (Public Utility Commission). He is looking for a 'Preferred Site' letter from the Weathersfield Planning Commission for this net-metered project.

Sven Fedorow said the Commission might want to take into consideration the Town Plan and the Zoning Bylaws and Michael Todd added that there might be a meeting with townspeople. There have been meetings regarding the Enhanced Energy Plan with The Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission but the Town has not signed off on it. Discussions have centered on whether the Town should designate certain areas for solar development inviting installers to consider such sites or wait to review such proposals. Visitor Fred Kowalik, who abuts a town solar project on Route 106, said he has concerns regarding sites that are visible from Route 106.

Michael Todd said the PUC does not require bonding for decommissioning solar sites and asked Ralph Meima what his plans are. The Town has already required a bond for their own two sites. Discussion covered the pros and cons of designating preferred sites, does the Town have zoning for projects and have a say in the project or would preferred sites open it up to all sorts of projects and how much solar does the town want to develop?

It was agreed that Sven Fedorow will set a time and date for members of the Commission to make a site visit to the proposed project on Route 106. Ralph Meima said an aesthetic analysis will be done, and there is a role for solar in the state with the installations of heat pumps.

A date and time for the site visit was set for Wednesday, December 4, 2019 at 8:30am and Sven Fedorow will notify landowner Brian Walters.

Michael Todd said he was not opposed to projects but wants to do it right.

VI. Bylaw hearing contd.

Howard Beach closed the Hearing at 8:40pm.

There were no members of the public present and no written comments were received.

Michael Todd made a motion for Item VI. Bylaws (1 through 8) on the Agenda to be accepted and moved to the selectboard for their approval, seconded by Tyler Harwell. Voted: Unanimously.

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes - 12 November, 2019

A motion was made by Michael Todd to approve the Minutes of 12 November, 2019, seconded by Tyler Harwell. Voted: Unanimously.

IX. Next Meeting Agenda - 9 December, 2019

Zoning Bylaw Updates

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

Bylaw updates - Status spreadsheet review

X. Adjourn

A motion was made by Michael Todd to adjourn at 8:55pm, seconded by Tyler Harwell. Voted: Unanimously