

DRAFT

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, 22 October, 2018

I. Call to Order - Chair, Nancy Heatley called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Introductions: Howard Beach, Sven Fedorow (Land Use Administrator), Nancy Heatley, Paul Tillman, Michael Todd, Julia Lloyd Wright (Energy Coordinator, ex-officio)

Visitors: Allen Tate (EDF Renewables) Dusty and Diane Hodgdon (Weathersfield Solar Partners, LLC); Allan and Jean Swanson, Skyline Drive Subdivision; Jeff Epstein, (Eagle Times); Ed Morris, (Town Manager)

II. Agenda Review - 22 October, 2018

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes - 9 October, 2018

A motion was made by Michael Todd to accept amended Minutes of 9 October, 2018, seconded by Howard Beach. Voted: Unanimously.

IV. Comments from Citizens

A motion was made by Michael Todd to move the comments to a later point in the meeting following item VIII., seconded by Howard Beach. Voted: Unanimously.

V. Zoning Bylaw Hearing - 7:15 PM

(1) Habitat Areas, (2) Renewable Energy, (3) Buildings, Structures, Building Height, Structure Height, Minor Structures, (4) Federal/State law clause

Chair, Nancy Heatley opened a Public Hearing on Zoning Bylaws for the Town of Weathersfield at 7:15 PM and read the Notice of Public Hearing dated Monday, 10/22/2018.

The Commission reviewed a brief explanation of the proposed bylaws with minor changes suggested by Sven Fedorow.

Chair, Nancy Heatley closed the hearing at 7:30pm.

There were no written comments received and no citizens appeared to comment during the hearing

A motion was made by Michael Todd to accept the amendments and move the bylaws (listed above) to the Selectboard including the report accompanying the bylaws dated 10/22/2018 as reviewed, seconded by Paul Tillman. Voted: Unanimously.

VIII. Zoning Bylaw Updates

- (a) Driveway/Private Road bylaw proposal: Review of West Windsor bylaw.

Commission members reviewed a copy of the West Windsor driveway bylaw and state standards and discussed access to private driveways and curb cuts. Sven Fedorow will draft a bylaw for the next meeting.

- (b) Noise bylaw/ordinance discussion (continued from 10 September meeting)

Various noise ordinances from Vermont towns were reviewed plus a copy of the Weathersfield Ordinance adopted on 18 December, 2008 was discussed. Sven

Fedorow said the selectboard are interested in noise bylaws but creating a bylaw requires a person assessing the complaint to have special training in the use of a decibel meter. Between three - four complaints are received a month by the Land Use Administrator, usually they involve shooting, dirt bikes and heavy machinery. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.

VI. Sketch Plan Review - 8:00 PM - Allan Swanson - Parcel #130102 - 482 Skyline Drive

Chair, Nancy Heatley ran through a reformatted copy of the Town Final Plat Checklist. The subdivision consists of a 50 acre parcel with an existing house and a 9 acre parcel for a proposed new house; the property is zoned RR 3-5 acres. The entire property is 300ft from a deer wintering area and the ag. soils are okay.

Allan Swanson said the 9 acre lot does not need a road or driveway as the two properties will use the same access with a covenant put in the deeds. A building envelope needs to go on the plat with the zoning setbacks, pins need to be set on the boundaries and a date will be set for the final plat review.

VII. Review of materials received in support of Weathersfield Solar Partners, LLC application for net-metered solar electric generation facility located off US Route 5

- (a) Excerpts from packet received from applicant attorneys.

Representative for EDF Renewables, Allen Tate, told the Commission that Green Mountain Power (GMP) has completed their study on the leased five-acre 500 kW net-metered solar array. EDF is looking for comments and feedback from the town. The group will clear three acres for the site, there will be no noise, there is only natural vegetation and screening is not necessary. Sven Fedorow said he had looked through the report for potential visibility indirect views. He questioned the sight from Route 5 which is a designated Scenic Byway.

Howard Beach also raised the question of wetlands in the area and asked about potential issues from a 'blowup' from transformers and safeguards from explosions and fluids and oil retainment. Tate said the solar panels are owned by GMP they may be sited on a pad or on a pole, there are no transformers and there will be an underground trench from the site for power cables.

When asked about the end of the project's life-span landowner Dusty Hodgdon said at the end of the 25-year contract "there will be none of it on the site" - panels and equipment will be removed.

Howard Beach asked about reclaiming the area and replanting trees, There is ledge in the area but vegetation will regrow. Sven Fedorow suggested in the Town's report to the State there be a recommendation for screening which is covered by language in the Town Plan.

A motion was made by Michael Todd to recommend 1) screening to eliminate sections of project visibility and 2) a surety bond to secure reclamation, seconded by Howard Beach. Voted: Unanimously.

Sven Fedorow will draft a letter to GMP.

IX. Proposals for next meeting agenda

- (a) Finalization of Zoning District sections
- (b) Zoning Bylaw Updates
  - (b) - Noise Ordinance and (c) River Corridor and flood areas
- (c) Setbacks in zoning districts for one-acre parcels in RR1

X. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn at 9:05pm was made by Howard Beach, seconded by Michael Todd. Voted: Unanimously.

