

LINCOLN PLANNING BOARD

SEPTEMBER 27, 2017

DRAFT MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Planning Board was held September 27, 2017. This meeting was at the Lincoln Town Hall, 100 Old River Road, Lincoln, Rhode Island.

Chairman Bostic called the meeting to order at 7: p.m. The following members were present; Ken Bostic, Michael Reilly, William Murphy, Jeffrey Almond Jeffrey DelGrande, John Hunt, Gerald Olean. Also in attendance were Town Planner Al Ranaldi and Town Engineer Leslie Quish and Town Solicitor Anthony DeSisto. Elizabeth Gagnon kept the minutes. Quorum met.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Bostic reminded members that the consent agenda is normally voted on in total unless a member motions to remove an item. Motion was made by Member Olean, second by Member Reilly to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion was approved by all Members Present.

Major Land Development Review

a. George Washington Highway Solar

AP41 Lot 58

Master Plan Discussion /

-WED GW Solar II, LLC

600 George Washington

Hwy Approval

Town Planner Ranaldi: This application is in front of the Planning Board under the 2016 Subdivision Regulations. It represents the development of 9.8 acres of land which is part of combined 15 acre parcel of commercial land on George Washington Highway on the Smithfield town line. It is a proposal for 3.0 MW solar array system and associated site improvements. It requires a special use permit. It is in front of the Board for Master Plan Review. It was certified as complete on August 25, 2017 and the Board has ninety days from the Certificate of Completeness to make a decision. Actually we have three meeting that we could make a decision because of November with the Holiday. So the Board has until November 23, 2017 to make a decision. Currently there is a 7,500 square foot commercial building in the front portion of the property with associated parking. This proposed solar array is proposed for the rear of the property which is vegetated with mature trees. Zoning is ML-05 which requires a special use permit for a Utility Scale Facility. It does not require any Public Utilities for this. There are some small wetland complexes off to the side of the property. We do believe that they would need a DEM Permit or at least they have to look into it. They may or may not need it. When they go for the RIPDES permit it would be reviewed at that stage. It is unclear if they need a DEM but it will be looked at by

the State. They are not required to have any dedicated parking spaces, however, the service roadway that runs along the western edge of the array is 20 feet wide and we feel that if two vehicles happen to be servicing the system there is plenty spaces for them to park and travel by each other. There is no traffic at this site. It is estimated at one or two technicians who come for maintenance of the facility once it is up and going. Access to the site would be through the existing parking area. The existing parking area will be reconfigured to accommodate access and also to accommodate a better turning radius for any type of delivery vehicles. Our regulations require that manufacturing or commercial up against a residential or commercial residential zone that a buffering be provided. We spoke to the Applicant about this and what they have come up with in front of you is a opaque fence, chain link fence. We are looking more toward more vegetation along that fence. Leslie and I looked at it again today and found that even though I would prefer a lot more vegetation the abutting site the elevation is much higher than the existing site. So any type of vegetation you will see right over it because of the elevation. However there is in the front portion of the area there could be some added additional vegetation to just break up the front portion of it. We can go over that with the Applicant as we work with them at the next TRC. But that was a discussion that we had at the TRC meeting and I also put a statement in here that we felt strongly that we should be a good neighbor and require site buffering. I think that hopefully a compromise can come into play with the Applicant. The site is a pretty big site it is over 11,000 panels

and they have displayed that they have several options for stormwater runoff. They could do a vegetative drip edge system. They could do detention basins. They have a lot of options there and they haven't worked through them yet totally. We are confident that an option exists that we would be comfortable with. Other than that we feel that they have addressed everything in the Master Plan Review and recommend that they proceed to a Public Hearing in October.

Nicholas Goodier: My name is Nicholas Goodier Attorney for the Applicant. I did a fine job introducing the proposal situated at 600 George Washington Highway. The property is currently developed commercial building. It is here for review and approval before this Board. I am prepared to come back for an information hearing and request a special use permit that this project will require. This evening I have Michelle Carpenter from Green Development to discuss operations and the project specifics. And Kevin Moran of DiPrete Engineering the Project Engineer. He will run through the site layout. The project has evolved based on feedback from Town officials and Members of the TRC to what will be presented. Next month there will be other changes based on our meeting that took place recently with the Albion Fire Chief. I would like to have Michelle give a brief presentation. She is very informative as to this project and their operations as well.

Michelle Carpenter: Michelle Carpenter I am with Green

Development. The Green Development Company located in North Kingstown, RI. We developed, construct, design and we build renewable energy projects which consist of solar energy. The most recent project that we concluded was the Turbine Project in Coventry, Rhode Island. (Ms. Carpenter goes on to list other project done by Green Development.) Solar projects are now in Richmond and Coventry. In terms of the project on George Washington Highway it is 3.4 MW. The estimate of first year of production for the system is a little over 4 million kilowatt hours. There are wetlands to the east of the property that we will deal with as part of our design with DEM. In terms of interconnection we have met the Attorney and we have gone through the interconnection process. We have a full impact study and the next step is to sign an interconnection services agreement which is a contract that governs how the power gets interconnected to the grid. One of the other things that we required prior to coming before this Board was a submission to the Federal Aviation Administration to confirm there is no issue with the airport. They came back and they gave us that. In terms of project benefits; through tangible taxes the solar array would yield \$12,500.00 for the town in its first year of operation, and over 25 year, would bring in a total of more than \$300,000 in tax revenue. The project requires minimal drain on the town in terms of the school system and water is not needed. In terms of the land use one of the advantages of the project is that they are temporary use of property. We have a lease with the land owner for 25 years. At the end of the lease we are obligated to restore that property to its pre-development condition. In terms of job creation

Rhode Island has one of the fastest growing sectors. Since 2014 there has been 66% growth since the 2017 energy industry report. It is not going to rotate. There are not any moving parts it is just stationary.

Member Reilly: At the highest point of the panel off the ground is it 5'?

Carpenter: It is under 12'. We actually raised the front edge to keep it above the snow line, 2 to 4' off the ground.

Kevin Moran: I am a registered Professional Civil Engineer with DiPrete Engineering. The report was excellent and it reflected the TRC discussion and we try to incorporate some of that with the plans that you have in your packet. We did some updates on Friday and we tried to incorporate some of those. The project as far as we are concerned meets the ordinance in terms limitations and setbacks. So I think the project otherwise meets it. I am sure a discussion is currently needed to comply with Zoning from a development standpoint. The utility connection we come in from George Washington Highway as an overhead that is how National Grid requires it to come in. And then it separates from National Grid utility to the private underground and continues on to the property as underground. We did make a couple of changes. We did make some adjustments to parking and the truck turn around. We cleaned up the sheet a little bit to make it a little easier to read. We talked a lot about this property line abutting Smithfield. It is a high density residential

or commercial use. We had a discussion with the TRC to look at that soon. We proposed is a 6' chain link fence which surrounds this whole project along this western line. The fence is about 20' off the property line. A double row of trees staggered to fill in around that space a little bit. We will incorporate some vegetation there. Entrance to the site has two driveways. As part of this project the developer the solar party agreed to take that driveway that runs pretty close to the plot line. We are actually adding parking to the site based on the uses that are there. We made sure about the fire trucks turnaround. We had some discussion with Chief Andrews and we make it meets his requirements. There will be a lock box at the gate. And they did ask for a turnaround at the end of the aisle. If they have to go in there with equipment they have the ability to go in there and turnaround and come back. So we will incorporate that as we are going forward. Drainage we will get into sizing and calculations going forward. Another thing from the TRC was to add some warning signage along the fence. It is not required by National Electric. The signage will be about every 75' feet. We will provide specifically what that signage will be as we get further into the project. We will approval from DEM for this. There is no increase in traffic per se.

Carpenter: We will provide to the Board Noise Maps. The gist of the Noise Maps is the Town Ordinance states 70 dba or less at the property line. Member Reilly: What does that mean? That noise level is equal to what? Chairman Bostic: 85 you need ear protection right? Carpenter: 85 yes. Member Reilly: At the Public Hearing

people are going to ask. They don't want to hear it is going to be 70 dba. They want to hear it is going sound like this. Carpenter: We have that information and we can provide that. Member Olean: If you could compare it to a dishwasher or something like that so the people in the audience know. Carpenter: We can get that information for you.

Chairman Bostic: The interconnection contract that you have with National Grid; how long do they give you to get the system up and running? Carpenter: It's depending on the project. Roughly I would say 9 to 12 months from when they can actually hook it up. But it does depend on what their factor looks like and what they have to do as other project in the pipeline.

Member DelGrande: Will the company monitor the noise level? Carpenter: When we come out to do our annual or bi annual inspections we will check the noise.

Member DelGrande: How long do you think your pile drivers are going to be there, how many days? Carpenter: I would say two or three days. It is 11,000 panels. Member Olean: Are we going to get a copy of the Power Point? Carpenter: We can get a copy of that.

Member Olean: That would be appreciated for the next meeting. You answered all the questions but we don't have it in front of us. And the 514 houses that are going to come up that is how everybody

measures things. The second point is that you have been in touch with Chief Andrews. Do you have anything from him in regards to Public Safety? You were talking about the fire trucks turning around. I think there should be some type of letter in here from someone whether the Public Safety Director, the Fire Chief or someone saying that there is no problems here with Public Safety for the next meeting.

The next question is there will be no (inaudible) whatsoever underneath the panels.

Moran: What we are looking at is something different we basically sheet off to a stone bed.

Member Olean: And you said no DOT permits are required. Can we get something in writing so that we can get it on record? You are doing a good job at answering all the questions.

Chairman Bostic: How do you go about calculating for the watershed because even though you are not putting in any foundations you are cutting down a lot of vegetation that absorbs a lot of water and I would imagine even though it looks like one big block the water is going to run off on to the ground.

Moran: That is a good question. Whenever you change from a wooded conditions to something else whether it be basically will be a grass field around and under the panels. We will have to reduce the run off.

Chairman Bostic: Because I am sure it is going to be a concern of anybody that lives around there.

Member Hunt: Do you have something from DEM now? **Moran:** No at this point we do not. We would have it normally we would go this process of a conceptual Master Plan, Zoning and go the DEM and come back with that to you for a Preliminary. The grading, erosion and a lot more detail.

Member Hunt: Is there a maintenance program for that? **Carpenter:** We do our maintenance in house. We remotely monitor them. In addition we do visual inspections one or two times a year and then we will be out there mowing the grass as well as removing snow from the access way.

Member Olean: I make a motion to accept the TRC's recommendation to advance to a Public Hearing, second by Member Reilly.

Motion was approved by all members present.

Chairman Bostic: Next of the agenda is Correspondence/Miscellaneous, Staff Reports.

Town Planner Ranaldi: I did put in the two letters that the Police Chief sent as a result from the Lincoln Mall project. We had put together two letters to be State's Traffic Commission regarding the

Sunoco Gas Station as well as the two entrances to Lincoln Mall. So we will follow up with this commission and see if they make any recommendation and will report back to the Board.

Chairman Bostic: Ok

Town Planner Ranaldi: I knew that was important to the Board as of the last hearing that we had so I wanted to include them.

Chairman Bostic: Mr. Solicitor.

Town Solicitor DeSisto: I actually have a report for you tonight. I want to let you know the State Housing Appeals Board has scheduled a hearing on the Whipple-Cullen affordable housing application. It is October 16th, 2017 at 2:00 pm at a location to be determined. We will notify where the location is. Once I find out I will let you know. They have to give us reasonable time. I just got a notification of this hearing now which is ok. The briefs are in and ready to go. But the location is to be determined.

The second has to do with the so called Dunkin Donuts affordable housing application from 1672 Realty Associates. The briefing schedule has been set. The Dunkin Donuts lawyer had its brief ready to go. He submitted it on August 28th. The Town has until October 12th. I am hopeful that we get a hearing scheduled for December. If not it will probably be in January. That is the availability of the State

Housing Appeals Board. Do you have any question?

Member DelGrande: How do we look with Dunkin Donuts? We had a lot of issues with that.

Town Solicitor DeSisto: If you take a look at the procedure at the State Housing Appeals Board the first thing that is supposed to happen is whether the matter can be negotiated. This particular one I have to say not only deny but also the applicants said negotiations forget just proceed with this and go forward. This will be a battle all the way though. Any other questions?

Chairman Bostic: Secretary Report.

Member Reilly: I move to dispense with the reading of the minutes of May 24th and June 28th, second by Member Hunt.

Motion was approved by all members present.

Motion to accept the minutes May 24th and June 28th by Member Almond, second by Member Murphy.

Motion was approved by all members present.

Motion to adjourn by Member Reilly, second by Member Hunt.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 mp.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth A. Gagnon

Secretary to the Planning Board