

PLANNING BOARD
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Christopher Cooper, Chairman
Robert Moitozo, Vice Chair
Edward Bertozzi
Tomas Ennis
William Costa Sr.
Jake Kramer
Tish Vadnais
Lynne Ferreira, Assoc. Mbr.
Daniel Roach, Town Planner

Meeting Minutes
May 20, 2020
Remote Meeting
7:00 PM

Present: Christopher Cooper, Robert Moitozo, Edward Bertozzi, Tomas Ennis, William Costa Sr, Tish Vadnais, Jake Kramer, Lynne Ferreira, Associate Member, and Daniel Roach Town Planner.

Absent:

Mr. Cooper began the meeting with the Pledge of allegiance at 7:00p.m.

Form A

1. Dumontier – Spring Street – 20-07A

Mr. Neal Hingorany from Narragansett Engineering was present.

Mr. Hingorany presented plans.

Ms. Ferreira stated that the ortho should be removed. Assessors map 11-10B should be map 11-49. Has the second owner signed the application? We need the seconded owner's signature.

Mr. Hingorany agreed.

Ms. Ferreira stated that the original parcel for 65 Spring Street needs to be on the plan. If you are doing parcel 1 & 3 then the entire proposed Form A for lot 10B needs to be on the plan. Adjacent land owned by the same person needs to be shown in it's entirety, 57 Spring Street as well. It's owned by the trust.

Mr. Hingorany stated that page 2 of the plans shows the entire parcel 1. Ms. Ferreira asked if they were going to record all the plans?

Mr. Hingorany stated yes, all 4 sheets. We can remove the ortho.

Ms. Ferreira asked if the well easement is on the plan?

Mr. Hingorany stated he would add it on and an owner's index.

Public Hearings

1. 90 Pond Street – Rehoboth Renewables – 19-01 Solar, 19-03 SPA, 19-04 GWSP

Ms. Shannon Taylor was present.

Ms. Taylor asked what is a berm?

Mr. Cooper explained what a berm was. Explained the board's position on the project.

Mr. Roach explained where the poles are located.

Mr. Mark Haskell was present.

Mr. Haskell showed a street view of his property and explained what he could see. The fence will be only 88-90 feet from his front door. Explained all the vegetation being cut down.

Mr. Cooper stated that those concerns need to be answered by the applicant. We can ask then to extend the tree line or prove to the abutters that it won't be seen.

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Ms. Vadnais asked why all the trees need to be cut down if the trees are downhill from the project?
Mr. Cooper stated that the board will have to ask the applicant next time they are present.
The board discussed the project lay out in relation to the tree cutting being done.
Mr. Haskell stated that the Fire Department is going to require an 18 wide improved road around the fence. This is not shown on the plan. It is not being taken into consideration.
The board discussed the fence and the potential need for a road around the perimeter of the fence.
Mr. Haskell asked how long the project is going to take place?
Mr. Ennis stated that it could be done in 6 months.
Mr. Haskell stated his concerns with possible logging, stumping, grading and pile driving that will take place near his property.
Mr. Cooper explained what the Planning Board is allowed and not allowed to do under the Solar Bylaw.
Mr. Haskell stated that he is going to be losing money because of the solar farm. Asked about tax credits.
Mr. Cooper explained that some of these concerns have come up at prior meetings. Then explained the outcome of them.
Mr. Bertozzi stated to have Mr. Roach send a letter to our engineer asking about the requirements of the Fire Department for the roadway. Particularly if it has to be outside of the fence.
Mr. Ennis stated that we need information from the Fire Chief.
Mr. Bertozzi stated that he has always made sure that whenever a developer comes in with a solar project that it cannot be seen.
Mr. Fred St. Lois was present.
Mr. St. Lois stated that when he looks into the woods all he will see is a fence. He had information that said it would be further into the woods. There is a lot of land on the opposite side of the property. Asked why things couldn't be moved, so the project wouldn't be so close to the road.
The board discussed possible reasons for the way the plan is laid out.
Mr. Cooper stated that the applicant will have to answer these questions.
Mr. St. Lois stated that his property value is going to go down.
Mr. Bertozzi stated that it is the solar panels that can't be seen, not the fence.
Mr. St. Lois asked how many trees would be cut down?
Mr. Cooper explained what was being cut.
Mr. St. Lois stated his concern with being able to see the fence.
Mr. Cooper stated that he understood his concerns. The applicant can give you a better idea on it.
Explained that the board had only one chance to make sure that the applicant does what is best for the town and the abutters. The applicant has been working with the board. We have a landscape architect working with the board as well as Mr. Kramer to make sure the plantings are accurate.
Ms. Elizabeth Fitzpatrick was present.
Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the town had recently cleared out brush and cut some trees for safety reasons. What they cut down would have prevented us from being able to see the fence.
Mr. Cooper explained the proposed plantings.
Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the level of destruction of natural beauty is catastrophic. She hopes it will be addressed with the applicant.
Mr. Cooper stated that her point is well taken.
Mr. Kramer spoke in regards to the plantings. He did not feel that there is enough proposed.
Ms. Vadnais made a motion to have Mr. Kramer speak to Fuss and O'Neil and their landscape architect about what is we will require of the applicant.
Mr. Costa seconded the motion. Roll call vote: all replied aye.
Ms. Vadnais stated that Ms. Taylor also had a question regarding the gate. At the last meeting the applicant had proposed a second gate to keep people out of the property.
Ms. Vadnais asked Mr. Roach to make sure that abutters are notified of the meeting.

2. By-law Changes – GWPD

Mr. Cooper asked if there were any updates?

Mr. Roach explained where it stood right now.

The board discussed a notification give to them Mr. Jack Hermance regarding a well study done on Tremont Street.

New Business

1. Planner Update

Mr. Roach had no update.

Mr. Cooper asked if there was a time line for virtual meetings yet?

Mr. Roach replied that they will continue. As we move through the phases of reopening, we will work on having regular meetings in person.

Mr. Cooper stated that as long as meetings are still ok to have virtually, I'm ok with it.

2. Site Plan Approval – Sunset Clause

Mr. Roach explained what it was and why it has come back on the agenda. He read an email from Board of Selectmen's liaison Jim Muri regarding this and creating a by-law.

Mr. Cooper asked how Mr. Roach felt as Town Planner?

Mr. Roach stated that it's a good idea. It doesn't have to be restrictive for subdivisions, but gives clarity to everyone involved.

Mr. Ennis stated that he agreed with Mr. Muri. This was brought up about 5 years ago.

Mr. Cooper stated that he remembers this being brought up and it was stopped. I'm not against it. We just need to be careful on how we address it, time limits and the implications it might have.

Mr. Moitozo stated that if they are concerned about it, they should prepare a drafted bylaw and present it to the board. Then we have something to work with. Bring us what they want.

Ms. Vadnais stated that every project is unique. Some will take longer than others.

Mr. Cooper stated that a letter should be sent back to the Board of Selectmen to have them do a study of what other towns are doing and come back to the board with something.

The board discussed how this should happen and what it should pertain to.

Mr. Roach stated that he would coordinate with Jim Muri and Bill Mc Donough for a path to move forward.

The board is looking for clarification.

Mr. Bertozzi stated we need Town Counsel's opinion.

Mr. Cooper stated that he felt that there should be more clarification before asking Town Counsel.

Mr. Roach stated once we have a clearer idea, we can move to Town Counsel.

Mr. Costa stated that is a good approach.

3. SRPEDD – Appointment

Mr. Costa stated that his appointment ends on the 22nd of June for his SRPEDD appointment.

Ms. Vadnais made a motion to reappointment Bill Costa to SRPEDD.

Mr. Kramer seconded the motion. Roll call vote, all replied aye. Motion passes.

Minutes

1. April 1, 2020

2. April 23, 2020

Mr. Ennis made a motion to approve the above-named meeting minutes.

Mr. Kramer seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Ms. Vadnais abstained, everyone else replied Aye.

Motion passes.

Adjournment

Mr. Costa made a motion to adjourn at 9:00 pm

Mr. Kramer seconded the motion. Roll call vote – all replied aye. Motion passes.

Respectfully Submitted

Christopher Cooper, Chairman


Robert Moitozo, Vice-Chairman