

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FORT EDWARD PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING AND CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2023 AT TOWN HALL COMMENCING AT 7:00 PM

Chairman Belden called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

Pledge of Allegiance

PRESENT: Chairman Belden
Valerie Ingersoll
Donald Sanders, Jr
Max Fruchter
Joseph McMurray
Dolores Cogan

ABSENT: Zachary Middleton

OTHERS PRESENT: Paul Lubera, Paul Kruger, Town Engineer Chris Koenig, Town Attorney Bill Nikas and Planning Board Clerk Aimee Mahoney

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION by Max Fruchter, Seconded by Donald Sanders, Jr to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 13, 2023 **ALL AYES**

BUSINESS:

**Fort Edward Community Solar
142 Blodgett Rd.
Continued Public Hearing**

Paul Kruger:

- We met with the Town Assessor regarding PILOT's and the State Model for assessing solar projects. As far as a PILOT we would need a separate agreement with the Town and Schuylerville School.
- We met with the Fire Chief regarding site access for emergency vehicles and he was satisfied with our plan.
- Draft Decommissioning was sent to Attorney Nikas and he will pass it along to the Town Board for review.

Paul Lubera: We haven't received a letter from Jed Hayden yet but in speaking with him he indicated that the Short-Eared Owl nesting will require a survey. As far as the Bald Eagle as long as we stay in contact with DEC regarding nesting times that will not be an issue.

Paul Kruger: We are submitting a permit application to both the Army Corp. of Engineers and DEC due to the access road going through a wetland needing a permit.

Chairman Belden: We heard back from the Washington County Planning Dept. and they indicated that this was a matter of local concern with the comment that we notice the Town of Greenwich.

Chris Koenig: There is a spot on the access road that shows a slope of 15% and we will need something in writing from the Fire Chief saying that he is agreeable to that with 10% being the standard.

Paul Lubera: The average is 6% from the top of the road down, the 15% is just a small portion.

Chris Koenig: Are you proposing a restriction on tree cutting annually during the winter?

Paul Lubera: That depends on what the Water Quality Cert. says and we do not have that yet.

Chris Koenig: The following items are still outstanding:

- Decommissioning estimate update
- Operations & Maintenance Plan
- Replacement of vegetation not effective or dying plan

Chairman Belden: Do you have an easement from National Grid?

Paul Lubera: Not yet, the drawings have been submitted but that takes a while.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Max Fruchter: With the new formula will the value go up or down?

Paul Kruger: It will all depend on the State Model and the tax rates.

Valerie Ingersoll: On page 12 of the EAF you will have to add the Short-Eared Owl.

Dolores Cogan: I understand the need for solar but I have severe concerns environmentally. How do we gauge 20 years from now?

Chairman Belden: There is no more room on that National Grid line for any more development; this will be temporary unlike if that entire area was filled with houses.

Chris Koenig: You have identified White Spruce, Balsam Fir and White Pine for buffer trees which are acceptable but why are they clustered on one side?

Paul Lubera: We show them closer together where the view shed is; about 6'-8' of space between each one.

Joe McMurray: The trees should be spaced out more than 6', if they are planted too close together you will have die off. You may want to plant them 10'-12' apart.

Paul Lubera: We can stagger them and open up the distance between the rows.

Chairman Belden went through Part II of the Full EAF with the Board:

- Section 7 cannot be completed until the applicant receives the letter from Jed Hayden from DEC.
- Section 16 cannot be completed until an investigation is done into whether or not the site is contaminated.

Attorney Nikas: DEC will have record of that if there is any contamination on site.

- **Applicant will reach out when they are ready to meet.**

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by Max Fruchter, Seconded by Dolores Cogan to adjourn the meeting at 8:28pm
ALL AYES

Dated: September 30, 2023

Aimee Mahoney, Clerk