



# TOWN OF WARE

Planning & Community Development  
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## Planning Board

Meeting Minutes from  
**Thursday, November 5, 2020**  
Select Board Room, Town Hall

**Planning Board Members Present:** Rick Starodoj (Chairman), Josh Kusnierz, Ed Murphy III, Joe Knight (Remote), Ken Crosby, and Jennifer Muche (Alternate)

**Staff Present:** Rebekah Cornell-PCD Director; Jack Carolan-PCD Assistant; Anna Marques-Building Inspector

**Public in Attendance:** Tom Barnes, Steven Pikul, Terrance Smith, Henry Crobsey, Elio Qorri, Jeremy Chapman, Carol Blackmer

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### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman R. Starodoj called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ADMINISTRATIVE

- Approval of Minutes from October 15, 2020

**Motion** by J. Kusnierz to approve the minutes from October 15, 2020. Seconded by E. Murphy. All in favor approved 5-0

### PUBLIC HEARING

- **Special Permit (SP-2020-05) and Site Plan Review (SPR-2020-07) for a 4 MW dual-use agricultural large scale solar project.** Property owned by Terrance Smith, project applicant Ian Cohen, of Goldilocks Capital LLC, located on Greenwich Plains Road. Said property is also listed on Assessor's Map 38, Lot 7 & 7-3'

J. Kusnierz read the legal notice and opened the public hearing.

Terrance Smith, property owner, introduced the proposed project as well as introduced himself as the landowner of the property as well as a member of the design team. He

emphasized that this is both a solar project as well as an agricultural project. The agricultural component of the project it would involve a Christmas tree farm, a tree nursery, and blueberry patches. The agricultural component needs to be reviewed and approved by the Clean Energy Extension at UMass-Amherst to ensure the proposed agricultural use is compatible with the soil types on the property.

There will be a minimum of 8 ft. between the ground and the solar panels to allow for plants and trees to grow. The wattage of the proposed solar project and how it complies with state regulations. The battery storage would be located and what their storage capacity will be. T. Smith also highlighted that the access road will comply with both the Ware Zoning Bylaw as well as National Grids regulations. The stormwater management plan includes a retention basin and berm around the eastern perimeter of the solar field. He also emphasized that he has a vested interest in this project because he is the landowner, he and his family live on the next parcel over, and he will continue to be after the project is completed and he also lives adjacent to the project site.

All of the wetlands on the property have been delineated by licensed professionals. He has had the Conservation Agent come out and inspect the site. He presented the site plans to the Board and explained the reasoning behind some of the design features and how they comply with town and state regulations.

R. Starodoj asked what the maximum height of the panels. The panels will be at a 15% tilt so the max height would be 11 to 13 feet from the top of the panel to the ground. T. Smith stated that he believes this project is much farther along from a conceptual and design standpoint compared to other proposed solar projects in town, and that it is ready to move forward. He also said that he believes this project will be economically feasible based on his estimates. The project is currently being reviewed by National Grid and is waiting on an interservice connection agreement.

R. Starodoj stated that he would like to see a little more detail from a design perspective such as more accurate details regarding the spacing of the panels and the specific dimensions and placement of the access road. K. Crosby asked how the stormwater was going to drain from the access road. T. Smith responded that the road will be a pervious surface and that water will drain away from the sides with the contours of the site. K. Crosby also asked for some clarification on what the solar panels were made out of. T. Smith referred to detailed information on the brand and type of solar panels in the meeting packets.

There was also some concern regarding containment underneath the battery storage units in case of some sort of leakage. It was discussed that a concrete pad could be installed. K. Crosby also wanted to know who was responsible for maintaining the solar facility such as the battery storage units when they need to be replaced or decommissioned. T. Smith also noted that just because there may be a 20 to 25 year lease on the solar panels does not mean solar production ends once the lease expires even if production capacity has decreased. As the landowner he could take over the solar panels and solar production as well as decommission them on his own.

There was a discussion on the perimeter of the project site and the location and types of buffers that will be implemented. J. Kusnierz recommended using warm season/native grasses as a buffer planting.

T. Smith concluded. R. Starodoj requested a detailed stormwater management plan including topography of the site. J. Kusnierz requested more detail regarding the type of plantings that will be on the site. R. Starodoj mentioned providing some more specifications on the type of fencing that will be going in. T. Smith said he would like to do his best to maintain the rural character and he does not want to see chain-linked fencing go in.

**Motion** by E. Murphy to continue the hearing to the meeting on January 21, 2021 at 7:10 pm. Seconded by J. Kusnierz. All in favor. Approved 5-0

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

- **Public Hearing (continued):** 278 Osborne Road – Definitive Subdivision. Colin Derhammer of Ware Solar II, LLC c/o Melink Solar Development requesting approval for a Definitive Subdivision Plan. The applicant is proposing to divide an estate lot at 278 Osborne Road creating two parcels of land. Location is Parcel 40-14-9, owned by Joel Harder.

J. Kusnierz recused himself from this portion of the meeting. Alternate J. Muche was appointed to the public hearing, but left at 7:58pm.

E. Qorri from Bertin Engineering presented the plans for the proposed project to the Board. R. Starodoj asked of the issue regarding the plantings along the access road have been addressed. E. Qorri said that they had not come up with a final solution to that issue. R. Starodoj asked if there was any way to do away with the dry swale. E. Qorri said based of this current design it is needed.

An issue with pole placement was raised and R. Starodoj noted that because the lot will no longer be an Estate Lot, the poles will have to move to be in line with the solar array.

R. Cornell stated that Bertin Engineering needs to provide a much more detailed plan of regarding the access road and what they plan to do with the existing trees which is a major concern of the abutters. She also stated that she did hear back from the Fire Department and they do not have any major concerns with the access road, but they were meeting with the engineers to discuss the solar array access.

R. Starodoj said that the reduction in width of the proposed roadway satisfies the Board. K. Crosby said he would like to see more detail regarding the stormwater management on the site. There was also a discussion regarding an agreement from the applicant to keep the road private in perpetuity and not allow it to be adopted by the town as a public way at a later date. R. Starodoj also said that any maintenance and plowing should be the responsibility of the lot owners and not the town in the event the site is developed for housing. K. Crosby also noted his concern that houses could potentially be put in at a later date and would like to see language that prevents that from happening. It was discussed that if any future additional lots were created, they would require further review for subdivision requirements.

R. Starodoj asked when the perc tests were expected to be completed. J. Chapman said that they hope to have the tests completed in the next several weeks and will coordinate with R. Cornell in terms of specific dates and times.

**Motion** by E. Murphy to continue the hearing to December 17, 2020 at 7:10 pm. Seconded by K. Crosby. All in favor. Approved 4-0.

#### **NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

- Zoning Bylaw Amendments. A public hearing is scheduled for November 19, 2020 to discuss zoning bylaw amendments.

#### **TOWN PLANNER UPDATE**

- West Street Grant. The town was awarded a grant to conduct a traffic study along West Street as well as a parcel analysis which will be completed by the Planning Department.
- PARC Grant. The town was awarded a PARC Grant to address the drainage issues at one of the baseball fields in Grenville Park.

**Motion** by E. Murphy to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by K. Crosby. All in favor. Approved 4-0

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday November 19, 2020 at 7 pm.

Minutes from November 5, 2020

Respectfully submitted by,

Jack Carolan- Department Assistant

*Minutes Approved on:* \_\_\_\_\_

Starodoj \_\_\_\_\_

Kusnierz \_\_\_\_\_

Knight \_\_\_\_\_

Murphy \_\_\_\_\_

Crosby \_\_\_\_\_