

**TOWN OF PLYMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD**

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TOWN OF PLYMPTON
PLANNING BOARD
OFFICE

Plympton Planning Board – Minutes – February 10, 2020

Meeting opened at 7:07 p.m. members present A. Sobolewski, J. MacDonald, P. D'Angelo, J. Cohen; J. Schmid

1. 7:00 399 Main Street Solar Array Continued Public Hearing. The Applicant has requested to continue the hearing until 2/24/2020 by letter dated 2/7 Ms. Sobolewski moves to continue the Public Hearing to 2/24/2020 at 8:00. Mr. Schmid, seconds, unanimous vote in favor.
2. Jim Molloy, West Light Development owner of property at 165 Palmer Road wants a temporary sign that is 32 square feet in size to advertise the property for sale. Mr. D'Angelo recuses himself from this application. There is discussion about the requirements for a sign permit. It is determined that the sign requires a special permit because it is larger than the allowed square footage for a temporary sign. The applicant wants to move forward with the special permit process and is informed that they will be heard on 3/9/2020.
3. 7:15 CLE, LLC (applicant and property owner) for Site Plan Approval to construct two 80' by 90' buildings 0 Palmer Road, M/B/L 11/5/10. The Applicant has requested to continue the hearing until 3/9/2020, by letter dated 2/7/2020. The applicant has also requested a continuance of the site visit to March 7, 2020. The Board discusses the time for the site visit. The Board decides that 10:00 a.m. is the best time for the site visit. Ms. Sobolewski moves to continue the Public Hearing to 3/9/2020 at 7:00 p.m. Mr. D'Angelo seconds, unanimous vote in favor.
4. 7:20 Warrants and deposits processed.
5. 7:30 p.m. Continued Public Hearing Harju Bros. Cranberries (owner) Plympton Main Street Solar, LLC (Applicant) Solar Array 0 Main Street and Mayflower Road (October 28, 2019) – Site Plan Review for Large Scale Photovoltaic Project

Ms. MacDonald recuses herself as she is an abutter

Evan Watson, Prime Engineering, makes the presentation for the applicant. With him are: Greg Sampson, project attorney and Patrick Jackson of Sunraise Investments – the applicant

Ms. Sobolewski asks for a full size set of plans as revised December 27, 2019. Mr. Watson agrees to provide the plans.

Mr. Watson describes what has happened since the preceding hearing. They incorporated additional stormwater best management practices and made some changes to the project.

Mr. Watson discussed the response letter from John Chessia. Starting with a waiver for the requirement to mark the trees. They are willing to have the trees reviewed by an arborist to confirm their quality. They are going to ask for the waiver with respect to the development impact statement. They wanted not to indicate the building dimensions for the pump house but they do not need that waiver anymore. They request not to mark the adjacent wells and septic systems but the project is more than 100 feet away from the abutting properties.

The only comments John Chessia had were on the more recent comments that were submitted. Mr. Watson reviewed the stormwater management policy applicable to the property citing DEP policy 17 which allows low impact solar design if ten standards are met. In the initial application that demonstrated that they met the policy. He notes that the Board asked them to do additional documentation because of the concern from the abutters. They also computed the flows as if the base was grass and not meadow which increased the rate of runoff slightly. He stated that the flows off the site were sandy with less runoff than a typical development that has impervious surfaces.

They propose to use a pollinator mix as the base of the solar field. Mr. Schmid asks what the results were when he ran the calculations using the pollinator seed mix. Mr. Watson responds that in woods and meadow with A soil the curve number is the same. Mr. Schmid asks further questions about the runoff computations.

Ms. Dahlen, an abutter, asks where exactly the plantings would occur and is informed that the plantings in question would occur beneath the entire upland array.

Mr. Watson provides photographs of the two different types of berms that are common. He has revised the proposed berms to use a modified earthen berm that would be covered with the stump grindings. Berm height 18", 24" 26". They are proposing a modified berm to mimic a natural condition to allow the water to retain in a high design storm. Ms. Sobolewski asks what the width of the berm is and is informed that it is 3 feet at the top and wider at the base in a pyramidal shape. Mr. D'Angelo asks what the purpose of the berm is. Mr. Watson informs him that the berm is designed to retain the water in a storm.

Mr. Watson notes that the A soils are a measure of the top two feet and beneath that there is different material. If they were to consider this as an infiltration basin, they would need to fill to provide the increased depth to groundwater that is required for an infiltration basin.

They are concerned about the comment letter because they see it as imposing requirements on the design that would be required for a development with impervious surfaces. Mr. Schmid asks for the locations of the specific berms and Mr. Watson identifies them on the plans.

Mr. Watson explains that the impervious surface is the equipment pad which they have surrounded with filter fabric, on top of which there will be three feet of crushed stone with a small curb. This is designed to infiltrate the water runoff from the equipment pad.

Mr. Schmid asks whether it is possible to build the berm in the wooded area without disturbing the existing vegetation. Mr. Watson states that it will be possible to construct the berm in the woods without disturbing the existing vegetation.

Mr. Schmid expresses his general opinion that the new design should not be classified as infiltration areas which would subject the project to different standards.

Mr. Watson did not analyze the conditions for the bog construction. Mr. Chessia agreed with his approach but noted that the vegetative mix could be changed,

Mr. Schmid states that he would like to review the materials and provide his own opinion. Mr. Watson agrees with this concept and notes that Mr. Chessia had technical questions that they will respond to but they wanted to get some direction with respect to the infiltration question

With respect to the vegetative screening, they are adding a five foot tall berm on the Mayflower Road side that will be twenty feet wide with a fence on the top of the berm. This would prevent people from seeing into the solar array.

Mr. Watson noted that the Fire Chief wanted there to be an access road and they are proposing to put an access road outside of the berm and that will involve clearing in the buffer zone. Ms. Sobolewski questions why they intend to clear the buffer zone for the access way rather than pulling the array back and locating the access way out of the buffer zone. She asks what the total area of the entire project is and is informed by Mr. Jackson that it is 16 acres/approximately 17 acres. Mr. Watson agrees put the edge of the fire road outside the buffer zone, to move the fire road back behind the 100 foot setback.

Mr. Watson looks for direction from the board. Mr. Schmid suggests that before the plants are planted the applicant contact the abutters to get their buy in. He suggests meeting with the abutters once the berm is up and the fencing is up. Mr. Watson indicates that he is amenable to doing that.

Mr. Cohen asks how the power is going to get out to the grid. Mr. Watson explains that the other two arrays go from the panels to an inverter and transformer and then into the central pad with the storage panels. Then underground electric that tie into the three new telephone poles. Mr. Watson describes the poles that will be used.

Ms. Macdonald asks what the use of the bogs will be. Mr. Watson states that the Bogs with the array will not be farmed.

No members of the public have questions.

Ms. Sobolewski asks what the vegetative screening would be from the corner of the upland array next to the access road in proximity to Mayflower Road. Mr. Watson indicates that it would be black slat fencing. Ms. Sobolewski asks whether it would be possible to put a few shrubs in from of the fence. Mr. Watson agrees to ad plants in that location and recalls that this request was made at the last hearing but was inadvertently omitted from the revised plan.

The waiver requests are discussed. Ms. Sobolewski notes that she is in favor of the waiver requests for the trees and the development impact statement. Mr. Schmid and Ms. Sobolewski agree that the waiver request to not show wells and septic systems is appropriate.

Mr. Schmid inquires as to where they are with the Conservation Commission. Mr. Watson says that they are back before the Conservation Commission on the 18th or the 25th. Mr. Schmid will look over the documents on the weekend and will have comments back early next week.

Mr. D'Angelo asks for confirmation that they will pull back the fire road out of the buffer zone and the applicant agrees.

There is discussion of an appropriate continuance date. The applicant requests a continuance of the public hearing to 3/9/2020. Ms. Sobolewski moves to continue the public hearing to 3/9/2020 at 7:15 p.m., Mr. D'Angelo seconds, unanimous vote in favor.

Ms. Sobolewski moves to continue second by Mr. D' Angelo, unanimous vote

2. Old Business:

The board reviewed the draft minutes for the January 27, 2020 meeting. Mr. Schmid moves to accept the Minutes as written, Mr. D'Angelo seconds, vote is unanimous in favor.

7:50 p.m. Motion to adjourn made by Mr. D'Angelo, Mr. Cohen seconds, unanimous vote in favor.