



TOWN OF PLYMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS PLANNING BOARD

Plympton Planning Board – Minutes – October 7, 2020

Meeting opened at 5:48 p.m. members present A. Sobolewski, J. Cohen; and J. MacDonald

1. 5:48— Public Hearing — Continued Public Hearing on Modification to Site Plan Approval - 61 Upland Road –

Brandon Smith of Borrego Solar appears on behalf of the applicant.

Mr. Smith provides e-mail correspondence from 2018 and an affidavit from Evan Watson the engineer of record at that time affirming that the vote was taken and the Planning Board approved the plans at that time. These documents are introduced into the record.

Mr. Smith has prepared a cross-section showing the view shed from the Imlach's property to the pole area. The closest pole is approximately 1,550 feet from their property line and 1,825 feet is the furthest pole from their property line. The applicant provides photographs of the poles with the equipment located thereon. Mr. Smith describes the types of equipment located on the poles and refers to each photograph to indicate what each type of equipment looks like.

Ms. Sobolewski asks for additional information relative to the elevation and the views from the Imlach residence to the poles.

Mr. Cohen asks whether the poles that resemble pine trees as used by the cellular industry could be used in this application and Mr. Smith indicates that it would not be possible to use those type of poles in this application.

The continued hearing is opened to public comment:

Mr. Imlach, 25 Dukes Brook Road, states that 1,500 feet is not very far when it is viewed from the house and the prior plan showed the poles closer to Mr. Smith's residence. Mr. Imlach notes that it was already planned to go in the opposite direction. Mr. Smith states that there are additional requirements that have been developed since the project was originally approved in 2018. The requirements of smart metering require additional poles and additional safety measures that make it more cumbersome - namely there are additional distances between the poles that are required and the new requirements mean that the poles all have to be in a straight line. The previously approved location for the poles is not in a straight line and the location proposed in this amendment is in a straight line and runs for the distances that are now required.

Ms. MacKenna-Imlach, 25 Dukes Brook Road, asks whether this is different from the Smart Program.

Mr. Smith states that it is basically the same thing. In 2018 the project was designed to meet their best estimate as to the engineering design that was required. But now they need these additional pieces of equipment to connect to the grid. Mr. Smith states that the smart metering program requires additional equipment, separate metering for the energy storage as well as the energy storage. That requires two different meters, two different conduits and therefore there are more poles. They have to be a specified distance to the inter connection area. The second set of poles that is required must be set at a specific width and the corner of the bog means that the width could not be maintained in that area. The blue run of poles as shown on the plan is 240 feet and the red run is 180 feet.

Ms. MacKenna-Imlach says that it is not an impossibility to work with the utility to allow them to access from the location that was originally proposed but you have to pay more. She says the utility companies are required to purchase the power. She is still concerned about the original approval. It is going to affect the entire farm and she is concerned about the wires running under the ground as well.

Mr. Smith explains that the underground conduit is running under the road now and not beneath the bog.

Ms. MacKenna-Imlach asks what the total reduction was in the project size and is that reflected in the lease.

Mr. Smith states the total reduction in the plans. Mr. Smith explains that there will be less excavation as a result of the plan revision.

Ms. MacKenna-Imlach states that ground mounted equipment would be less visually disturbing.

Mr. Smith states that if the equipment were put on the ground there would need to be a security fence surrounding it.

Mr. Smith states that only the Imlach's will be able to see the poles from their house. There is discussion about whether they would be able to see the poles from the other location and Mr. Smith indicates by referring to the plans that they would see more of the poles from the originally permitted location.

Mr. Randall states that he spoke with Borrego's counsel and their counsel is corresponding with his counsel and within a week they should have the title issue resolved. Mr. Randall has a right of way across the property and he says there is no deed into the Smith's or Crescent Moon. This area in question is included in the deed from Granville Baker to Mr. Randall. Mr. Smith states that if there is a title issue the project will not be able to be financed.

Mr. Smith indicates that they are willing to include plantings to make things look better for the Imlachs. Ms. McKenna-Imlach states that their underlying concern is that the array will be expanded in the future. Mr. Smith indicates that there is no known intention to expand the property.

Ms. Sobolewski moves to close the Public Hearing, Ms. MacDonald seconds the Motion, vote is unanimous in favor.

The Board begins deliberating the application. The Board discussed the findings pertinent to the proposed development, as set forth in the Decision.

The Board discussed each section of the conditions as set forth in the Decision.

The Board discussed the proposed: General Conditions; Prior to Construction Conditions; Construction and Operation Conditions; Construction and Operation Conditions; Prior to Completion Conditions; and Decommissioning Conditions. With respect to the Construction and Operation Conditions, the Board specifically requested that the Applicant meet with the Imlachs and offer to place additional landscape screening plantings on the Applicant/Property owner's land in order to provide additional visual buffering. The Applicant agreed to do so and Ms. MacKenna-Imlach indicated that she was interested in the applicant providing additional plantings.

With respect to the General Conditions; Prior to Construction Conditions; Construction and Operation Conditions; Construction and Operation Conditions; Prior to Completion Conditions; and Decommissioning Conditions, Ms. Sobolewski moves that the board to impose the conditions previously read. Ms. MacDonald seconds. Vote is unanimous in favor (3-0-0).

Having voted to impose the conditions, Ms. Sobolewski moves that the Board

On October 7, 2020, on a motion made by Ms. Sobolewski, seconded by Ms. Macdonald, the Planning Board voted 3-0-0 to approve the requested modifications as depicted on the Project Plans last revised on July 20, 2020, **subject to the conditions** which the Planning Board finds are necessary to mitigate impacts related to the construction, maintenance, operation and decommissioning of the Project.

2 Old Business:

The board reviewed the draft minutes for the September 23, 2020 meeting. Ms Sobolewski moves to accept the Minutes as written, Ms. MacDonald seconds, vote is unanimous in favor.

Bills are reviewed and warrants issued for payment.

7:00 p.m. Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Sobolewski, Mr. Cohen seconds unanimous vote in favor.

