TOWN OF PLYMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

**PLANNING BOARD**

Plympton Planning Board - Minutes – 1/11/2022

Members present: A. Sobolewski, P. D’Angelo, J. Schmid, J. Cohen

Meeting opened 6:30 PM

1. Continued Hearing for 171 Palmer Rd.

Applicant has requested a continuance

Movement: Ms. Sobolewski to continue public hearing on 171 Palmer Rd. to March 8, 2022 at 6:30 pm

2nd Mr. Schmid

       Approved Unanimously

 2.  New Business

Chris Vandenberghe of Outback Solar and applicant appeared regarding to submit plans for a solar project at 117 Lake St. Plans were accepted and this project will receive a hearing on February 8. 2022 at 6:30 pm.

 3.  Hearing 0 and 37 Lake St.

Mr. Schmid recused himself from the discussion due to the fact he is an abutter to the property. Mrs. JoAnn Beckwith, an abutter to the property stated 50 feet of the property was cleared. Approximately 150 stumps remain that she feels strongly should be removed. The clear-cut zone along his property was not supposed to be so large. Selective clearing was supposed to occur according to the approval of the permit. Ms. Sobolewski asked about the abutter’s view. She reminded the applicant, Sunrise Solar, and Borrego Solar (sub-contractor) the land was supposed to be selectively cleared. The applicant is now claiming there was no undergrowth or shrubbery remaining when trees were cleared. Mr. D’Angelo voiced his displeasure with the way this project had been carried out. He recalled another project with Borrego where the same type of blunt clearing was done violating the terms of the decision. Sunrise Solar did go out and identify the clear-cut zones and the selective clearing area. Steve from Borrego Solar said they had received a map of the area and created “minor differences.” Truck equipment was used to clear trees over 40 feet, personnel would have trampled saplings.  Ms. Sobolewski asked what they were trampling because the letter Borrego produced indicated there was no undergrowth. Mrs. Beckwith stated again there are at least 150 tree stumps remaining. There was no selective clearing.

Josh Farkus with Borrego stated there is currently less understory in front of the Beckwith home. He agreed it does not look good right now but says they haven’t started rebuilding. Mr. D’Angelo asked why they had not come prepared with before and after pictures of the site. The photo of the Beckwith house included was not taken from the selective clearing zone and was therefore irrelevant. He wanted to know what they were going to do to fix it. Ms. Sobolewski stated that perhaps the lot should not have been selectively cleared if there was no understory to begin with. “Selective clearing” in this case was a misnomer. Steve from Borrego stated they spent a lot of time on the design of the plans including the landscaping and screening. He feels they tried to follow the agreed upon selective clearing but understands the situation is not ideal. He believes when the plantings are done, they will provide adequate screening. Ms. Sobolewski stated the abutters would like the stumps completely removed in addition to plantings. Steve from Borrego stated there may well be an issue with permits from National Heritage which may not allow the removal of the stumps. The permit states stumps must be removed creating a catch-22 situation. Mr. D’Angelo asked if Borrego was aware National Heritage said stumps could not be removed at the time the permit was issued. Borrego claimed it was bad planning. Ms. Sobolewski suggested pictures of the area be provided to National Heritage along with information about the conflict with the Planning Board permit. Brandy O’Neil an abutter and neighbor of the Beckwith’s stated there was more undergrowth on her area of the property. She suggested it was important to concentrate on the stumps by the Beckwith’s. Their property has been left in a mess. Once the stumps are removed, new things will grow more easily. Ms. Sobolewski stated all stumps in the selective clearing area close to the Beckwith’s must be cleared. If they cannot be removed due to National Heritage, the stumps must be cut flush. She asked Borrego to produce a landscaping plan. Some of the abutters asked what would happen if the plants did not survive. Mr. D’Angelo responded the town would require a bond to cover the plants. Ms. Sobolewski asked if there was a plan to increase the landscaping due to the condition of the site. Borrego and Sunrise would like to sit down with the Beckwiths a little closer to Spring to come up with a plan. Mrs. Beckwith asked the Planning Board to be involved with those meetings. Ms. O’Neil wanted it made clear she should not receive less screening than originally agreed; the Beckwiths should receive more. Borrego stated they would work with abutters to make the situation right. Mr. D’Angelo suggested this project is a good indication of why neighbors should be involved in coming to meetings and reviewing plans. In his opinion any new plan would have to be agreed upon by neighbors, Borrego, and the board. Ms. Sobolewski stated at this point the board needed clarification on the stumps and a new plan for landscaping. Borrego asked to appear at the March 8 meeting and said they would meet with abutters prior to that date.

 Movement Ms. Sobolewski: to continue the hearing on 0 and 37 Lake St.

 to March 8, 2022 at 6:45 pm.

 2nd Mr. D’Angelo

 Approved 3-0-1 with Mr. Schmid abstaining

3.       Minutes

Movement: Ms. Sobolewski to approve the minutes of 12/7/21 as written.

2ndd: Mr. D’Angelo

Approved Unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm