

Town of Washington

Planning Board Meeting

September 8, 2020

In Attendance: Debra Dean (Alt.), Sarah Collins, Cassidy Parmley, Mitch Garnett (Chair), Steve Ocean, Bob Temple (CEO)

Absent: Jesse Casas, Katherine Grinell (Alt.)

Public Attendees: Jordan Belknap, Silas Canavan

Mitch Garnett calls meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

The summaries from February and March require Board approval. Steve Ocean motions to approve, Debra Dean seconds. All in favor none opposed, the summaries from February and March are approved.

Election of Board officers is discussed, Steve Ocean motions to table until more members are in attendance. Sarah Collins seconds the motion, all in favor, none opposed Election of Officers will be addressed at the next meeting in October.

Presentation by Jordan Belknap (Turning Point Energy) and Silas Canavan (Civil Engineer):

The proposed solar array would be located at 576 Waldoboro Rd near the CMP substation at the intersection of Rt 17 and 220 south of Stickney Corner. The property is owned by Katherine Hutchins. Access to site would be through the improvement of an existing driveway/farm road by expanding to 14' and covering with gravel. The area would be surrounded by a 7' chain link fence and the panels would be a maximum of 12' in height. The area is currently a treed meadow and does encompass some areas of wetlands. Silas Canavan has prepared a plan to minimize impact, (i.e. using underground wiring in areas where it doesn't interfere with wetlands and overhead to avoid disturbing the environment where necessary.) The property falls within the Medomak watershed and permits through DEP are currently under review. After initial installation the property will be allowed to return to meadowlands being mowed biannually.

Steve Ocean asked about how many households would benefit as well as how many acres the project uses. Jordan Belknap stated that it could assist in powering approximately 1000 residences and Silas Canavan added it would be just under 10 acres involved. Mitch Garnett asked about the durability of the panels in regards to the weight of snow and the life span of the panels. Jordan explained the panels would be tilted due south and for the most part snow will slide off. Maintenance crews will be dispatched in the case of more severe storm or ice. The panels are warrantied for 25 years and the lease for the project from the landowner is 20 years with the option to expand in 5 year increments up to 40 years. Panels will be subject to routine inspection and repair. The system is fully remote and can detect when maintenance is needed. In the event of an emergency the system can be shut down remotely as well, either with their system or by CMP. Steve Ocean asked about a fire plan for the site. Jordan said that the chance of fire is low but will consult with the Fire Chief to create a protocol in the event of such an event. Debra Dean asked about how to alert hunters to the site to avoid damage to panels due to it being a popular area for hunting. Jordan Belknap had not considered this situation, signs will be posted on fencing, but will come up with a plan to minimize potential damage.

Mitch Garnett asked about the schedule for inspections, the possibility of leaking of the panels and snow removal for the area. Jordan Belknap stated that the panels and related equipment all have their own individual time tables for inspection and repair. (quarterly, biannually, or annually depending on the component) The panels are silicon based and contain no liquid that might leak, they are comprised of aluminum and glass as well. The access will be kept clear for vehicles to get through during the winter months. Cassidy Parmley asked about the location of abutters. Silas Canavan had prepared a map of the area but it wasn't large enough to show the abutting properties. Bob Temple wasn't positive on exact number but felt that it was around 12-14 abutters to the project. Steve Ocean asked about exterior lighting and Jordan Belknap said no exterior lights would be installed although some of the equipment have lights that will not disturb the neighbors.

For the purpose of expediting the project the Planning Board will meet again on 9/22/2020 to review the application in hopes of scheduling a public hearing in the October meeting. The Planning Board has also recommended a site review pending a complete application.

Other Business:

Bob Temple has two other solar projects applications but is waiting on follow up. CMP project, Bob is waiting on the fees to the application to upgrade the grid from 220 near the Washington Trading Post.

Steve Ocean motions to adjourn, meeting ends at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelly Hassanein