Conservation Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
May 24, 2018

Present: Jeff Green, Sue Tomkins, Ron Rezabek, Paul Yaeger, Sam Akinbami, Ed Standora, Diane Evans, Bob Wynne, Mike Madigan. Excused: Alice Gerard
Alternates, subject to approval by Town Board: Jim Czapla and Tom Burke. Guests: Bob Eddy, Nicole Gerber, Bev Kinney, Jim Sharpe. Guest speakers, see below. Meeting called to order at 7:03 pm by Jeff Green.

1. Consent Agenda - April minutes approved with two minor corrections. Motion to approve made by Bob, seconded by Ron. Carried 8 to 0.Jeff introduced, and welcomed to our board, Alternate 1, Jim Czapla and Alternate 2, Tom Burke. They will have voting power when regular members are absent.

2. Planning Update on Proposed Solar Park - Thomas Guzek, from SolarPark Energy in Saratoga Springs, NY was introduced. His company will be developing the solar farm on 42 acres of privately-owned land north of Whitehaven Rd. Kristen Savard, from Advanced Design Group presented the plans and details of the project. The area is zoned R1 D, so a special use permit will be needed. The Planning Board reviewed the site plan at its last meeting and suggested a few changes. Don Wilson, a soil and water specialist was hired to flag the wetlands. They will be Army Corps compliant. A steel bridge will be built to cross over Woods Creek which runs through this property. They will not disturb vegetation 50 feet on either side of the centerline of the creek.

Solar panels will be titled. There will be 15 feet in between rows. They will plant pollinators there. A bio retention area will be established at northeast corner of south end of the property, discharging into Woods Creek. That will be checked once a year. The 6-ft high fence surrounding the panels will have locked gates at entrances and at the bridge. There will be one gravel road to access the property. They will not level the land. Baywa is a partner on this project. Their parent company is in Germany. This will be the largest solar project in NYS, capable of producing 5 MW of AC power. Power lines will run underground except for one row of poles along the gravel road.

We raised concerns that so many mature trees will be cut down on the northern piece of the property. Jeff, Sue and Diane walked the property recently and discovered a large, dense, mature forest there. We also raised the concern that the fencing will prohibit or greatly restrict wildlife travel throughout the wetland areas. For the sake of frogs, salamanders, and turtles we suggested some sort of piping/small culverts that could go under the fence in periodic locations to allow safe travel for these small animals.

3. Planning Update of Heron Pointe, Phase 2
Sean Hopkins, attorney, and Chris Wood
engineer, joined us to present details of the project. 156 units will be built on 24 acres, adjacent to the previously-built units. None of them will be three stories. There will be Nineteen eight-unit buildings (two stories high) and one building with four units. Earth Dimensions will do the wetland delineation. A walking trail will be put in. There are proposed wetland retention areas. Exits will exist on Whitehaven and Grand Island Blvd. Question of traffic issues on Gl Blvd. were raised. Landscaping was discussed.

4. **RFQ Update** - We have only received one response to the RFQ. It is from the WNY Land Conservancy. Jeff will open it after tonight.

5. **Town Board Report** - Mike reported that out of the four very good candidates, two have been invited to join the board as alternates: Jim Czapla and Tom Burke. They will be official members when the Town Board votes them in at the next TB meeting, on June 4.

The TB is exploring different vendors for street lighting. LED and solar lighting are being evaluated. We could see as much as a 20% reduction in purchase of power if we switch. Right now everything, including the poles, are rented from National Grid. The Town is also negotiating with Beaver Island State Park to increase their payment for sewers. Currently they pay 25% of the cost.

6. **Master Plan** - Diane reported that the new Master Plan is complete! (After two years of work.) She reported that Jim Sharpe gave an excellent explanation of the process at the public event on May 22, 7:00 pm at the High School. He gave an overview of the plan and comments were taken from the floor. Diane urged CAB members to read it over and make comments. The LRPC will be accepting comments until June 12, at 5:00 pm. Make comments at: mp@grand-island.ny.us. Names will be removed so the comments will appear anonymous when the LRPC meets later in June to go through all the comments. The LRPC will make adjustments to the plan, based on the comments received. The plan will go to the Town Board for approval. Diane added that Jim Sharpe plans to keep the LRPC together. They will meet periodically to monitor the progress of the action items of the Master Plan. Jim Sharpe confirmed this and spoke briefly of the plan and the process.

7. **Additional News/Announcements/ Comments**
With our guest speakers out of the room, members discussed the two presentations. We concluded that Jeff will draft a letter of advisement with our concerns about the SolarPark Energy project. This will be sent to the Planning Board and Town Board.

Diane announced events coming up for the Solarize Grand Island Campaign. Details can be found at www.solarizegrandisland.org.
There is a bird walk on June 9,
8:30-10:30 am at Buckhorn Island State Park. A small group of birders met and decided we’d like to promote birding on Grand Island. This is our first public bird walk. Jajean Rose-Burney, from the WNYLC was invited to lead the walk. It’s the Town’s 50th birthday this year!

Bob moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm. Ron, seconded. Carried, 8 to 0.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Evans
Recording Secretary