



**Town of Hartland
Planning Board Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, Sep 15, 2022 6:30pm

In attendance: Robert Harris, Robert Spencer, Beverly Spencer, Steven Urtel and Secretary Jennifer Mason

Margaret Darroch - Absent

Public Attendance: Peggy Zaepfel, Town Supervisor - Ross Annabelle, Code Enforcement Officer - Michael Hartman, Ray Sullivan, John Davis and Barbara Outten.

Meeting called to order at 6:34pm

Mike Hartman shared data regarding soil types, with wooded and farm acre details of all properties participating in the Solar Energy project, highlighted on the map. 27 out of 2,008 properties located in the town limits. (See attached)

Kevin Campbell and Drazen Gasic with EDF Renewables begin their presentation.

Kevin begins to review sections of our proposed solar law.

Tier 4 part of the law: Sighting and Mitigation. A public meeting must be held 2 months prior to submitting an application. They are proposing an escrow with the town so the town may hire a consultant and an attorney to review materials as we have them ready. We will begin reviewing multiple agreements within the next year. A PILOT is required for the project to move forward. 15 year maximum PILOT. This may be negotiated with the County for a longer term.

Ray Sullivan asks Kevin about the map with highlighted yellow properties. These are the current participating parcels.

Kevin:

50% of easements have been signed as of now.

It costs 25 million dollars for the substation.

Easements are 100 feet wide.

Every 15-20 acres of solar panels need an inverter.

Substation will be on the transmission line.

We have to be under 45 decibels (this is comparable to a furnace turning on in your home) near neighboring homes.

The mets station was just put up 2 weeks ago, it's measuring the solar radiants, aka the power of the sun. Over the course of a year, we can then compare the intensity of the sun at ground level and coming off of the solar rays to the ground.



Town of Hartland Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Peggy Zaefel asked a question regarding the inverters and the noise we can expect from them.

Kevin: Inverters will be quiet at night.

Bob Spencer: Is there a timeframe for getting the rest of the easements signed?

Kevin: within the next year.

Ray Sullivan asked if the panel will affect the value of the homes.

Kevin does not believe that will affect or have very little impact on the value of homes in the town. He will have data in the next couple of months from a solar project in Ontario.

Special use permit, \$350,000 will be set aside, 75% is for the town and the other 25% can be set aside for other groups who wish to hire their own consultants and attorneys as well.

Zoning Districts: allowable for solar. Industrial and agricultural (with a handful of single family home zones). Two setbacks I'm concerned about. The setback from the centerline of the road. They currently have 50', personally 100' is more realistic due to things like snow banks. Setback minimum from homes is a minimum of 250'. Most cases we negotiated 400' from surrounding homes. Property lines are either 50 for nonresidential or 100' for residential, depending on if it's zoned residential or not. 250' from the edge of the neighboring house, not the property line.

Steve Urte expressed concern regarding road frontage on roads that have few homes. He does not want to see solar panels to the road, ultimately not allowing any new residential homes.

Kevin states the panels can be removed if need be. They will be removed in 30 years regardless, they have to decommission the land.

The timeframe will depend on the agreement with the land owner.

John Davis questions if the shrubbery will be maintained, he has driven around and noticed dead trees. Kevin said it will be maintained. Kevin shows examples of Arrays and the shrubbery around them. We will discuss what species of trees we will have planted around the Array. Kevin states they have planted Confers by the fence and aesthetically pleasing trees in front of them. He has also had fruit trees planted.

Kevin states, his company wants our feedback, they take that into consideration.

A trip was discussed to view a solar array in the winter months to get an idea of what they will look like with leafless trees, November most likely.



Town of Hartland Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Kevin mentions fence heights. He says per code it has to be 7 feet, but sometimes they are 8 feet. He also offers barbed wire on top as an option. He asks for our thoughts, most lean towards not wanting barbed wire.

Peggy Zaepfel discusses a main concern that the project is a checkerboard through the whole town and the noise ordinance. Everyone within a mile will hear the loud screeching, since they're across the town everyone will have to hear this noise. Can these be consolidated? So not everyone has to hear this noise? She also heard that on a quiet night the sound could travel miles.

Kevin states there will almost be 100 inverters.

Panels will not be placed on wooded property, which appears to be mostly wetlands. The mitigation on wetlands would be too costly.

Fire Code: 2 things we look for. 1) They ask for 20 foot wide roads, we reduce this to 16'. 2) Roads within 150' of any facility, this can include inverters or transformers. We offer a fly car or ATV to fire companies to gain access to the panels.

Bob Harris asks how the fire companies would gain access inside the fence?

Kevin states there will be a lockbox which they will have the code for. We use central inverters which are placed every 15 acres, along with transmitters. We can install a noise retention wall, or we can pay more money to have them quieter. We have done this in the past.

Inverters can be between 70 & 90 decibels at the source, this decreases the further away from the source.

Humming noise is called Tonal.

94C includes a decommissioning plan and the decommissioning bond. Every 5 years the company will revisit the costs and adjust as needed.

Steve Urtel asked if the panels are made in the U.S.A. They're thinking by 2024-2026 we will have American made panels.

Bob Harris asked if a panel goes bad, does it get replaced by the same company or manufacturer or can it be replaced with a different kind. Kevin answered this with they're typically replaced with the same as of now, but this may change in the future.



**Town of Hartland
Planning Board Meeting Minutes**

Peggy Zaepfel asks about panels creating hot spots on the ground. Kevin said this was looked into and he thinks it was a 4 or 5 fahrenheit degree difference.

Bob Spencer asks about utilizing sheep. Kevin said absolutely. We are currently importing 5-7 million sheep from overseas. The sheep are moved every 2 to 3 days.

Barbara Outten questions the setbacks. Kevin stated that in past projects distance from homes directly across from an array we have negotiated larger setbacks from the road.

Kevin:

Berms are typically used for visual buffering because that can make an impact on drainage. Landscape professionals are required for the visual buffering.

We also have a plan to protect the ag district. We try to maintain the topsoil so the land can revert back to its original use.

Other projects have crops growing under the panels, this will depend on the height agreement of the panels.

The parcels will be mowed if they aren't maintained by sheep. Chemicals are not used as often as possible.

8 Gigawatts are currently being made in the U.S.A. per year.

Vegetation that is put under the panels is also covered in the law.

Hazardous materials are discussed in multiple sections

These panels also use the backside of the panel to collect the reflection from the ground. In the winter the reflection off the snow greatly increases this.

NYS agreements are negotiated on a project basis. They are not all the same.

Construction is heavily regulated and monitored.

A schedule will be provided as a notice to residents what project will be occurring at what time and what type of work will be done at that time.

Next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on **Thursday October, 20th 2022 at 6:30pm.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Mason

Jennifer Mason
Planning Board Secretary