

## Charlemont Planning Board 10/18/2018 Meeting Minutes

Members Present, Bill Harker, Co-Chair, Gisela Walker, Carlene Hayden; Robert Malone, Co-Chair participated via telephone.

Public: Doug White Jr., John Schafer, Charlotte Dewey, Chris Rodstrom, Bob Fournier, Mark Nelson, Clean Energy Collective and applicants;

### Call to Order

Bill Harker called the meeting to order at 7pm and opened the public hearing.

### Item 1: Continuation of the Public Hearing from 10/4 about the large scale solar installation on Tea Street

Co-Chair B.Harker announced that R.Malone was participating via conference call due to geographic distance preventing him from attending in person.

C.Hayden raised the issue that the Hathaway lot is the last property on the list of historic properties from 1978 in the Village Historic District in the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) Inventory of Historic Assets of the Commonwealth and National Register of Historic Places for Massachusetts, the MACRIS database. Such properties are not eligible for qualification under the SMART program without permission from the local Historic Commission.

Mr. Rodstrom pointed out that while originally the field under consideration for the solar farm was part of that property, it has since been separated and does not fall under the above restriction. He said that properties on the State Register of Historic Places commonly focus on the historic structures, buildings or barns and not on large hayfields.

R.Malone suggested that the Board contact the local Historic Commission and clarify with them where they see their role in this. G.Walker agreed to contact Bill Coli, chair of the LHC.

The discussion focused next on grid capacity and the potential impact of 2MW going online for the rest of the development potential of the town. There is good reason to assume that the applicant will need to finance an upgrade of to the grid capacity. CEC has filed already an interconnect application and expects that the system impact study National Grid is currently doing will be ready by the end of the year. Board members and some members of the public continue to struggle with how to assess the capacity issue and will continue to look into it.

G.Walker asked whether the land identified for the solar installation is all that the LLC is leasing from the landowner or whether there is an additional buffer included. There is not. This is related to the next issue raised, that of additional screening. The Board appreciates the additional screening CEC had offered at the last meeting at the west side. Abutters who look directly down on the installation asked whether the trees could be a bit higher obviously without shading the collectors. The plan so far is that there will be small trees such as dogwood and crabapples in front of the stockade fence and arbor vitae in front of the chain link fence towards the northern half of the west side. The applicant had offered to make the chain-link fence at the south side towards Rte. 2 black plastic coated to reduce its visibility. The Board expressed the wish to have vegetative screening on the south to break up the hard line of collectors across the field.

There seemed agreement to go with the shrubs or bushes such as forsythia – not a solid line is needed.

An abutter raised the point that at present the field has much wildlife criss-crossing and asked CEC to accommodate their travel patterns as the solar installation is quite large to circumnavigate.

G.Walker asked on what criteria CEC had based the overall size and expanse of the installation and whether there was a possibility to reduce it. The applicant said they had been balancing the opportunity to minimize the visual impact by working with the topography, with the wish to maximize the amount of power to be generated. They stated that they usually create much larger installations. Obviously the applicant is not in favor of reducing or consolidating the layout of the solar field.

CEC's maintenance plan will include two mowings a year and four visual inspections.

Given the still pending issues around the capacity and historical register issues and the other co-chair only being available via telephone, G Walker moved at 8.15 pm to continue the hearing to November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 at 7.15pm; motion was seconded by B.Harker, all in favor.

Item # 2: Approval of Minutes

There were no minutes yet to be approved.

Item #3 Marijuana Regulations

There was no time to work on drafting regulations.

Item #4: 108 Main Street Mixed Use

The new owners of this house on the corner of the entrance to the school want to provide two apartments and one public workshop space. They will be submitting a SPR application for their public hearing on November 15.

Item #5: Brian DuPree Class III permit

Brian DuPree had inquired with the Select Board previously as to obtaining a Class III (junk car storage) license. Because he had outstanding violations with the Conservation Commission, the Select Board told DuPree to take care of his issues with Cons. Comm. first then come back to them. DuPree also needs a Special Permit from the Planning Board for the junk car operation, as he had never obtained one. Now the Cons. Comm. has asked for a joint meeting as DuPree has not followed through on his requirements with the Cons. Comm. So there will be a joint meeting with the Cons Comm., Select Board, and the P Bd. on Wednesday November 7 at 6.30pm to discuss next actions of each Board.

Item #6: Celltower Bylaw for Legate Hill Tower?

Town Counsel requested a conference call with P Bd members and Selectwoman Sarah Reynolds. We hope to make this call November 15 at 7pm.

Harker moved to adjourn the meeting at 9.15pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> by C Hayden, all in favor

**The next meeting of the Planning Board is Thursday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 at 7pm. PM.**

Respectfully submitted **by Gisela Walker**