



## **Planning Board Minutes – March 15, 2016**

A meeting of the Town of Freetown **Planning Board** was held on **March 15, 2016** at the Freetown Senior Center, 227 Chace Rd. Freetown, MA. **Present:** Debra Robbins, Robert Jose, Nicolas Velozo **Absent:** Mark Rogers, Keven Desmarais

Meeting called to order at 6:01 PM

### **A. ANR Plan for 103 County Road (Map 242 Lot 57)**

Bernard Perrotty of Prime Engineering approached the Board on behalf of the applicants. The subject property is currently 6.72 acres; the plan proposes the lot being divided into (4) new lots, all with adequate frontage and area to meet the zoning requirements. Motion to endorse the plan: Robert Jose; Second: Debra Robbins: all in favor.

### **B. ANR Plan for 0 Quanapoag Rd (Map 254, Lot 25)**

Steven Carvalho of Thompson Farland Inc. and Matthew Gifford, property owner, approached the Board. The subject property is a landlocked 7.3 acre parcel. The applicant is proposing to divide into (2) new lots, neither buildable due to lack of frontage. It is intended that one parcel, through a future sale, shall be combined with an abutting piece of land with frontage on Quanapoag Rd. Motion to endorse the plan: Robert Jose; Second: Debra Robbins: all in favor.

### **C. Public hearing for Marie's Way solar array (Map 228, Lot 8.02) called to order at 6:13 PM**

Motion to open the public hearing: Robert Jose; Second: Debra Robbins; Motion to waive the reading of the hearing notice: Robert Jose; Second: Debra Robbins: all in favor. David Albrecht of Borrego Solar approached the Board.

Mr. Albrecht states that this is a new application for a previously approved solar project in the same location, but with new modifications to the plans. He states the previous plan and approval did not necessarily have the same racking and modules that Borrego uses; Borrego designs, permits, and builds their own systems with specifications for materials, construction, and placement. Changes from the previously approved plan include:

- The new plans have been rotated to the correct state plane coordinate system
- Locations for the equipment (inverters, weather station, transformers, etc) have been moved from the SE corner of the parcel to more centrally located within the site. These equipment pads are now further away from Marie's Way and properties across the street
- Facility is now proposed to be 5.3 mW, rather than the 5.5 mW previously proposed
- The gravel road into the site will now run along the front property line and up through the center of the site

Mr. Albrecht states that the fencing and vegetated berm will be the same as had been previously approved. The largest difference, according to Mr. Albrecht will be the elimination of \$800,000 worth of grading and earth work that was proposed under the previous plan. Borrego has access to 3D modeling technology which shows the earth's contours, and such grading work was deemed unnecessary. There will be some grading to the north of the panel locations to run stormwater off north of the project perimeter, which will constitute roughly a week's worth of earth work. Mr. Jose inquires as to how many feet of topography they are leaving which would have otherwise been removed. Mr. Albrecht responds that there are areas that would have been cut 5 ft.

Mr. Albrecht discussed that the actual area containing the panels is roughly .5 acre less than the original plans, due to the fact that Borrego places the panel rows closer together.

Mr. Albrecht discussed the need for a gravel road which would be strong enough to accommodate vehicles bringing in materials, for about a 6 week period. After construction ends, traffic to the site will consist of pickup trucks sporadically throughout the year for landscape maintenance. Grass will be mowed when it reached 30 -36 inches high. He states that the project went before the Conservation Commission the previous week; the Commission discussed the differences between the stormwater reports for the previously approved project and this version. It is believed that the previous engineer analyzed using different B & C soil types, and arrived at more conservative analyses. He states that the Con Com Chairman will be speaking to a contact at DEP about those differences.

The Board discussed the merits of increasing the height on the vegetated berm, given that the topography of the site will not be changed as it was in the previous plan. Mr. Albrecht stated that if a berm is too tall, much of the water will quickly shed off of it, stunting the tree growth. He stated that if the Board is amenable, an option they are willing to provide is a stockade fence with shrubbery in front, in lieu of trees.

Gary Berna, of 76 Chace Road inquired as to the height of the panels from the ground to the top; Mr. Albrecht states that depending on the topography, anywhere from 7.5 ft to 10 feet in height. Janice Warr, of 2 Maries Way stated that she is not in favor of the stockade fence. She stated that one of the issues under the previously approved project was the right of way from Chace Road. She asked if that had been resolved; the Planning Technician stated that a Form A split the strip running along Marie's Way from a lot to the north, and that strip was subsequently deeded to Mr. DeMoranville. She inquired as to what the entrance would look like; Mr. Albrecht states that the entrance will now be further back from the cattle gate than it was on the previous plans. He states the cattle gate will come out and 100 further back will be the entrance gate. The dirt road will be extended through the entrance gate and run as a gravel road across the front of the property line. Ms. Warr inquired as to whether or not vegetation will be placed at the entrance to soften the appearance; Mr. Albrecht states that they do not presently have plans to do that, and that the entrance is located roughly as far back from the road as the vegetated berm, which will serve as a visual buffer.

Ms. Warr asked Mr. Albrecht to speak to the sound level of the equipment on site. He states that there is a hum that is not audible at 50 -100 feet away. The equipment is proposed to be located 660 ft away from Marie's Way. Mr. Berna inquired as to the decibel level; Mr. Albrecht stated that he did not have an exact number, but that the sound drops exponentially per foot, and at 660 ft away from the residential abutters, it would fall below the threshold for rural background noise level. Mr. Albrecht spoke to the construction stage; the estimate is that it will take about 6 months of construction time.

Ms. Warr asked for clarification on a previous mention of a DEP superseding order of conditions that was issued for the previous project. Mr. Albrecht stated that the DEP had issued a superseding order for the first project because they felt the solar system was too close to the stream. The stream has a benefit of a 200ft protection zone. DEP felt the land historically was wet, but then filled in due to farming activity. They asked the applicants to pull the system back; they did that, and the new project maintains a similar edge, leaving the project almost entirely out of the 100ft buffer as well. Mr. Velozo inquired as to the ledge that is out back towards the stream, and what Borrego's plan were for that area. Mr. Albrecht states that they will leave the ledge in that state; there is some pre-drilling, but no blasting. The panels are screwed in right through the existing ledge. Mr. Velozo states that a reviewing engineer will need to look at all of the proposed project changes.

The Board discussed the facts as presented tonight; Mr. Jose states that he feels the vegetated berm should be increased in height by 2 ft but stay with vegetation rather than stockade fence for visual screening.

Motion to continue the public hearing to April 5<sup>th</sup>, at 6 PM at Town Hall: Debra Robbins; Second: Nicolas Velozo; all in favor.

**D. Misc**

The Board discussed the partial collapse of the roadway over the culvert on Marie's Way at Holly Ridge. Mr. Endriunas had installed timbers and metal plates over it until a more permanent fix could be undertaken. A resident called with concerns that the metal plates had shifted. The Board came to a consensus to send Mr. Endriunas a letter, asking for his presence at the next meeting to update the Board on the solution, and to make a deposit into the project's engineering review account.

Larry Tate, owner of property located on 53 Narrows Rd., approached the Board regarding the subdivision of his property. He states that John Romanelli is working on an application for him.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Moreau  
Planning Technician

RECEIVED  
FREETOWN TOWN CLERK  
2016 JUN 10 PM 1:06

Jg/B