



Planning Board Minutes – April 16, 2019

A meeting of the Town of Freetown **Planning Board** was held on **April 16, 2019** at the Freetown Town Hall 3 N Main St Freetown, MA **Present:** Robert Jose, James Frates, Mark Rogers, Debra Robbins **Absent:** Keven Desmarais

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Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM

Discussion on 0 South Main Street USRV Way Subdivision request to run utility poles and overhead wires along the state property for the solar installation

James Rezendes, KR Rezendes, explained that he was there to get permission from the Board to construct utility poles and overhead wires along the state property for the solar installation.

Mr. Jose asked if the utility poles would be the typical kind used. Mr. Rezendes said that they would be.

Mr. Jose made a motion to approve as stated the utility easement on USRV Way Subdivision. Ms. Robbins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Continued public hearing for the Fallbrook Subdivision

Mr. Rogers read the letter from Evan Watson, Prime Engineering, asking for a continuance to the next Planning Board meeting on behalf of his clients.

Mr. Jose made a motion to continue the public hearing for the Fallbrook subdivision to May 7, 2019 at 6:00 pm. Ms. Robbins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Continued Public Hearing – Michkev RE LLC

Mr. Rogers read the letter from Dan Mulloy, Site Design Engineering, asking to continue the public hearing to a later date.

Mr. Jose made a motion to continue the public hearing for Michkev RE LLC Site Plan Review to May 21, 2019 at 6:00 pm at the Freetown Town Hall. Ms. Robbins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Proposed Solar Facility, Map 243, Lots 23 and 24, Freetown, MA Public Hearing

Mr. Rogers opened up the public hearing for the Proposed Solar Facility, Map 243, Lot 23 and 24, Freetown, MA.

Mr. Jose made motion to waive reading of the public hearing notice. Ms. Robbins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Evan Watson, Prime Engineering, explained the history of the site. He said that it was an old gravel pit and cranberry bog. Mr. Watson added that there is existing access to the site through a gravel road. The proposed solar array's output is 1.436 megawatts.

Mr. Rogers asked if the solar array can be shut off remotely. Mr. Watson replied that it can be controlled to some degree but that it has to be manually shut off on site.

Mr. Jose asked what is being proposed for screening. Joe Shanahan, Clean Energy Collective, replied that they put fences in that are 7 feet high and 6 inches off the ground. Mr. Rogers asked what Clean Energy Collective's biggest project is. Mr. Shanahan said it was 2 megawatts. Mr. Jose asked if there was going to be black mesh on the fence. Mr. Watson said that there would be.

Mr. Rogers opened up the public hearing to public comment. Mike Boudreau, 67 Dr. Braley Road, asked how long construction will take. Mr. Shanahan said that it will take 3 months, from mid-summer to November. Mr. Watson added that material arrive as they are installed.

Mr. Rogers asked where the nearest substation is. Mr. Shanahan said that it is ½ mile up the road. Steve Chimel, 50 Dr. Braley Road, asked if there will be any change in power. MR. Shanahan replied that the residents won't even know that the solar array is there.

Wendy Graca, 3 Dr. Braley Road, asked if the forest was already cleared. Mr. Watson said that it was. Ms. Graca asked what the benefit of this project is. Mr. Shanahan said since these facilities cannot be taxed his company will sit down with the selectmen and assessors and workout and agreed upon rate for a PILOT. Mr. Shanahan added that the impact on town service is non-existent and that there is no traffic, noise, lights, or fumes.

Mr. Rogers asked for the Board's comments. Mr. Rogers said that the site is huge and trucks should have no problem turning around there. Mr. Watson said that they can tell the truck drivers not to sit the trucks in front of properties. Mr. Rogers said he would like to see proper signage and a pre-construction meeting. Mr. Watson replied that the construction superintendent should meet with the board. Mr. Jose said that a material drop zone would be nice. Mr. Shanahan said that would not be a problem.

Mr. Jose made a motion to continue the proposed solar array at 0 Dr. Braley Road to May 7, 2019 at 6:00 pm in the Freetown Town Hall. Mr. Frates seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Hearing for Freetown Solar II

Mr. Rogers opened the public hearing for the Freetown Solar II project.

Mr. Jose made a motion to waive the reading of the public hearing notice. Ms. Robbins seconded.

Azu Etoniru, E. T. Engineering Enterprises, Inc., explained that he just received the review letter from Environmental Partners Group so he is going to ask to continue the public hearing and that he was there to give an overview of the project. Mr. Etoniru explained that the proposed solar facility is a 4 megawatt project and that access to the site is through an existing gas main easement that is 80 feet wide. Mr. Etoniru said that Algonquin, the gas company, will not allow gravel to be placed on the easement so swamp mats will bet down during construction. Mr. Etoniru added that all the panels will be placed so that they meet the minimum setbacks and that there will be 25 foot strip of undisturbed area between property line and panels.

Mr. Jose asked what kind of screening will be done. Mr. Etoniru replied that there will be a berm and screening. Mr. Rogers asked for more details like height, minimum height, deer resistant, etc. Mr. Jose asked what kind of fencing was proposed. Mr. Etoniru said they were proposing chain link fence.

Mr. Jose said something defining the hours of operation and parking, as well as a pre-construction meeting would help.

Mr. Rogers opened the public hearing up for public comment. Doug Simmons, 3 Christopher Drive, said that he would like to see a taller berm and said that the berm on Marie's Way is a joke.

Mr. Jose asked how long construction should last. Mr. Etoniru said about 4 months. Mr. Rogers asked what the time frame should be. Mr. Etoniru said hopefully starting in June or July and ending in October. Mr. Jose asked if privacy slate could be put on the fence. Mr. Etoniru said that privacy slats and barbed wire fencing are state requirements.

Matthew Allen, 12 Maries Way, asked if there would be chemical residue from the battery leaking. Mr. Etoniru said there is no battery in the proposed solar array and the equipment would be in the middle of site.

Mr. Rogers said that there has to be an ideal ratio between the size of the berm and survivability of the plants. Mr. Etoniru said the maximum height of a berm is 4 feet in order to sustain life. Mr. Etoniru added that at a 3:1 slope rocks are needed to try and stop erosion.

Mr. Jose asked the neighbors present if they would allow Mr. Etoniru to go on their property to try and a build a better plan. The neighbors said they would allow him to.

Mr. Allen asked what the maximum height that a tree could be and still be planted. Mr. Jose said that it depends on the amount of money one wanted to spend to install mature trees.

Mr. Rogers asked Mr. Etoniru to bring a copy of the Algonquin easement agreement to the next public hearing. Mr. Rogers also said he would like a breakdown of the anticipated amount of traffic.

Mr. Simmons said he would like to see a taller berm than 4 feet, if possible.

Mr. Jose made a motion to continue the public hearing for Freetown Solar II to May 21, 2019 at 6:00 pm. Ms. Robbins seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Rogers made a motion to accept the minutes from March 19, 2019. Mr. Jose moved and Mr. Frates seconded. Ms. Robbins abstained because she did not attend the March 19th meeting.

Mr. Jose made a motion to adjourn at 7:31 pm. Ms. Robbins seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher McKay