

Minutes of the Burrillville Planning Board meeting of July 8, 2019, at the Jesse Smith Library, 100 Tinkham Lane, Harrisville subject to approval at the next regular meeting.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm, Jeffrey Partington, Chairman, presiding.

Members Present: Jeffrey Partington, Christopher Desjardins, Steve Foy, Dov Pick, and Robert Woods

Others Present: Ray Goff, Planning Director

II. ATTENDANCE REVIEW:

Mr. Partington acknowledged that Leo Felice, Bruce Ferreira, Michael Lupis and Ken Raspallo were excused.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

A motion to accept the minutes of the June 3, 2019 meeting was made by Mr. Foy, seconded by Mr. Woods and carried unanimously.

IV. CORRESPONDENCE:

- Ocean State Outdoors, Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan – Notice of public hearing on July 17, 2019

V. OLD BUSINESS: None

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

Hexagon Solar – Saint John Solar, owner: Woonsocket Consumers Coal, Major Land Development Project - Pre-application/Concept Review – 0 Clear River Drive, Plat 178, Lot 013- Discuss proposed 800 kW ground mounted solar field.

Mr. Buzz Becker of Hexagon Energy spoke as representative of the applicant. Mr. Becker described the property and project to the Board as follows:

The property is 9.7 acres zoned General Industrial (GI) and the site area is 3 to 3.5 acres. The set back is thirty (30) feet in the rear and 15 feet on the sides, but we bumped to 30. In terms of abutter considerations, the neighbors to the east on Clear River Drive are 580 feet away. Then there are some houses on the south side, the closest structure is 240 feet away. A lot of that is vegetative buffer. The interconnect point is on Clear River Drive running along the southern lot line. There is a little bit of a north east facing slope which is not optimal for fixed panels but we will make it work. There is a small isolated wetlands in two locations, but we are working with Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management so we won't encroach on any of them. This will be a community solar project which means that the power produced will be locally consumed project and not shipped to Providence or other places. It will be used by local rate payers.

We recognize that we will need to apply to the Zoning Board. We need at least one variance along with the special use permit. The variance is for lot coverage. The Ordinance allows up to 20% lot coverage for a solar project. That's defined by site perimeter. Even if you're going to count the panels' square footage as coverage, we think the ratio to be about one third of site perimeter is actually what has panel coverage, so with that logic it's easily within the 20% there.

We don't anticipate any changes to the elevation, we'll just do panel spacing to accommodate the slope. The primary use for this space today is a propane tank facility for Consumers. While not an open field, it is not the densest forested area. We measure it to be roughly two of the three acres to be wooded. We can certainly look into some post project mitigation. We are going to be doing natural pollinators underneath the panels.

Mr. Foy asked what the percentage of the lot coverage based on the perimeter site. Mr. Becker responded that it is about 30%. Mr. Woods asked the applicant the rationale for a variance of the percentage allowed. Mr. Becker said that they hope to get credit for the space in between the panels towards the counting of the coverage. Mr. Partington stated that the Ordinance is ambiguous on the definition of lot coverage and we have allowed for more coverage in previous projects because we view each project individually according how a property can be used.

Mr. Desjardins asked how much tree cutting was being considered. Mr. Becker stated that about half of it will be cleared, some of that amount is already clear. They will look into adding to the natural buffer on the south side and the south east side if necessary.

Mr. Desjardins asked if there is any way to move the site itself closer to Clear River Drive to make the buffer to the abutters greater. Mr. Becker replied that the constraints are that the security fence around the propane tanks will stay and there is a little bit of a wetlands in the other direction. Mr. Foy asked if the 30% was to get them to the 800 kW. Mr. Becker stated that as an alternative they could do some site mitigation that could potentially reduce the lot coverage. Mr. Becker stated that they could do elevation changes to improve solar gain, but would rather not due to costs and how it would change the site elevations. Further, they would consider manipulating the spacing of panels in order to achieve the right number of panels to make the project feasible.

Mr. Foy asked how far to the property line, rather than to the house, the buffer is to the property on the south side. Mr. Becker said it is 30 feet to the property line. Mr. Pick asked if it is a symmetrical configuration. Mr. Becker said it's not a perfect rectangle, but a little bit tilted. Further asked how facility size, ½ MW is a threshold for a project to be feasible. Mr. Becker explained that the costs to connect determine what is feasible for a project. You would need a certain number of MW's in order to do a project.

The Board expressed that they like the project and the site. They also expressed their desire to have more landscaping added to ensure more of a buffer to the abutters and to avoid large cuts and fills just to make the project feasible.

Mark Brizard – Minor Subdivision Preliminary/Final Review, 0 Stone Barn Road, Plat 54, Lot 11
- *Requesting approval of a 3 lot subdivision.* Norbert Therien of National Surveyors-Developers Inc. spoke for the applicant. Mr. Therien described the lot to be subdivided as 33 acres, two lots are 10 acres the third is 13 acres. There are no outstanding issues. There are no sewers so all three lots have septic systems that have been approved. Each lot will have its own driveway. The existing stone walls will be kept and some utilized as a landscaping feature. He stated that the lots have met all the state and town requirements for wetlands as well as septic design. In particular the town requirement for lots containing over 40 percent wetlands need to locate the septic system 200 feet away and have at least 12,000 sq. ft. of upland.

A motion to approve the Minor Subdivision Preliminary/Final Plan for Mark Brizard was made by Mr. Partington pursuant to such a hearing and testimony by appropriate representatives of the land owner and/or developer, the Burrillville Planning Board, upon careful deliberation and in accordance with the provisions of RIGL Section 45-23-60 Required Findings, has arrived at and agreed upon the following findings of fact: the subdivision is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, Chapter V – Housing,

Implementation Action V.1.a.1; with the granting of a waiver of Section 15-9.3 A. General 3. (lot depth to width ratio), the development is in conformance with the Town's Subdivision Regulations; the application is in conformance with the Town's Zoning Ordinance regarding lot dimension and use; there will be no negative environmental impacts as evidenced by the Freshwater Wetlands Program Application approval 19-0124; the subdivision will not result in the creation of unbuildable lots; the subdivision will create three (3) lots that will have adequate and permanent physical access to Stone Barn Road. The motion received a second from Mr. Pick and carried unanimously by the Board.

Virgil Jr. & Donna Gauthier – Minor Subdivision Preliminary/Final Review, 320 Mowry Street, Plat 178, Lot 8 - Requesting approval of a 2 lot subdivision. Mr. Gauthier stated that there had been questions of wetlands on the property, approvals have been received from RIDEM; and there was also a question of the frontage, a variance from the Burrillville Zoning Board has been received. There are no other items outstanding. Mr. Goff stated that the applicant has gone to the Zoning Board for the frontage variance, which was approved shortly after the last Board meeting.

A motion to approve the Minor Subdivision Preliminary/Final Review for Virgil Jr. & Donna Gauthier was made by Steve Foy pursuant to such a hearing and testimony by appropriate representatives of the land owner and/or developer, the Burrillville Planning Board, upon careful deliberation and in accordance with the provisions of RIGL Section 45-23-60 Required Findings, has arrived at and agreed upon the following findings of fact: the subdivision is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, Chapter V – Housing, Implementation Action V.1.a.1; with the granting of a waiver of Section 15-9.3 A. General 3. (lot depth to width ratio), the development is in conformance with the Town's Subdivision Regulations; with the grant of a Zoning Variance by the Zoning Board of Review of 32.55 feet on May 14, 2019, the application is in conformance with the Town's Zoning Ordinance regarding lot dimension and use; there will be no negative environmental impacts as evidenced by the OWTS Application #1803-1572 approval; the subdivision will not result in the creation of unbuildable lots; the subdivision will create two (2) lots that will have adequate and permanent physical access to Mowry Street. The motion received a second from Mr. Woods and carried unanimously by the Board.

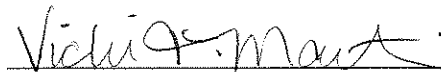
Burrillville Solar LLC. /Town of Burrillville – Major Land Development Project - Final Review, 0 Daniele Drive, Plat 195, Lot 15 - Requesting approval of a for a 4.2MW ground mounted solar field. Mr. Goff asked the Board to continue this until the next meeting because they are still waiting for the RIDEM wetlands permit.

Motion to continue this item until the next meeting was made by Mr. Partington. The motion received a second from Mr. Desjardins and carried unanimously by the Board.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS:

Report from Administrative Officer: None

Having nothing further, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Pick at 7:45 p.m. The motion received a second from Mr. Woods and carried unanimously by the Board.


Vicki T. Martin, Deputy Town Clerk