



PLANNING BOARD MINUTES August 21, 2018

The Pledge of Allegiance.

One public hearing was scheduled for this meeting and the public was invited to come forward to review the plans and ask questions. Howard Post, Chairman, opened the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Present: Howard Post, Daniel Ellsworth, Carol Furman, Kenneth Goldberg, Michael Tiano, William Creen and Robert Hlavaty (alternate).

Also Present: Dan Shuster, Consultant & Mike MacIsaac, Liason

Absent: Len Bouren

A motion by Furman, seconded by Tiano to accept the July 2018 minutes, motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING(S):

1. Site Plan/SUP-Blue Stone Solar Energy, LLC/Geronimo Energy-Churchland Lane.

The draft Negative Declaration, prepared by Dan Shuster, as required by SEQR was discussed. The draft was read in its entirety to the public. Derek Hasek and Jenny Monson-Miller were present to contribute to the discussion. When addressing herbicides, it was noted by Mr. Hasek that there will be several points to remember in the use of herbicides by Blue Stone that were agreed upon with the Board and shall be included in the Final Draft of the Negative Declaration:

- For the first three years herbicides will not be used at all.
- If any herbicides are to be used after that point in time, they must notify the board with a report of what herbicide and how much is necessary, limit the potential use.
- Only those herbicides that can be bought by a homeowner/general public will be used.
- A licensed professional 3rd party will be hired to apply any necessary herbicides.
- Round-up will not be used at all.

No pesticides will be used at any time. There will be no impact visually to any known resource historical, architectural or aesthetic nature. Visual Impacts from Overlook Mountain in the Catskill Park have been demonstrated to be obscured by topography. Visibility will be primarily from the surrounding properties in the immediate area, none of which are considered sensitive sites. Views of the site by the greatest number of people will be those of the drivers on the NYS Thruway who will have a potentially unobstructed view of the site and will be from a high rate of speed. There will be virtually no visitation to the site, except for upkeep.

A motion was made by Furman, seconded by Goldberg to approve the Negative Declaration with additional conditions regarding herbicide use. All in favor, none opposed, carried.

Opened public hearing at 8:16 pm. Several residents present for the public hearing. Geronimo Energy is a Minnesota based company founded by a farmer. Try to be an excellent partner to all the communities they develop in. The applicant is looking to develop a 19.99-megawatt solar farm over just under 100 acres. Blue

Stone Solar Energy, LLC holds a contract with NYSERTA for the energy that is generated. Significant outreach. There was a Neighborhood outreach meeting in July and an Open House in August hosted by Geronimo Energy.

Public Comments:

- Barry Benepe – Out of the 16 criteria in the Negative Declaration not one was regarding visual impact to the neighbors. Handed out photos of solar installations in other parts of the country to demonstrate the visual impact. This site plan for Blue Stone shows total coverage of land with solar panels. This is not zoned industrial but residential and a solar farm should be in an industrial zone. The Board should take consideration in the location of this project in a residential area.
- Joan Monastero & Alan Spivak, Churchland Road – Read a statement aloud regarding their views of the project, copy given for file. Opposed to the use of 100 acres of residential zoned property for industrial use. Not opposed to solar but not in this location. No regard to well being of the people that live here. This zoning law was changed to include solar farms in residential areas in a manner that was not fair to the community in 2016. Successive plants should not be eliminated. Thought into using sheep to graze instead of herbicides? Monson-Miller – Looking into that option. Spivak - Who owns this property?
- Philip O’Conner, Owner of property - Purchased property in April 2017. Native to upstate NY and advocate for clean energy. Co-owns with Kevin O’Conner, Jamie Atkins and Scott Frost. This location would be a good location for a solar farm because of the access points. Approached Geronimo Energy after researching several companies to find the one that would fit into the community the best.
- Tiffany Sperl, 1206 Churchland Lane – Supports this project 100%.
- Bill Wynkoop, 135 Churchland Road – Present to support Geronimo.
- Darrell Sherman, 11 Bill Parr Drive – Agree with renewable resources, supports Geronimo because it will be the lowest impact to the community as opposed to a condominium or something else being developed on that land.
- Tracy Puertas, 1272 Churchland Lane – 20-year resident. Pro-Geronimo because of its low-impact and the ability for the animals to still use the land.
- Tammy Conklin, 195 Churchland Road – Can houses be built on the property? Heard it was a wildlife preserve and wetlands. Shuster – not a wildlife preserve and houses may certainly be built, the lot is a buildable/developable lot. Post-There are federal wetlands on the lot but they only occupy areas of the lot which are spread out, everywhere else may be used for development. Monson-Miller-can use wetlands to build on but will require a special permit.
- Maryann Kalin-Miller, 80 Churchland Road – How are the screening plantings chosen? They will not screen those residents looking down from Churchland Road. Hasek – the Special Use Permit application included intelligent local flora to use as screenings. Geronimo is open to additional screenings and suggestions from the neighbors. Shuster – The Board will review the screenings and landscaping provided on the Site Plan before approving the Site Plan or Special Use Permit.
- Nora, Churchland Road – What is the process of the sale of energy? Hasek – A transition grid is used, and the energy is distributed through the area. Contracts are made with commercial off-takers, this is not a “community solar-program”.
- Ingrid, 4 bill Parr Drive – In favor of the project.
- Charles Duford, 23 Bill Parr Drive – Has solar on residence and loves it. Use of renewable energy is necessary to take care of the future.
- Nigel Redman, Saugerties Resident – How do the neighbors and Saugerties residents benefit from this project? Hasek – There will be an increase in tax revenue with benefits going to local schools, revenue stream to cover taxes of land, 6-9 months of construction with 75-100 short term jobs, influx of patrons to local restaurants and stores while construction is underway, PILOT process allocation per megawatt to school and town and there will be one full time employee.

- Lance Sperl, 1206 Churchland Lane – Have investigated the effect on land value as a neighboring land owner and have found no negative effect or deterioration of property value.

Post asked if anyone else had comments/concerns. None. A motion was made by Creen, seconded by Ellsworth to close the public hearing at 9:10 pm. All in favor, none opposed, carried.

Goldberg - Solar is allowed in MDR with a Special Use Permit but how was this location selected. Hasek – The owner approached Geronimo to develop the land. The site works for this project because it is flat with electrical access. The land is already a field so there is not a lot of foliage/tree removal needed. The parcels that were available in the industrial area would require tree removal and clearing of the land.

A motion by Goldberg, seconded by Creen to refer to the Ulster County Planning Board. All in favor, none opposed, carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Site Plan/SUP, ELP Saugerties Solar, LLC, 1765 Route 212. Presented by Jamie Fordyce and Wendy DeWolfe, Eastlight Partners. The applicant decided to reconfigure the fence design so that a Zoning Board of Appeals variance is not needed. The new site plan was submitted and reviewed. All setbacks were adhered to. Visual impacts were looked at and the only visual point was from the southward view on Raycliffe Drive, which was barely visible. The EAF was modified to reflect the land disturbance. A motion was made by Goldberg, seconded by Furman to approve a negative declaration under SEQR. All in favor, none opposed, carried.

PRE-HEARING CONFERENCE:

1. Lot Line Revision, Gerard & Theresa Bradford, 3585 Route 32. Tom Conrad presented for the owner. The applicant would like to revise as existing lot line to remove encroachment by an existing driveway, an area .535 acres will be transferred. A motion was made by Goldberg, seconded by Furman to declare a Type II action under SEQR. All in favor, none opposed, carried. A motion was made by Furman, seconded by Tiano to waive the public hearing and approve the lot line revision pending signatures and fees paid. All in favor, none opposed, carried.

2. Minor Subdivision, Ted Miller, Off Delaware Street. Presented by Tom Conrad. The applicant would like to create a 1.06-acre lot from a 42.7-acre parcel currently owned by Northeast Solite. The applicant is in under contract to purchase. The new lot will be bounded by the Town of Saugerties sewage treatment plant to the south, the access road to the plant on the west and the access road to the loading dock on the north and east. Tiano - The lot does not have municipal water/sewer. Conrad – will ask applicant if they wish to move forward knowing this has no water/sewer access. No further Board action is necessary at this time.

3. Minor Subdivision, Andrew Omotoso, 266 Malden Turnpike. Presented by Tom Conrad. The applicant wishes to subdivide two acres, where his house currently is, from a 17-acre lot and sell the remainder of the property. Shuster – Concern with access to back lot if the parcel is subdivided. Is there a road maintenance agreement? Ellsworth – We can not approve a subdivision if there is not access to the back lot. No further action can be taken by the Board until they have proof of access to the proposed 15-acre parcel.

4. Minor Subdivision, Catherine Berzal, 6058 Route 32. Presented by Walter Eckert of Brinnier & Larios, P.C. The applicant proposes to subdivide a 17.9-acre parcel into two approximately equal sized lots, 8.5 acres and 9.4 acres. The 8.5-acre southernly lot has an existing house on it. Referral to the Ulster County Planning Board is not required. A motion was made by Goldberg, seconded by Ellsworth to declare an Unlisted action under SEQR and approve a Negative Declaration. All in favor, none opposed, carried. A motion was made by Goldberg, seconded by Tiano to schedule the public hearing for the September 18 2018 meeting. All in favor, none opposed, carried.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Sophiedrew Acres – Mike Tiano distributed a handout and addressed his concerns; water issues/drainage, will the past usage of pesticides be harmful to the horses that will live there, will the evasive fly used harm the birds or reptile businesses that are in the surrounding area, traffic study is not accurate, would like to require a chip and tar surface for the road and would like to see a note in the resolution that they cannot exceed 40 horses. Why was he public hearing being closed? The Board will now only have 62 days to determine a decision. Post- If the applicant agrees to an extension of for the decision it can be delayed until the Board is ready to make such decision.

Agawam – Mike Tiano distributed a handout and addressed his concerns; an 8' water line should be required from Glasco Tpke. into the project, Agawam should attach the four houses on Liberty Street to the water/sewer, roads should be stone and chipped and inspected by Town Engineer, fire district would like to know if they plan on using natural or LP gas and the screening needs to be reviewed with types of plants to be used. There was another 2-car accident at the four corners on July 31st.

Adjournment:

Since there was no further business to discuss, a motion by Tiano, seconded by Furman, to adjourn the meeting at 10:42 pm. All in favor, none opposed, carried.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Becky Bertorelli
Planning Board Secretary