

MINUTES OF THE JULY 11, 2023 MEETING OF THE TOWN OF STEPHENTOWN PLANNING BOARD

In attendance: Zachary Leonard, Alex Haley, Robert Lobdell Jr. , Derek Gardner and Craig Crist, attorney for the Planning Board

Absent: Mark Prescott; ZBA Secretary Gilliland

Meeting called to order at 7:11 p.m.

The Board and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Leonard, seconded by Haley, to adopt the May 2, 2023 draft meeting minutes as the official minutes of that meeting. The motion was seconded by Haley and passed 4-0.

A motion was made by Lobdell, seconded by Leonard, to adopt the June 6, 2023 draft meeting minutes as the official minutes of that meeting. The motion passed 3-0 with Gardner abstaining as a result of not having attended that meeting.

It was discussed that attorney Crist would keep the minutes of the meeting in light of the planned vacation of Gilliland.

Solar Power Network

Crist noted that Aaron Ovis, the engineer for the applicant, had brought a check that was delivered to Building Inspector Casavaugh, who was in attendance for the \$2,500.00 application fee. It was also discussed how the prior \$2,500 payment is to be utilized as funds to be applied to the legal fee escrow.

In attendance was Traci Sousa of MJ Engineering. She noted that she had sent out a review letter dated that same day, July 11, 2023. Crist asked her to walk the Board through the letter. She did and noted that she had no concerns, and that the items noted therein were "minor items."

Crist asked Mr. Ovis if he cared to comment. He said he did and said that he agreed that the matters listed on the aforementioned July 11, 2023 review letter are minor items. He said that he met with the Fire Chief and that he is fine with the turnaround. He said that they will note any trees to be removed. He said that it was his desire that that Planning Board move at this meeting to accept lead agency status.

Building Inspector Cassavaugh said that he understands that the accessway to the property will not be used often but that it has to be sufficient in the event that there is an emergency and that there cannot be a situation where there is a bottleneck because the driveway is too narrow. He said that he has spoken to the Fire Chief and that the accessway needs to be such that it can accommodate two emergency vehicles.

Ovis said that would not be a problem and that the accessway would be widened to 16 feet and that it would be reviewed with the Fire Chief.

Crist asked Sousa if an FEA and Agricultural Data Statement had been provided. She responded that both had been provided.

Crist asked Code Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector Cassavaugh if the amended plans meet all of the requirements of the Town's Solar Photovoltaic Energy Systems Law and all other applicable laws of the Town including the Town's Amended Land Use Regulations.

Cassavaugh said it yes, they do.

Crist asked Cassavaugh if it was still his opinion that that approvals needed for the project were a special use permit and site plan approval. Cassavaugh said yes, but also noted that a building permit was also needed.

Gardner asked if there was anyone from the public that desired to speak on this matter. There was no one who desired to do so.

The Board and Sousa discussed the involved and interest agencies for the project. Crist asked, if in her opinion, the Board could move to classify itself as lead agency for the project. She said she was of the opinion that it could.

Leonard therefore made a motion that the Town of Stephentown Planning Board be lead agency for the subject Solar Power Network project, which was seconded by Gardner and passed 4-0.

Crist noted the passage by the Town Board of the Town of Stephentown Solar Photovoltaic Energy Systems Law and recommended that the Board members continue to review same.

Crist asked Sousa if in her opinion the Board could call for a public hearing on the application. She said yes.

Gardner made a motion to call for a public hearing on the Solar Power Network application at the August 1, 2023 meeting at 7:00 p.m., which was seconded by Lobdell and passed 4-0.

Crist asked Ovis if he continued to adjourn all applicable time periods and deadlines. Ovis said he did.

Crist asked Sousa if she had any questions or comments. She said that she did not.

Leonard made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 pm, which was seconded by Haley and passed 4-0.