

1 MILFORD PLANNING BOARD AND ZONING BOARD JOINT

2 MEETING MINUTES

3 May 19, 2020 Telephone Conference, 6:30 PM

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5 **Members Present:**

6 Doug Knott, P B Chairman

7 Tim Finan, P B Vice Chairman

8 Pete Basiliere, P B Alternate Member

9 Janet Langdell, P B Member

10 Susan Robinson, P B Member

11 Paul Amato, P B Member

12 Laura Dudziak, P B Selectmen's Rep

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14 Jason Plourde, ZBA Chairman

15 Rob Costantino, ZBA Vice Chairman

16 Karin Lagro, ZBA Alternate

Staff:

Kellie Walsh, Planner

Darlene Bouffard, Recording Secretary

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22 **1. Call to order:**

23 D. Knott called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. D. Knott read the Telephone Conference Preamble as
24 follows:

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26 ***MEETING PREAMBLE DURING COVID-19 EMERGENCY***

27 *Good Evening, as Chairman of the Planning Board, I am declaring that an emergency exists and I am*
28 *invoking the provisions of RSA 91-A:2, III (b). Federal, State, and Local officials have determined that*
29 *gatherings of 10 or more people pose a substantial risk to our community in its continuing efforts to*
30 *combat the spear of COVID-19. In concurring with their determination, I also find that this meeting is*
31 *imperative to the continued operation of Town government and services, which are vital to public safety*
32 *and confidence during this emergency. As such, this meeting will be conducted without a quorum of this*
33 *body physically present in the same location.*

34 *At this time, I also welcome members of the public accessing this meeting remotely. Even though this*
35 *meeting is being conducted in a unique manner under unusual circumstances, the usual rules of conduct*
36 *and decorum apply.*

37 *Public comments will be limited to three minutes per person. Any person found to be disrupting this*
38 *meeting will be asked to cease the disruption. If the disruptive behavior continues thereafter, that*
39 *person will be removed from this meeting.*

40 *Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting must and will be done by Roll Call Vote.*

41 *Let's start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their name, also*
42 *please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under*
43 *the Right-to-Know Law.*

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45 Roll call was taken: T. Finan was present, alone in his office; J. Langdell was present, alone in her office; P.
46 Amato was present, alone in his office; L. Dudziak was present, alone in her office; J. Plourde was present, alone
47 in a Town Hall office; R. Costantino was present, alone at home; K. Lagro was present, alone in her home; L.
48 Daley was present, alone in his office; K. Walsh was present, alone in her office.

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50 **2. Public Meeting:**

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52 Milford Spartan Solar, LLC, for the properties located at Milford Tax Map 38-4, 38-5, 38-5-1, 38-9, 38-11,
53 3812, 38-13, 38-14 and 39-74. Conceptual Review Application to construct a 16 Megawatt Utility scale
54 solar collection system totaling approximately 83.05 acres in area on properties located in the Industrial and
55 Residential "R" Zoning districts.

D. Knott stated this is a conceptual discussion and is a non-binding meeting. Dom Lebel, Tom Hill, Ben Chamberlain and Andy Provencher were present for this discussion. Dom Lebel thanked the Planning and Zoning Boards for continuing with these public meetings amid the confusion in the world today. This is a conceptual discussion about 83 acres. D. Lebel explained the plan and walked through the design layout. This layout is for a potential use as a solar farm on town owned and privately owned land. This site abuts two gravel pits along NH State Route 101. This project will generate power for about 8800 people, or 58% of town residents. Olivewood is a solar farm development company in New England. The planned solar farm is anticipated to be on line for service in 2022. The project should generate about \$9 million to the town. Solar requires very little infrastructure. This energy will avoid .5 million tons of carbon and there will be opportunity for other development. The town of Milford signed a letter of intent on November 2018 and a PILOT program was approved in February 2020. Voters approved a solar collection system ordinance in March 2019. One of the issues with this property is there are several wetlands that must have a setback. After any required construction, there will be native species planted, there is little or no sound associated with solar energy. The project will be surrounded by existing vegetation on the property therefore visual impacts are expected to be minimal.

D. Knott asked what kind of maintenance is involved in the vegetative buffer, and what will be done about invasive species? Dom Lebel answered there will be some infrequent maintenance. The fence along the edges of the property will have a 6" gap along the edges to allow wildlife to get through. D. Knott asked about invasive species. D. Lebel said we will work with Fish & Game on that. DES and Fish & Game will allow the use of herbicides to curb invasive species. The preliminary layout shows vernal pools. D. Lebel described the layout of the 83 acres planned for this solar project and asked if there were questions from the Board.

D. Knott asked for questions from any Board members. R. Costantino asked if other solar projects have been done by this company in this area and are they productive in this part of the country. D. Lebel said this company does not have any current properties but we are working with Olivewood and they have many projects. R. Costantino asked if there are any projects such as this in NH because there are not a lot of sunny days. D. Lebel said there is a solar project in Ludlow Vermont. R. Costantino said 8800 people could be supplied with power from this or is that number based on homes? D. Lebel said that is 8800 people and that number was pulled from the NH average. J. Langdell sees that there are Conservation members that have joined the meeting and asked where the 83 acres to be use are located, where are the wetlands and is there any usable land that cannot be developed due to wetlands.

Ben Chamberlain said yes, that is correct, some of the land is not usable due to wetland. J. Langdell asked if that is the case on the town land? And is any wildlife planning being done? D. Lebel said yes we have already done vernal pools and the NH Heritage Bureau and DES and Fish & Game to identify species in the area. J. Langdell asked where the residential portion of the land is located. D. Lebel said it is on the east part of the property, no direct abutters are near the solar panel area. J. Langdell noted that the address for Not So Dusty is old and needs to be checked. D. Lebel believes that was recorded with that address. P. Amato indicated that the mail for Not So Dusty is forwarded to his address and he sends that mail on to the owner of Not So Dusty. S. Robinson asked what is the acreage of the panels? D. Lebel answered there are 47 acres on private land and 36 acres on town land. S. Robinson asked about environmental studies. D. Lebel indicated the wetland delineation data, Heritage Bureau, Fish & Game and DES requirements are being done.

T. Finan asked if the PILOT program is only for the town land portion of this solar farm? D. Lebel responded that the PILOT program applies to all the property used, not only town property. The PILOT should cover all of the taxes used for the solar farm. There will be some portion of the private land that will not be paid for but most of that land is in the Current Use. T. Finan said in the end, the PILOT will be greater than the property taxes.

P. Basiliere said it appears that the farm is very close to the road (101) how much of this will be visible to the motorists? D. Lebel said there is about 150' of wooded area between the solar farm and the road. B. Chamberlain said they are working on some visual simulations to anticipate visual impact to motorists. P. Basiliere asked about the view from Heron Pond? D. Lebel said it is likely that as this moves forward there

might be some easement re-orienting from trails in response to how close the trails might be to the panels. L. Daley said he sees this as an opportunity to work together with Conservation to design trails that work for all parties.

Audrey Fraizier, speaking on behalf of Milford Conservation Commission, said her company has been working on the environmental impact studies, since there are many requests for them regarding solar farms. This gets scientists out there to know the impact of the project to the environment. This impact would look at the wetlands, acreage, etc. P. Basiliere asked what impact does a solar farm have on aircraft or helicopters in the area? B. Chamberlain said it is something that we study with glare of the panels. D. Lebel said there are airport solar projects around airports in different areas. There might be some glare, but at this point it is not something the FAA has complained about. We expect no issues with this. P. Amato has flown over at least 50 solar farms in NH and MA and has never had an issue with glare. P. Amato noted the private land owner still shows Paul's address and Paul forwards it to the actual land owner but he no longer has a stake in the land. P. Basiliere said in conjunction with the Conservation Commission the town should keep this in mind and the environmental impact as well.

D. Knott asked for comments from the ZBA. J. Plourde said his questions were already addressed. J. Dargie joined the meeting. R. Costantino said on the map it appears that the road is being blocked (Perry Road). D. Lebel said that is not the intent. R. Costantino said if there was an area where you do not want the panels in, would you reduce the farm by that amount of panels? B. Chamberlain said if an area was not good to place the panels, they would find another area in which to place them. The panels have a 30 year life span.

A. Fraizier asked if there is a 25' distance from the wetlands, will that buffer be treed? D. Lebel said we are hoping to do as minimal tree cutting as possible, on the north side, the tree clearing will be minimal in the buffer zones. Seeing no further questions from the Boards, D. Knott opened the meeting to the public, noting that comments are limited to three minutes. There were no members of the public waiting to speak. D. Knott closed the public hearing.

P. Amato asked how this will be handled at the ZBA meeting? L. Daley said this solar farm ZBA application is being heard June 4 via Zoom or live streamed on Granite Town Media

3. Discussion / possible action regarding other items of concern-

4. Upcoming Meetings:

- 5. Adjournment.** P. Amato moved to adjourn the joint meeting at 7:40 p.m. P. Basiliere seconded. All were in favor. The Board was polled: L. Dudziak yes in favor; P. Amato yes in favor; J. Langdell yes in favor; S. Robinson yes in favor, P. Basiliere yes in favor; D. Knott yes in favor and T. Finan yes in favor.

Signature of the Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson: Date: _____

MINUTES OF THE 5/19/2020 MEETING WERE APPROVED 6/16/2020