



**Town of Whitingham
Planning Commission**

MINUTES OF MAY 2, 2019

These Minutes will be accepted into the public record (with any corrections noted) at a future meeting of the Whitingham Planning Commission.

The Whitingham Planning Commission held a special meeting on Thursday, May 2, 2019 at 7:00pm in the Whitingham Municipal Center, 2948 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT.

Attendees: Brad Lackey, Chair; Linda Donaghue; Phil Edelstein; Gig Zboray, Zoning Administrator; John Bennett of Windham Regional Commission and Ralph Meima, Director of Development, Green Lantern Solar.

Call to Order, Additions or Changes to Agenda: Brad Lackey called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

Hearing of Visitors none

Green Lantern to discuss solar array at TVMHS

Ralph Meima of Green Lantern Solar, a state-wide developer of renewable energy projects, explained their intended project at Twin Valley Middle High School on Route 100. It will be a net metered project, meaning that the electricity produced is delivered to the electric grid. Third party credits will be sold to the school to reduce their power costs by an estimated 13%. Phil Edelstein questioned who the investors for this project are: Mr. Meima answered that it is 50% debt funded; 50% investor funded. Green Lantern buys out the investors in seven years.

Energy projects are regulated under Act 248 which is similar to Act 250. To receive the maximum energy credits the site must be a "preferred site". One condition of a preferred site is that the solar array will be built on the same parcel as the customer who will use at least 50% of the power. However, the Public Utility Commission (PUC) is concerned that in the 35-year lifespan of the project the school might close. Therefore, they are looking for letters from the Planning Commission, Selectboard and the Windham Regional Commission indicating that they agree the school grounds are a preferred site. An environmental review is scheduled for the week of May 6. Mr. Meima wants to go back to PUC in two weeks. He would like to get application submitted by the end of June. He would need a letter from all three entities by mid-June at the latest.

Mr. Meima talked about the project offering a state solar tax of \$400 per KW. The town might receive a solar tax of approximately \$1,000 per year.

Green Lantern already has a lease option agreement with the school. Maintenance will be handled by Green Lantern, they would remotely monitor the equipment to make sure it is working properly, and they would brush hog the area to keep the array clear.

Work session to continue edits of the Whitingham Zoning Regulation

Continued work on definitions:

Abutter – we will use the definition from Act 250.

Dripline – Mr. Bennett provided a definition but feels it needs more research.

Conditional Use – will say “Refer to Section 3.4.2”

Dam – discussion around Woodstock’s definition, need to abide by setbacks measured to the ordinary highwater mark, requires an administrative permit, discussion around how big was never answered.

Earth and Mineral Extraction is a use listed in every district but there has never been any more information provided in the Zoning Regulation. There was much discussion, but no decisions made. We will continue discussing this at our next meeting.

Approve prior Minutes/Work Session notes

A motion was made by Linda Donaghue to approve the Minutes of April 16 and 17, 2019, seconded by Phil Edelstein, all in favor.

Next Meetings: A special meeting/work session has been scheduled for Wednesday, May 15 at 7pm. If necessary, Mr. Bennett is also available Wednesday, May 29 at 7pm.

Zoning Administrator/other business, as needed none

Adjourn Meeting adjourned 9:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Donaghue, and Gig Zboray, Zoning Administrator