

Town of Manchester Planning Board Meeting Minutes

October 20th, 2020 – 7:00pm

Present: John Boeckmann, Steve Buerman Scott VanAken, Julie Vanderwall & Lee Sanders - members, Stuart Gwilt, Chairman, Steve DeHond, Code Enforcement Officer and Jill Havens, Recording Secretary

Absent: Jeff Flower – Planning Board Member

Also, present: Applicant(s) – SUNEAST/STANTEC – Mike Mantell, Suri Sukdaung , Mike Beckner and Greg Elko; Jasper Daniels, Tayler Squies, Joseph DeRuyter, Julia, Brian & Carley Standera, Sharry Gibbs, John Mueller, Julie Metzger, David Rider, Cody Notaro and David Reed; **MRB Engineer** – Patrick Nicoletta

(Continuation of Public Hearing from September 15, 2020):

Final Site Plan Application # 4592-19: SunEast Development who is requesting a 20,000 kw Solar Project located at 3169 County Road 13, tax map no. 45.00-1-6.110 in an A-1 district pursuant to Chapter 325 Section 325-44.1.

The chairman read the public hearing notice. Eighteen (18) surrounding property owners were notified by mail of this meeting of which several were present.

Stuart Gwilt, Chairman: Reviewed the comments received from the Ontario County Planning Board regarding this project as follows:

- 1.) Why is grading necessary to maintain existing drainage patterns?
- 2.) Soil testing should be completed to determine if fertilizer with phosphorus is necessary to promote germination
- 3.) Show quadrant boundaries on existing conditions map or town lot line on overall grading plan to allow reviewer to visually compare existing and proposed conditions.
- 4.) The SWPPP says no disturbance of federal or state wetlands and that timber matting will be used if access to area is necessary. Will wetlands be disturbed or not?
- 5.) The cover letter and EAF indicate no change to impervious surface coverage. What about concrete pads for inverters/transformer?
- 6.) Is lot coverage as allowed by code?
- 7.) Have operation and maintenance and decommissioning plans been provided and reviewed?

And OCSWCD Comments as follows:

- 1.) Will location of concrete washout allow for smooth flow of traffic in and out of site?
- 2.) Consider grading of contours in channel located in NW quadrant to reduce concentrated flow in the area.
- 3.) No topsoil stockpiles are indicated in southern quadrants. Will topsoil from the construction of the pad and road be taken across site?
- 4.) Signage should be used to help delineate and protect wetlands.
- 5.) The stabilized construction entrance should be minimum 12 feet.
- 6.) Pre-existing agricultural tile drainage should be considered and maintained if present to avoid impacts to remaining agricultural lands in the area.

We can review these comments more in depth tonight, however, it is my understanding that there has been no agreements made on the decommissioning plan, therefore we can take no action on this approval for Final Site Plan tonight.

Patrick Nicoletta, MRB Engineer for the Town of Manchester: Correct, the Town Planning Board needs to approve the decommissioning plan before they can approve the Final Site Plan. The decommissioning plan needs to be finalized with the attorneys involved before it is presented to the Town Board for approval and then passed to the Planning Board for their approval along with the Final Site Plan approval. The only action that can be done tonight is to close the Public Hearing that has been open since last months meeting.

Stuart Gwilt: Could you briefly go over what you want to do again?

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Mike Mantell, SunEast: I am a Civil Engineer with Stantec. I am here on behalf of SunEast Development with regards to the proposed 20 MW Solar Facility at 3169 County Road 13. This 20MW ground mounted solar facility is proposed on existing farmland that is zoned A-1 is an allowed use in this zone. The facility consists of the solar array with a security fence around the perimeter with a gate at the access point. It has a stone access road off County Road 13 that traverses the site providing access throughout the site. There is inverter space around the facility and then a substation at the south end of the site. The site is approximately 179.6 acres with a residence and outbuildings on the northeast side, these buildings will remain after construction. The facility within the project that will be fenced in will be 130.8 acres. In order to construct the facility, we do have to cut about 17 acres of trees. While the site is not within an area of concern for any endangered species or threatened wildlife, we are going to cut any trees over 3 inches in diameter during the months of DEC allotted time November 1st-March 31st, in order to not impact any Northern Long-Eared Bat habitat, even though it is technically not shown within that area.

The panels are single-access tracking panels that will start the day facing to the east and track the natural movement of the sun across the sky end the day facing west, for maximum solar capture. The panels at maximum height are 14 feet. There will be no impact to the existing wetlands on the site. None of the grading or construction will impact those areas. We will provide landscape screening on the northern side of the project, along County Road 13, along part of the fence line and along the neighboring residential properties to help screen the visibility of the site. We have provided a decommissioning plan for your review. Storm water pollution prevention plan is also provided. For this site, there should be no additional run-off added once the construction is completed.

The project does have many benefits, it does provide 20MW from a clean energy source. It provided tax revenue and job creation during construction of the site; as well as, revenue to local businesses during the construction period. There will be essentially no traffic impact. It is a temporary facility, after its life of 20-25 years, this site can be returned to its prior use as opposed to having a building or something more permanent constructed here. Are there any questions for me?

Steve DeHond: I have received several phone calls from residents regarding the placement of the access road, is that able to be moved further away from the neighboring properties?

Mike Mantell: The current site plan allows for more screening between the facility and neighboring properties. Moving the access road would shift panels closer to the residents.

Pat Nicoletta: Can you tell us what type of screening you will be providing?

Mike Mantell: Sure, the screening will be oak and maple trees, as well as evergreens to provide some year-round screening.

David Reed, Resident: How tall will these trees be at the time of planting?

Mike Mantell: They will be between 4-6 feet tall.

David Reed: These are going to be 12-foot-tall panels, so we are doing to have to look at them for the first 10 years while we wait for these trees to grow.

John Boeckmann, PB Member: As what stage will these trees be planted? Right at the beginning of construction?

Mike Mantell: Usually, towards the end to reduce the risk of damaging them during construction and panel placement.

John Boeckmann: I think the neighbors are concerned about the dust and debris from construction, is it possible to place them at the beginning of the construction process?

Mike Mantell: We could possibly look into that but with the dust concern, we will be watering the driveway and soil to keep that to a minimum and there should not be much debris if any.

Julie Metzger, Resident: Why can't your access road be back by the railroad tracks on Lover's Lane where your sub-station is going to be? County Road 7 is already able to handle the heavy trucks because of Dolomite.

Mike Mantell: We will not have access to that property. That is not part of this parcel.

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Joseph DeRuyter, Resident: Where would the substation be on the property according to the plans you have there?

Mike Mantell: At the south end of the property where the existing National Grid line is already.

Jasper Daniels, Resident: Can you request to be a solar power user?

Mike Mantell: Not for this, this is specifically for National Grid.

Joseph DeRuyter: What is the lifetime of this source, how long will this solar farm be a viable source of energy?

Mike Beckner, SunEast: It's a 40-year lease we have with the property owner.

John Mueller, Resident: Will there be an on-site manager for this facility?

Mike Mantell: Yes. There will be one (1) full-time and a couple part-time employees.

John Mueller: How many solar farms are allowed in the Town of Manchester?

Stuart Gwilt: I can't answer that. We have discussed it but I don't have an answer for you.

Julie Metzger: What happens to the Bond if the company goes bankrupt?

Pat Nicoletta: Its still usable by the Town of Manchester. The project is bonded by a bank separate from the Solar Company.

Joesph DeRuyter: What's the efficiency this will run at? How many houses will this project supply energy to?

Mike Beckner: This is 90-95% efficient and on average a house uses 1,000kw of energy per month.

Joseph DeRuyter: Will there be any noise from these panels or substation?

Mike Beckner: There is a slight hum from the substation if you are standing next to it

John Mueller: When will this be built?

Mike Beckner: It will take 6-8 months to construct, so we are looking at a 2022 completion timeframe of this project.

Stuart Gwilt: Will the quadrants be built in stages?

Greg Elko, SunEast: It could be done and is done with bigger solar projects but it most likely will not be done with this project.

Joseph DeRuyter: What happens if there is an oversight to the drainage issues this project could cause, how will that be handled?

Mike Mantell: It should generate no more and potentially less run-off because of the planting of the low meadow material we plan to use between the panels.

Mike Beckner: The Storm Water Run-Off Plan is strictly enforced by the DEC.

Joseph DeRuyter: Will there be any help to the nearby property owners who want to sell their home but cannot get a fair price because of the solar project?

Mike Mantell: No, not that I am aware of.

Stuart Gwilt, Chairman: Any other questions?

(Hearing none)

A motion was made by Scott VanAken to close the Public Hearing at this time with a delayed decision regarding the Site Plan Approval until there is an approved Salvage Value/Decommissioning Plan/PILOT received for review by the Town of Manchester Planning Board. The motion was seconded by John Boeckmann. All voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Preliminary Site Plan Approval #4610-20: Sharry Gibbs who is requesting Preliminary Site Plan Approval on property located at 3569 County Road 13, part of tax map no. 45.00-1-66.100 in an A-1 district pursuant to Section 275 – to subdivide a 1-acre parcel for a single-family home.

No surrounding property owners were notified by mail of this meeting due to the nature of it being a meeting, not a public hearing.

Stuart Gwilt, Chairman: Please come forward and tell us what you want to do.

Sharry Gibbs, Applicant: The current parcel is owned by my father-in-law, we want to subdivide this parcel to put a house on approximately an acre and a half of this property. My father-in-law would continue to live in the house that is already currently on this property. I have measured to make sure that I have the required amount of the 175 feet of road frontage and all the other setbacks are met as well.

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At this time, the Planning Board recommends that the applicant obtains a survey map, with site plan details and then resubmit to the Planning Board for approval.

Final Site Plan & Special Use Approval #4598-20: Brian Standera who is requesting to convert building to 6 apartments on property located at 630 Curran Road, tax map no. 11.00-2-34.121 in an A-1 district pursuant to Chapter 325 Section 325-75.

The chairman read the public hearing notice. Ten (10) surrounding property owners were notified by mail of this meeting of which several were present.

Stuart Gwilt, Chairman: Please come forward and tell us what you want to do. I see your map and everything.

Brian Standera, Applicant: I have provided you all with the new plan from the engineer which addresses all your concerns from the preliminary meeting we had back in June. All of the factors are included on this drawing as well:

1. Privacy buffering for neighboring property owners
2. Engineer report regarding to adequacy and current code compliancy of septic system
3. Maximum number of vehicles on site is fifteen (15)
4. Maximum occupancy is twenty-four (24) people
5. Central and fenced garbage/recycling area
6. Lighting with dark sky compliancy

Steve Buerman: Can you give us more information on the buffer you are putting between here and the neighboring properties?

Brian Standera: I will be planting twelve 3-foot blue spruce this winter in the cold weather is the best time to plant them.

Steve Buerman: Has the interior construction been following the current building code with Steve?

Brian Standera: Yes, Steve has been out to check everything and approve everything along the way. The building is actually laid out really well for this project.

Stuart Gwilt, Chairman: Any other questions?

John Mueller, Resident: When do you expect construction to be finished with this project?

Brian Standera: About 4-6 months.

Stuart Gwilt, Chairman: Any other questions?

(Hearing none)

A motion was made by Scott VanAken to approve Site Plan & Special Use # 4598-20 submitted by Brian Standera who is requesting to convert building to 6 apartments on property located at 630 Curran Road, tax map no. 11.00-2-34.121 in an A-1 district pursuant to Chapter 325 Section 325-75, with the tree barrier to be maintained and replaced as needed **AND** yearly review and renewal of the Special Use Permit with the Town of Manchester Planning Board. The motion was seconded by John Boeckmann. All voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Previous Minutes:

A motion was made by John Boeckmann to approve the minutes from the meeting which took place on September 15th, 2020. The motion was seconded by Lee Sanders. All voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned @ 8:24pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Gwilt
Planning Board Chairman

Jill Havens
Recording Secretary