

**Sturbridge Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 10, 2023
Town Hall**

Present:

Dane LaBonte
Charlie Blanchard
Wally Hersee
Sue Waters
Taylor Stedman
David Bourbeau
Brad Goodwin
Jean Bubon, Town Planner
Jeneé Lacy, Administrative Assistant



Also Present:

Jessica Bardi, Robinson & Cole, LLP
Brian Yergatian, BSC Group
Quinn Weinberger, Sturbridge PV, LLC
Chris Vorlicek, Sturbridge PV, LLC
Shane Berno, Owl Services (Virtual)
Matt Sosik, Berry Farms Subdivision
Mark Murphy, 30 Bentwood Drive
Barbara Murphy, 30 Bentwood Drive
Mike McGlone, 8 Bentwood Drive
Richard Para, 516 Sandy Circle
Jim Waddick, 56 Bentwood Drive
Roger LaFlamme, 58 Bentwood Drive

C. Blanchard called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and read the agenda.

ANR - If Any

No ANRs filed

Approval of Minutes

September 29, 2023

Motion: To approve the minutes of September 29, 2023 as amended.

By: S. Waters

2nd: D. LaBonte

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

C. Blanchard stated that the Board would delay opening the Public Hearing for Sturbridge PV, LLC because of the change of location for the meeting.

Town Planner Report

J. Bubon discussed the following:

- Next Meeting Dates:
 - October 24th –
 - Cornerstone Bank – 200 Charlton Road – relocate ITM to rear of the lot.
- Asked the Board to review draft survey questions for an update to the Master Plan.
 - S. Waters – suggested that the questions asking for a salary range would make people not want to take the survey.
 - J. Bubon discussed that it’s asking for a range for demographic reasons and all questions are optional.
 - D. Bourbeau – question #5a seems vague and that where the form mentions Route 15 should be changed to Haynes Street.
 - J. Bubon stated that she will continue to work with Open Space, Cons Coms, and Recreation on survey questions. She discussed the update to the Master Plan and that she is not proposing an update to the transportation, public facilities and services, or the energy and sustainability chapters since a consultant would need to be hired to do that work.

Motion: To approve the questions as provided and to do a town wide mailing for update of the Master Plan.

By: W. Hersee

2nd: D. LaBonte

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *A document entitled “Master Survey Draft 2 10_5_23”*

Public Hearing – Site Plan Review – Sturbridge PV, LLC – 200 Haynes Street

S. Waters read the legal notice that was posted in the Southbridge Evening News.

J. Bubon stated that the applicant is requesting Site Plan Approval to allow the construction of a solar array. The project will consist of solar panels mounted on a fixed metal frame with a battery energy storage system and other ancillary equipment. She stated that quotes were obtained for a Peer Review of the project and CMG would be doing the Peer Review. She asked that the applicants present to the Board and abutters and the Board ask questions or bring up concerns and asked the Board to continue the Public Hearing to November 21st.

J. Bardi, Robinson & Cole, LLP, introduced herself and gave a brief overview of the project and stated that they are also seeking a Waiver for a traffic study.

Q. Weinberger, Sturbridge PV, LLC, presented a powerpoint to the Board and discussed the following:

- The concrete pad currently located in the setback will be moved.
- The 200' setback will be updated.
- Construction will take about 3 to 6 months and discussed traffic, site access, safety.
- The site will be remotely monitored and will have an emergency access road.
- There will be no significant noise once site is functional.
- There is no hazard from their glare analysis.

B. Yergatian, BSC Group, presented the stormwater study and analysis to the Board. He discussed the different systems to manage stormwater.

C. Blanchard asked if the Board had any questions.

D. LaBonte asked about net cut or fill site and de minimus exceptions to decrease? B. Yergatian stated that the analysis had not been completed yet but they are close and discussed a table that shows the four (4) nodes and a couple will increase.

D. Bourbeau asked how many other locations the company has in the Commonwealth. C. Vorlicek, Sturbridge PV, LLC, discussed other locations in Grafton and Franklin.

C. Blanchard asked where the interconnection would be and if anything needs to be updated to be connected. C. Yergatian stated that it would be connected through Kelly Road and no updates are needed.

W. Hersee asked if there would be any poles on parcel. C. Yergatian stated that they would be coming down the sidelines of Haynes Street.

C. Blanchard asked if anyone from the public had any questions or comments.

- B. Murphy (30 Bentwood Dr.) – Stated that she is concerned about the septic area near the boundary lines in regards to drainage and runoff from the site and wants to make sure it won't drain into their septic. She also stated that her and some of her neighbors had concerns about the aesthetics of entrance gate.
 - B. Yergatian discussed the Southern boundary line and drainage areas on the site plan.
- M. McGlone (8 Bentwood Dr.) – Asked if 4R on the plan was a retention pond. Stated that there is a new septic line on his property line and has concerns about how much drainage will affect the leach field and how it would be mitigated by the applicant if something were to happen. M. McGlone also stated concerns about the lithium battery storage and if something were to happen to the battery, would smoke or fire cause any health or environmental issues.
 - B. Yergatian stated that it was an infiltration basin and discussed stormwater drainage. He also stated that there were no environmental air pollutants from the battery.
 - C. Blanchard stated that the peer reviewer would look into these concerns as well.

- J. Waddick (56 Bentwood Dr.) – Clarified that the location of the leach field was in the far Northwest corner and serves six (6) units. Also stated that there will be more clarification from both the Planning Board and Conservation Commission as the process continues and the project is peer reviewed.

J. Bubon asked if the Board would take a vote to Waive the Traffic Study.

Motion: To Waive the Traffic Study for Sturbridge PV, LLC at 200 Haynes Street.

By: W. Hersee

2nd: S. Waters

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

J. Bubon recommended that the Board vote to continue the Public Hearing to November 21st at 6:35pm at the Center Office Building (301 Main Street). Jean stated that the Public Hearing would take place at the Center Office Building assuming the technology was repaired by then.

Motion: To continue the Public Hearing for Sturbridge PV, LLC to November 21, 2023 at 6:35pm.

By: D. LaBonte

2nd: W. Hersee

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *Completed application;*
- *Abutters list;*
- *Legal Notice;*
- *Document to Planning Board, Sturbridge Massachusetts – Statement in Support of Site Plan Approval Application dated August 9, 2023, submitted by Jessica D. Bardi, Esquire, for the applicant Sturbridge PV, LLC;*
- *Exhibit A – Site Plan entitled “Ground Mounted Photovoltaic System, 200 Route 15 – Sturbridge, Massachusetts”. Plan prepared by BSC Group – 349 Main Street – Route 28, W. Yarmouth, Massachusetts 02673. Plan date April 26, 2023, Revised 6/14/23;*
- *Exhibit B – Interconnection Plans entitled “Proposed Photovoltaic Array, 200 Route 15, Sturbridge, Massachusetts 01566,” prepared for Bear Peak Power – 1099 18th St, Suite 2150, Denver, CO 80202. Plan prepared by ARC Design – 409 North Main Street, Elmer, NJ 08318, dated May 23, 2022 revised through June 16, 2022;*
- *Exhibit C – Packet of technical specifications – 10 sheets;*
- *Exhibit D – Purchase and Sale Agreement dated September 29, 2022 and an Amendment of Purchase and Sale Agreement, dated April 12, 2023;*
- *Exhibit E – Operation and Maintenance Plan for Ground Mounted Photovoltaic System, dated April 10, 2023;*
- *Exhibit F – Certificate of Liability Insurance for Bear Peak Power, LLC;*

- *Exhibit G – A document entitled “Decommission Plan – Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic System – 200 Route 15 – Sturbridge, Massachusetts. Applicant & Responsible Part – Sturbridge PV, LLC – 2420 17th Street, Denver, CO 80202, prepared by BSC Group, Inc – 349 Route 28, Unit D, West Yarmouth, MA 02673 (undated – received on August 9, 2023)*
- *Exhibit H – Email provided as proof of receipt of Interconnection Application from National Grid dated August 7, 2023;*
- *Exhibit I – Photo-simulations prepared by BSC Group;*
- *Exhibit J – Stormwater Report – Ground-Mounted Photovoltaic System – 200 Route 15, Sturbridge, MA 01566, April 2023. Owner/Applicant: Bear Peak Power, LLC – 2420 17th Street, Denver, CO 80202. BSC Group – 349 Main Street, West Yarmouth, MA 02673;*
- *An letter from Richard D. Para to the Sturbridge Planning Board, RE: “Proposed Solar Farm 200 Haynes St (old Rte 15)”*
- *Town Planner Report;*
- *Departmental memos;*

Wavier of Site Plan – Kathleen Schiffhauer (Owl Services) – 400 Haynes Street

S. Berno, Owl Services) joined the meeting virtually.

J. Bubon stated that the applicant was requesting a Wavier of Site Plan for the installation of two (2) pad-mount charging stations (four (4) EV parking spaces) with related equipment in the parking lot located at 400 Haynes Street. She also discussed working with Pilot to complete the close out process.

D. LaBonte asked what the reduction of regulation parking spaces would be?

S. Berno stated that eight (8) regular parking spaces would be turned into four (4) EV parking spaces.

D. Bourbeau asked if Pilot was separated into different parcels. J. Bubon stated that Pilot is all one site.

J. Bubon stated that she recommends approval with conditions.

Motion: To grant the Waiver of Site Plan to Kathleen Schiffhauer (Owl Services) at 400 Haynes Street with the following conditions:

- 1. All construction and site improvements shall be in conformance with the plans submitted and approved by the Planning Board.**
- 2. All State and Local Zoning Bylaws, Building Codes and Regulations must be adhered to.**
- 3. All requirements of the Fire Department shall be met.**
- 4. All other necessary permits must be obtained prior to the start of construction.**

5. **The site shall be kept in a neat and orderly condition throughout the construction process.**
6. **An emergency contact phone list with at least two names and numbers on it be supplied to the Sturbridge Police Dept. to be used by the dispatchers, in case of an off hour emergency, prior to the start of the project. The list must be updated whenever necessary for the duration of the project.**

By: S. Waters

2nd: W. Hersee

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *Completed application;*
- *A plan entitled "EVgo Fast Charging P77973 – Installation of Electric Vehicles Charging Equipment – Pilot Travel Center #222 – 400 Haynes Street – EV Sturbridge, MA 01566". Plan prepared by Tesla, Sturbridge, MA 196 Main Street Sturbridge, MA 01566. Dated 2/10/23 – Revision 2;*
- *Town Planner Report;*
- *Departmental memos;*

Town Planner Report (Continued)

J. Bubon stated that she received a request from Matt Sosik regarding the sidewalks that were approved for the Berry Farms Subdivision.

M. Sosik, Berry Farms Subdivision, explained the sidewalk specs and stated that he would like to change the sidewalk material from concrete to asphalt. He stated that some of the sidewalks within the subdivision will still be concrete and will transition into asphalt, which is comparable to other subdivisions in Town.

W. Hersee stated that he would prefer the concrete sidewalks because they last longer than asphalt and he has safety concerns for the elderly community since asphalt heaves in the winter and could be a tripping hazard.

D. LaBonte stated that curb ramps would be easier with concrete but if the engineers say they can meet requirements with asphalt then he will trust them.

B. Goodwin stated that he thinks concrete would be better as well for aesthetics, environment, sustainability, and sell-ability.

Motion: To allow the change in material from concrete to asphalt for the sidewalks in the Berry Farms Subdivision.

By: S. Waters

2nd: D. LaBonte

Vote: 5-2 (passes)

Documents Reviewed:

- *A document entitled: "Hot Mix Asphalt Sidewalk" Dated 3/16/17*

Old/New Business

None.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn meeting.

By: S. Waters

2nd: W. Hersee

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Meeting adjourned at 7:36 PM

Minutes prepared by: Jeneé Lacy