

**Sturbridge Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 12, 2024
Center Office Building**

Present:

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



Also Present:

David Faist P.E., CMG Engineering
Brian Yergation, BSC Group
Chris Vorlicek, Bear Peak Power (Virtual)
John McGlone, 8 Bentwood Drive
James Waddick, 56 Bentwood Drive

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

Approval of Minutes

February 13, 2024

Motion: To approve the minutes of February 13, 2024 as written.

By: S. Waters

2nd: D. Bourbeau

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

ANR – 3 Berry Farms Road – Fiske Hill East Realty Trust

J. Bubon presented the ANR and stated that the applicant has submitted a plan showing the division of Lot 4 into Lot 4 and Parcel 4A Declaration of Conservation Restriction, the open space land that Mr. Sosik indicated he was setting aside during his subdivision approval process. Parcel 4A is noted that it is not a building lot and is to be conveyed to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to become part of the McKinstry Brook Wildlife Area. J. Bubon stated that since the plan meets the requirements she recommends that the Board endorse the ANR submitted.

Motion: To endorse the ANR for 3 Berry Farms Road – Fiske Hill East Realty Trust.

By: W. Hersee

2nd: D. LaBonte

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- ANR Application;
- A plan entitled: "Plan of Property Lot 4, Proposed Parcel 4A & Proposed Conservation Restriction Areas Owned by Fiske Hill Realty Trust Berry Farms Road & Fiske Hill Road Sturbridge, Massachusetts" prepared by McClure Engineering (119 Worcester Road Charlton, MA 01507) dated 2/7/24;
- Town Planner Report.

Town Planner Update

J. Bubon discussed the following:

- Next meeting dates:
 - March 26th
 - 5 Snell Street – Site Plan Approval, retail shop – no exterior changes with shared parking agreement
 - LaQuinta – Waiver for new canopy
 - Terry Masterson – Economic Development Director – Provide year end 2023 economic review
 - Review survey data
 - April 9th & 23rd

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

B. Yergation came before the Board. J. Bubon discussed the background of the project, the landscaping updates that have been made and the peer review updates. She stated that she believes that the applicant meets the criteria for issuance of Site Plan Approval as requested. She recommended that the Board vote to grant the waiver requested on January 3, 2024 to allow the plan scale to be 1 inch = 50' rather than 1 inch = 40' feet as required in the bylaw. She also recommended that the Board approve the Site Plan Approval as requested with conditions.

B. Yergation discussed the following:

- Background about the site;
- Plans of the solar array – 3.5 acres;
- Stormwater management, infiltrations basins rated for a 1000 year storm;
- Project complies for Mass DEP standards;
- The planting plan;
- Abutter concerns;
- 50' buffer undisturbed, a certain amount of clearing has to happen to alleviate shadow concerns with solar;
- Planting of Mountain Laurel in regards to the 200' visual buffer;

J. Bubon stated that she has added a condition that additional plantings can be added if needed.

W. Hersee discussed the site walk, differences in elevation on the property, and that it was difficult to see through the buffer zone. J. Bubon mentioned that there is 430' between the nearest condo and the solar array.

D. LaBonte asked about the driveway and details as to retaining sediment so it isn't sent to the street. B. Yergation discussed the swalls on Haynes Street and that the gravel driveway is elevated with catch basins and the stormwater system will keep sediment from flowing into the street.

D. Bourbeau asked if there was any plan to address regrowth after trees were removed. B. Yergation stated that there is a maintenance and regrowth plan in the O&M Plan.

C. Blanchard asked if there were any questions or comments from the public.

John McGlone (8 Bentwood Drive) came before the Board, he asked how far the fence was from the property line. B. Yergation stated that the fence would be 50' from the property line. J. McGlone stated that he thought there was supposed to be a 200' buffer. D. Faist stated that the 200 feet will be a visual buffer with vegetation.

J. McGlone stated that he is concerned with flooding of the septic systems because of vegetation being taken out of the area. W. Hersee stated that lower plantings will be left and will soak up moisture.

J. McGlone stated that he is also concerned that the fence and the arrays will be visible from the condominiums. J. Bubon discussed the fence location and visibility during the site visit.

Jim Waddick (56 Bentwood Drive) asked what side of the fence the plantings will be on. J. Bubon stated that it will be on the condo side. J. Waddick also wanted to mention how great Jean Bubon has been with keeping the abutters informed about this project.

J. Bubon stated that before the Board close the public hearing they will need to take a vote on a Waiver to allow the plan scale to be 1 inch = 50' rather than 1 inch = 40' as required by law.

Motion: To waive the plan scale requirements to allow the plan scale requirements to allow the plan scale to be 1 inch = 50' rather than 1 inch = 40'.

By: W. Hersee

2nd: S. Waters

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Motion: To close the public hearing for Sturbridge PV, LLC – 200 Haynes Street.

By: S. Waters

2nd: W. Hersee

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Motion: To approve the Site Plan Approval for Sturbridge PV, LLC - 200 Haynes Street as requested with conditions of approval.

By: W. Hersee

2nd: S. Waters

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *Legal Notice;*
- *Town Planner Report;*
- *Departmental memos;*
- *A document entitled "RE: Proposed Photovoltaic System, 200 Haynes Street, Response to Peer Review, Fire Department & Public Comments", prepared by Brian Yergation, BSC Group, dated 2/23/24;*
- *A document entitled "RE: Proposed Photovoltaic System, 200 Haynes Street, Response to Peer Review, Fire Department & Public Comments", prepared by Brian Yergation, BSC Group, dated 1/31/24;*
- *A document entitled "Peer Review #3 – Stormwater and Zoning Compliance Review Sturbridge PV, LLC – 200 Haynes Street (Formerly 200 Route 15), Sturbridge, MA CMG ID 2023-218, prepared by David Faist, PE, CMG, dated 2/13/24;*
- *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 1, 2023, Revised through March 6, 2024.*

Public Hearing – Zoning Bylaw Proposed Amendments

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

J. Bubon stated that the proposed amendments will clean up inconsistent terms, typographical errors, missing text and improper footnotes that were noticed after using the bylaw as revised during the Codification Project in 2021.

J. Bubon went through the changes to Article XI – Accessory Dwelling Units, Article XIV – Intensity Regulations, Article II – Definitions, §300-15.8 – Trailer Coaches, §300-3.4 – Floodplain District.

J. Bubon and the Board discussed the following:

- Trailer coach variations;
- Specific language regarding tongue & axel;
- Formatting & grammar/punctuation;
- RVs parked on residential property, discussed a possible change in bylaw language. J. Bubon stated that if the Board thought there was a want for this language change they would need to come back to it with a public hearing at a later date;
- Campground – how 90 days are defined.

Motion: To close the public hearing for the Zoning Bylaw Proposed Amendments

By: D. LaBonte

2nd: D. Bourbeau

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Motion: To support the proposed zoning bylaw changes and to forward them to the Town Administrator for inclusion on the Town Meeting Warrant.

By: S. Waters

2nd: D. Bourbeau

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Documents Reviewed:

- *Legal Notice;*
- *Town Planner Report;*
- *Letter to BOS entitled: "Re: Proposed Zoning Amendments" from Charles Blanchard, PB Chairman to Jamie Goodwin BOS Chairman, dated February 14, 2024;*
- *A document packet entitled: "Zoning Clean-Up – Proposed Changes for FY25 Annual Town Meeting.*

Town Planner Update Continued

J. Bubon discussed the following:

- Conducted interim final inspection of the Noble property on February 23rd. Several areas needed attention, but in all the site looks good. She will re-check the site when the landscaping is complete. Nardelli's will hopefully be opening in 60 days or so, the hold-up really has been getting staff hired and trained.
- Blueberry Hill Estates – covenant was recorded and pre-construction meeting will be held in the next couple of weeks. They will also be erecting a model home/office at the end of the cul-de-sac on Berry Farms Road. After review, it appears this will be a safer arrangement than having the model home/construction office in the area of construction. The Building Inspector will be issuing a permit for a temporary structure and when conditions permit, the home will be moved into the development. The property owner will sign the permit application.
- The January OPM report for the Senior Center
 - C. Blanchard gave the Board an update.

Documents Reviewed:

- *Town Planner Report;*
- *A document entitled: "RE: Special Permit & Site Plan – Blueberry Hill Estates, a 55+ Manufactured Housing Community – Model Home" from Justin Stelmok to Jean M. Bubon, AICP, dated February 22, 2024 with associated plan;*
- *A Memorandum entitled: "Interim Inspection" prepared by Jean M. Bubon, AICP, to Michael Frisbie, Noble Energy Real Estate Holdings, LLC, dated February 23, 2024.*

Old/New Business

S. Waters asked if there was any update on the Thai Place. J. Bubon stated that she hasn't received an updated in a long time.

T. Stedman asked if there had been any interest in the location next to Panera. J. Bubon stated that she hadn't heard anything.

D. Bourbeau stated he has noticed that the Verizon antenna on the utility pole across from Teddy G's is working now.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn meeting.

By: D. LaBonte

2nd: S. Waters

Vote: All in Favor (7-0)

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 PM

Minutes prepared by: Jeneé Lacy