



Town of Hampden
Planning Board
Wednesday, November 9, 2022, 7:00 pm
Municipal Building Council Chambers
Minutes

In Attendance:

Planning Board

Richard Tinsman, Chair
Jennifer Austin
Brent Wells
Kelley Wiltbank
Benjamin Dunham
Monica Small (alternate)

Staff

Clifton J. Iler, Town Planner
Paula Scott, Town Manager

Public

Sean Hale
Alan Robertson
Thomas Channell

Chair Tinsman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and verified that all attendees in-person and virtual could hear and see each other.

1. Administrative

a. Minutes – October 12, 2022, Regular Meeting

Motion by Member Austin to approve the minutes of October 12, 2022, Regular Meeting as written, seconded by Member Wiltbank; motion carried 5/0/0 by roll call.

2. Old Business

Vice-Chair Austin briefed all present on the site walk that took place on Tuesday, October 25, 2022, at 8:00 a.m. on Old County Road (Tax Map/Lot 10-0-037-1). Planning Board members Tinsman, Austin, Dunham, and Day were present for the site walk. Others also present were Planner Iler, Public Works Director Smith, and developer representative Jim Kiser. The developer staked off the center of the proposed road and the corner of the proposed buildings for the site walk. Attendees looked at property drainage challenges and significant erosion that is running into Sucker Brook and on two sides of the property with the potential to worsen. They also looked at potential stormwater treatment options due to the topography and proximity to Sucker Brook.

3. New Business

- a. BlueWave Solar – Public hearing for an amendment to an approved Major Site Plan to construct a 6.85 MWdc solar array located off Route 202; Tax Map/Lot: 10-0-056-2. This property is in the Industrial 2 district.

Chair Tinsman went over the rules for public hearings, confirmed with Planner Iler that the required public hearing posting had been met, and then opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m.

The representative for the applicant, Sean Hale, presented the opening statement:

- Requesting amendment to previously approved Major Site Plan off Route 202 in the fall of 2021.
- BlueWave purchased the adjacent property from DiCenzo Realty to utilize an existing curb cut for a new accessway onto the property. The new access is approximately 500 FT east on Route 202 from the previous entrance.
- MDOT approved the use of the existing curb cut as a change of use.
- Slight change to fencing to accommodate the new access road.
- Impervious surface increased from approximately 12,000 SF to approximately 24,000 SF.
- There is no change to the panel layout, the perimeter of the project, or the electrical components.
- Applicant has filed an amendment with DEP and that is currently under review.
- Applicant has contacted Army Corps of Engineers due to the modification to the proposed wetland impact which is less than was proposed before.

Town Planner, Clifton Iler, explained that the increase of approximately 10,000 to 12,000 SF of the impervious area, per the ordinance, triggers the Major Site Plan Review process. Major Site Plans are typically sent for third-party review, but due to the low scale of change and development from the overall project, Town staff decided this could be reviewed by the Staff Review Committee. The Staff Review Committee meeting was held on October 20, 2022, to review the project. Questions that came from the meeting are outlined in the report included in the meeting packet. Questions, and answers, included the following:

- Does DiCenzo Realty have an access easement across the property now that the frontage along Route 202 has been purchased from them? Yes.
- What would be happening to the access way and if there would be any changes to that? The Applicant provided Public Safety with documentation to address fire-related concerns of the array, as well as an emergency services plan and fire operations plan.

Interested Parties Questions/Concerns/Opposition:

Pastor Thomas Channell of the Calvary Apostolic Church, located at 24 Crosby Way in Hampden, asked who is going to maintain Crosby Way to provide safe passage for BlueWave. Sean Hale explained that the project access would be coming off Route 202 and not off Crosby Way. Sean showed Pastor Channell the proposed access to the solar array off Route 202 on the plans to give him a better reference for Crosby Way. The distance between Crosby Way and the solar array access is roughly 1,000 to 2,000 FT.

Planning Board Questions:

Member Austin asked whether Town staff had any additional questions or concerns that came out of the Staff Review Committee. Member Austin also asked if the Director of Public Safety and the Director of Public Works accept the proposed emergency services plan and decommission plan respectively. Planner Iler stated that Chief Bailey and Deputy Lundstrom both approved what was submitted in terms of public safety. There were no concerns with the accessway or the decommissioning process.

Member Tinsman asked if the proposed solar array abuts an adjacent municipality. Planner Iler explained that the entirety of the solar array is located in Hampden.

Member Wiltbank asked where the materials go when an array is decommissioned. Sean Hale explained that materials that can be recycled will be. What cannot be recycled will be disposed of in an appropriate facility or landfill. Both DEP and Hampden require a decommissioning plan for the project – this was unamended from the previous approval.

Chair Tinsman closed the public hearing at 7:31 p.m.

Motion by Member Wiltbank, based on findings and information presented herein, move to approve the Major Site Plan amendment for a 6.85 MWdc solar array located off Route 202 (Tax Map/Lot: 10-0-056-2) in the Industrial 2 district; seconded by Member Dunham; the motion carried 5/0/0 by roll call vote.

4. Town Planner Report

Planner Iler explained that the Town Council, at their November 7, 2022, meeting chose to table the Zoning Ordinance Amendments recommended by Planning Board at their October 12, 2022, meeting. Town Council will discuss the recommended amendments at their meeting on Monday, November 14, 2022. Planner Iler recommended that Planning Board members, if they were able, attend the November 14, 2022, Town Council meeting at 6:00 p.m. to speak in favor of what was recommended to the Town Council

On, Tuesday, October 18, 2022, there will be a Planning Board Workshop at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers to start the process of the Zoning Ordinance rewrite.

5. Planning Board Comment

Member Wiltbank spoke positively about the demolition of the structure at the corner of Main Rd N and Western Ave.

6. Adjournment

Motion by Member Dunham moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m., seconded by Member Wiltbank, the motion carried 5/0/0 by roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted by Wanda Libbey,
Administrative Asst.