

**Rochester Planning Board
Minutes
September 27, 2022**

Present: Arnold Johnson, Chairman
Michael Murphy, Assistant Clerk
John DeMaggio, Vice Chairman
Chris Silveira
Lee Carr
Mark Rousseau

Absent: Bendrix Bailey, Clerk

Nancy Durfee, Town Planner
Dawn DeMaggio, Board Administrator
Lori Walsh, Recording Secretary (remote participation)

The meeting convened via Zoom Meeting ID 833 5614 3263. Members joined in-person at Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School. Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and stated the meeting was being recorded.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION:

Rochester Memorial School Photovoltaic Solar Canopy Project, presented by Green Seal Environmental, LLC, 59 Hartley Road, Rochester, MA. Map 37, Lot 6.

Bobby Owens, Senior Project Manager with Select Energy provided a presentation to the Board and was present to discuss the project. Steve Gregory, Vice President of Special Projects and Operations present via Zoom.

Chairman Johnson said, after reviewing the solar canopy project materials he has a few things to discuss. There are few spots in the body of the narrative that contradict each other, for instance the percentage of electricity provided to the school states 70% in one area and 68% in another. In addition, the applicant is requesting a waiver for all of the stormwater drains; much of this will depend on the peer review from the engineer.

Chairman Johnson added that they have to conserve the right to require landscape screening. Their assumptions appear accurate from Pine Street, but there are neighbors that may be impacted by the panels. Based on the Technical Review meeting notes, they agreed to painting the structure jet black. He said, decommissioning bonds are a Bylaw requirement, the bond must be provided prior to pre-construction. However, they may not need a landscape bond, but the decommissioning bond is non-negotiable.

Chairman Johnson mentioned that he discussed the Glare Study provided by the applicant with legal counsel, and the study will need to be resubmitted, the study states the building is only one story and it is actually two-stories. He asked, what was the lowest point? Mr. Owens said at the lowest point was at 13.6' and they are going to raise it up to 14'. Chairman Johnson asked, if that is counting the T structures coming up. Mr. Owens said the lowest point at that T that comes

**Rochester Planning Board
Minutes
September 27, 2022**

down, the bottom of that beam will be 14'. Are the inverters tucked up inside? Mr. Owens said there is a main column down the center isle and inverters will be as high as possible on that column. Chairman Johnson added that the Highway Surveyor is concerned that the steel goes all the way down and sits on the cement, he is concerned about corrosion of the steel with the use of the chemicals they put on there. Mr. Owens said that there is a 2' raise above grade, which will be 30-inch wide concrete footing. Chairman Johnson said that it doesn't show that on the plan. Mr. Owens said, he would add them to the plans. Chairman Johnson said he did not go over the construction notes since he only received them that day, so he might have a few comments on that when they get further along in the process.

The Board questioned the site drainage off the panel. Mr. Owens stated that in this case it would behave similar to the how the drainage is operating now. There is a gap between the modules so the water would fall off the modules onto the pavement. Another question regarding icicles accumulating off the panels was asked. Mr. Owens said there is a snow guard system incorporated into the plans. Member DeMaggio asked if he could explain what an AC Confiner is. Mr. Owens said it is a standard panel board at a larger scale for a 600 or 400 amp panel board, with breakers in each of them and invert on the canopy land and a breaker in that panel board that combines them into a single feed; which that is tied to the building. The Board asked if that will get tied to the building spout. Mr. Owens said yes, their system physically connects to the building so when they are tying in a new breaker, the distribution section of the main switch will send any excess power to the grid so it will be connected to the grid though the building.

Member DeMaggio asked if they are going to have any lighting underneath the panels. Mr. Owens said yes.

Chairman Johnson asked about the trench detail on the last page of the plan and asked if it goes out to the street. Mr. Owen said there is a trench from the canopy to the building itself, but they will not have one to the street. Chairman Johnson said the Board is used to solar fields that are putting solar output to grid, they generally have a disconnect switch, how does this factor into this project. Mr. Owen said the system is directly tied into the building itself so its only connection to the grid is through the buildings main, out to the pole. They are just tying to the main place; comes in behind the main power to the distribution system so there isn't any back-feed power from the second source into the grid. It shuts off automatically. Chairman Johnson asked how does the generator from the school figure in the event of a power outage at the street, the generator is going to kick in. The generator has an automatic transfer switch in the emergency panel and it would shut down. Town Planner Durfee said on that inverter, is that going to be seven inches off the pier, and will it protrude out where something could make contact with it. Mr. Owens said the column line will be down the centerline of the parking stalls and the inverter will be at the top of that column so it should not stick out to a point where it will be effected, it is roughly 2' wide by 3' tall, and 1' in depth, mostly protected by the lighting. Mr. Owen said that they will add the narrative as well. Member Carr said talking about the inverter,

**Rochester Planning Board
Minutes
September 27, 2022**

does it stick out past the cement abutment on the bottom because someone could hit it. Mr. Owen said it's also 10 to 12 feet tall.

Member Silveira asked if this has met all the setbacks that they have. He said that's been his question all along, is it far enough from everything. Member Silveira said he is not saying that they can't do anything about it but he is just curious right from the beginning if it fits. Chairman Johnson said he will talk to Blair about that. Member Silveira asked if the septic is going to be in that ball field. Chairman Johnson said yes. Chairman Johnson said there is no traffic islands around these columns, so how are they going to protect them just by them being off the ground a couple feet. Mr. Owens said right, it's raised so it acts like a parking bumper.

Chairman Johnson said they have a standard contract for Field Engineering for doing a peer review on this one so he would like to entertain a motion to have the Chairman to sign on behalf of the Board.

Member DeMaggio made a motion for the Chairman to sign the contract for Field Engineering for peer review.

Member Murphy seconded the motion.

Motion passes with a roll call vote of 6.

BOARD BUSINESS:

Minutes

August 23, 2022 (Draft), August 9, 2022 (Final)

Member DeMaggio made a motion to approve the minutes for August 9, 2022.

Member Murphy seconded the motion.

Motion passes with a roll call vote of 6.

August 23, 2022 minutes will be reviewed by the Board members for vote at the next meeting.

Review

"Arch at the Meadow" Site Plan Review, Draft Decision

Chairman Johnson asked, if the decision had been sent to Town Counsel. Town Planner Durfee replied, not yet. Chairman Johnson said that they could bring the decision up at the next meeting after Town Counsel has reviewed them.

Buzzards Bay Coalition, Scenic Highway Decision

Chairman Johnson said that the Board could review over the decision at the next meeting.

**Rochester Planning Board
Minutes
September 27, 2022**

Vouchers

Field Engineering, Connet Woods, Invoice #15322, \$375.00

Member DeMaggio made a motion to approve the voucher for \$375.00.

Member Murphy seconded the motion.

Motion passes with a roll call vote of 6.

Field Engineering, The Village at Plumb Corner, Invoice #15323, \$1,950.00

Member DeMaggio made a motion to approve the voucher for \$1,950.00.

Member Murphy seconded the motion.

Motion passes with a roll call vote of 6.

NEW BUSINESS & PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- Town of Rochester, Open Space and Recreation Plan 2019, State Required Letter of Review. Chairman Johnson said, unfortunately he did not have time to review it. The Board will move it to the next meeting.
- Morris Trust, 52 Wolf Island Road, Chapter 91 Waterways License Request to DEP, for any Planning Board Recommendations.
Dave Davignon, P.E., requested a continuance to the next meeting as he had a conflict. The Board continued discussion to October 11, 2022.
- Featherbed Lane South Historic Review Update, requesting closing out of the final Decision, Condition #8.
Chairman Johnson stated, Special Condition #8 from the Featherbed Lane South Solar Project requires the applicant to undertake a historical review. The developer provided a letter affirming they have performed the historic review, and they reported no historic significance was present. Unfortunately, Beals and Thomas is a slightly confused, in their letter, they asked to close out condition #8, but the Board does not conduct approval of individual items in the decision. Normally, the Board waits until they have completed construction prior to closing out any requirements in a decision. Town Planner Durfee asked the Chairman if they should request the historic report from Beals and Thomas or from the applicant. She said in the letter from Mass Historical, that they agreed with the recommendations by the Public Archaeological Lab (PAL) but we don't know what those recommendations are until we see the report.
- Annual Solar Systems Energy Output & Tracking Report
Chairman Johnson said that every decision written on any solar project, states that by January 31st the company shall provide a report of the energy that the solar field is putting out during the year. If within the report the solar project is notably either putting out low or no energy output in a calendar year, we would consider that abandoned and they will be required to dismantle the solar field. However, in all the years that Board has

Rochester Planning Board

Minutes

September 27, 2022

approved projects, they never really had an organized system of getting these reports so Nancy came up with a form which she had circulated at a previous meeting and has compiled everything. It includes additional information regarding the bonds as well. Town Planner Durfee said this is an easy way to track these projects, and gain cohesiveness on all of the various reports, because they come in all different fashions.

TOWN PLANNER UPDATES:

Prioritization Process for Protecting Land for Preservation

Town Planner Durfee reported to the Board on a prioritization process for protecting lands in Rochester. The purpose of this project is to assist the Town in prioritizing land for open space acquisition and preservation based on inherent qualities of the land, and proximity and relation to other categories of land. This project is being performed by SRPEDD with funding from the DLTA program and assistance from the town. We are looking for information from Town departments, boards, commissions and residents to determine what is most value to the community before running the analysis. This is just an opportunity to learn about the project and provide feedback. Chairman Johnson added maybe anyone who wishes to provide feedback could just submit it to Nancy, or on an individual basis and hopefully you get the data from the other groups. Town Planner Durfee said they are handing it out to anyone who is interested, we want the final product to come from the community.

Member DeMaggio asked a question about water rights, he just would like some clarification because it seems that anytime the Town of Rochester has water, it ends up going to other Towns and why would we want to purchase it for preservation? Town Planner Durfee said water is the most important characteristic that anybody has is water, Rochester happens to be rich in water and other Towns and communities around recognized that very early on and were able to develop their own community by obtaining ground and surface water from Rochester. Town Planner Durfee added it is entirely up to the Town of Rochester what they decide to purchase. This project is only a tool to allow you the opportunity to find the pieces that are the most valuable because of the variety of different things that it offers, so if you have a water source protection and it also has good forestry, and the soils are good, that might be adventitious piece of property to purchase.

Chairman Johnson mentioned hosting an Interdepartmental meeting towards the end of October or early November. Chairman Johnson said usually a Wednesday night works because the Boards and Commissions tend not to meet on Wednesdays.

Town Planner Durfee said that playground is making progress, the Village at Plumb Corner are doing the site work and that was been completed. The asphalt pad is constructed and they are working on that central piece. They are currently working on the safety issues in the back of the building making sure that the signage is up as well as the speed bumps. They sectioned off the place where the dumpsters will go, the paint is on the surface and that will be demarcated. She understands they are having difficulty with the dumpster company but it's coming.

**Rochester Planning Board
Minutes
September 27, 2022**

Rounseville Road Solar site visit, Member Bendrix placed a video in the Dropbox for your review and we are also holding a site visit to review the maintenance requirement. The site visit will take place on October 4th at 4:30. She will be attending the October 4th meeting to get a look at the site and make sure that the fencing and the site is being maintained properly. Chairman Johnson said to post the site visit to be on the safe side.

ADJOURNMENT:

Member DeMaggio made a motion to adjourn at 7:57 pm.
Member Murphy seconded the motion.

For the video recording of this Planning Board meeting click on the link: [9/27/22 - Rochester Planning Board on Vimeo](#)

Date: 11/16/2022



Arnold Johnson, Chairman



Lori Walsh, Recording Clerk