

**Planning Board Public Hearing
Extra-large Ground Mounted Solar Project
August 17, 2015**

Present: Planning Board – John Waite, Kip Komosa, Paul Allis, Rachel Blain, Max Antes, Roger Sadoski

Guests: Pat Smith (Franklin Regional Council Of Governments), Michael Marcus (New England Environmental, Inc.), Marnin Lebowitz (Lake Street Development Partners), Reenie Clancy (Deerfield Energy Resources Committee)

John Waite opened tonight's hearing by explaining this public hearing on the Site Plan for an extra-large ground mounted solar system is a continuation from August 3rd. On that date a quorum of Planning Board members was not present.

Mr. Marcus, president of New England Environmental (NEE), took the floor to explain what the project entailed. NEE is a consultant with LSDP. He said the project was limited by a state cap limiting the size of solar projects to 6 megawatts per parcel. This project will be built on one parcel next to the quarry - at 901 River Road, owned by WT Land.

Access to the site will be through the existing driveway that enters 901 River Road. Eversource has a right-of-way to the area entering through Keets Road. They plan to have that access gated but maintained as an emergency access, as requested by the Deerfield Fire Chief. Connection to the grid will be through a distribution line off River Road.

The area is currently forested. About 18 acres will be clear-cut to accommodate the panels. And since shade is an enemy to solar, there will be selective cutting around the clear-cut area, extending into the buffer zone of a wetland area.

Once constructed there should be no traffic at the site.

There will be some noise from the inverters required to convert DC current to AC. This will only happen when there is sunlight. Mr. Marcus said the noise normally cannot be heard 150 feet from the inverters and the nearest homes are about 500 feet away. He said that if noise is an issue they can place some barriers, such as planting, to eliminate the noise. Inverters will be silent at night.

The Zoning Board has approved a Use Variance for this site, since it was not zoned for Extra Large Scale Solar. The Conservation Commission has hired an environmental engineer to review the plan for any possible wetland and stormwater concerns. There is expected to be more run-off from the solar panels and grass areas than there is for forested land.

The electrical power that is generated may be used by the Town and public entities, such as the public schools. They are still negotiating with towns. It will not be provided for private schools.

or for-profit organizations. The state wants to work with municipalities and school districts. Even WT Land will not get any electricity from this project.

Pat Smith from the FRCOG was hired by the Deerfield Planning Board to review the Site Plan Application. She had presented a draft response to NEE and LSDP's Site Plan Review Application which NEE had responded to on August 3, 2015. She then presented a second draft of responses to questions she had about the project and NEE responded to them on August 14, 2015. She said there needs to be an excavation permit issued by the Board of Selectmen, before the Building Commissioner can issue a building permit.

There is a decommissioning agreement between the property owner (WT Land) and the lease holder (LSDP) that involves an escrow account of \$75,000 funded by Lake Street Development Partners. The Town may be included in the agreement if it wishes. It would need to do this prior to issuance of the building permit.

Other items to consider: The location is not in a 100 year flood zone. In the event of an inundation event, automatic shut offs are included in the plan. No hazardous materials -or oils are anticipated at the site. Training of emergency personnel will be needed. A PILOT agreement (for payment in lieu of taxes) has yet to be negotiated, and site plan fees have yet to be determined.

Ms. Smith will write up notes regarding the status of her questions and the responses from the applicant.

The hearing was continued until the next Planning Board meeting - September 14, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Priscilla Phelps