



Halifax Planning Board Meeting Minutes July 10, 2014

A meeting of the Halifax Planning Board was held on Thursday, July 10, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. at the Halifax Town Hall, Meeting Room #1, 499 Plymouth St. Halifax, Massachusetts.

Members Present: Gordon Andrews, Chairman
Mark Millias, Clerk
Larry Belcher, Member
Absent: Rob Piccirilli and Rick Greeley

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. and the agenda was read into the record by Gordon Andrews

MOTION: Mark Millias

SECOND: Larry Belcher AIF

Appointments:

7:30 p.m. George Smith, site Plan Review, 2 Monponsett St, Solar Farm.

Mr. Smith of Landcraft Corporation present. Mr. Smith gave an overview of the history with the Town and previous presentation for Site Plan Review. Overall a 50 acre site and will be using about 30 acres. Once approved will have a Form A cut out of the larger parcel, about 380 feet of frontage. 1000, feet deep. Project will have about 10,000 panels at 300 watts each. 3.1 Mega watt .DC and or about 2.5 megawatts AC. Enough for about 700 homes. (informally a couple years ago) will provide about \$45,000 in taxes for the Town per year. Keep the grade as is and leave the turf in place while installing and will over seed it later with ne meadow mix or fescue mix, lower maintenance turf.

Main access road is 18 ft. private drive. Utilities will go underground under transmission line about 200 – 300 ft. then up again, going down to the light in the center of town with 3 phase power. Right now there is single phase. 13.800 volt to tie into grid. One concern previously was screening, so have added White Pine Screening (at street) about 15 feet apart. 6 foot chain link fence around the perimeter, typical for these installations, with a gate. Wildlife will tend to get in and out, small animals and deer will jump the fence, and have found mice, foxes, turtles, snakes. He will be meeting with the Wildlife people tomorrow morning. Marked as a box turtle habitat.

Hoping they will go easy and maybe push back to the 100 foot buffer line. Some wetlands here, am 50 feet back. Conservation commission said that it should be ok. (Will be filing formally) Other sites have asked to put in tunnels and nesting grounds. Only gets expensive if they make you reduce the project as all the economics are done.

Mr. Millias: If they ask you to push back to the 50 feet, is the project still feasible.

Mr. Smith: Yes would be feasible, but the economics are tight. Would loose about 10% of the output.

Mr. Belcher: Are they raised panels or on the ground.

Mr. Smith: No, they are raised, called a fixed tilt system, 20 degree angle. About 30 % of site is taken up by panels, the rest is grass, all open.

Mr. Millias: It's all impervious.

Mr. Smith: Everything is impervious, except those that the path pads that those are on. less than 1%.

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Gravel drive, 12", 8" of gravel run, 4" processed rolled on top. Rolled to center and a road to the disconnect. So not much in way of roads. For the perimeter, there is about 20' all around it. So truck can drive around for maintenance, or replacement of panels, maybe a transformer through the life of it. Probably have a few visits a month, for a few hours each time, no traffic to speak of.

Should be built in about 4 months. Hope to start, if we get all the approvals in October and finish in January. Scheduled to go on line the end of March.

Mr. Millias: does it provide emergency access for fire truck to get down to the buildings in the center there.

Mr. Smith: Fire trucks can definitely get down in here, designed for that, but can't go around the edges. The transformers are here. Nothing is flammable including the transformer. The oil, there would be smoking type fires, might ignite insulation for a while, but wouldn't be big fires. Could be a high voltage short which would only be smoking. The oil in the transformer might be flammable. It will have vegetable oil in the transformer, instead of petroleum. Over here is switch gears and metering.

Mr. Millias: If it's going to go underground from the transformers to the other building, is it going to go above ground to meet to the road and then back under.

Mr. Smith: It will be underground to here, and up on a pole, over to another pole on the road, it is actually three poles, and one will have a manual disconnect. It can be disconnected back at the utility automatically or disconnect manually at the pole by the utility if they wanted to, as a back up.

Next to a high voltage transmission line, so can't go cross that. That's why they have to go down and under and up again 200 feet down the road and pick the poles up again.

Goes to the Nuclear station. Not allowed to cross a high voltage line, with a local distribution line, have to go underground.

Mr. Millias: wouldn't see the wire.

Mr. Smith: Not very intrusive on the landscape. Snow will slide right off, no snow removal, just for the road access. Will generate electricity thru the snow. Heat up with the sun and melt. Let it all happen naturally, no scraping of the panels. Very expensive initially to put in, once pay for themselves in 7 to 8 years, it is essentially fee emergency for 25 years. Low cost s maintenance once built.

Mr. Millias: Replace panels as technology improves.

Mr. Smith: Will keep it up once it's paid for, it's a 30 year facility, only have to replace it with something new is if fell apart in 20 years. Put a new generation in, maybe, or some other industrial use. Owner is new Gen Capital. Any questions for me?

Mr. Andrews: Screening along the street?

Mr. Smith: yes, white pine, 15 feet on center, and are fast growing.

Mr. Andrews: What is the distance between the panels?

Mr. Smith: Rows are 12 – 15 feet in between and 9 or 10 feet in plain view. 11 ' 7" between panels.

Enough to drive a truck down, will be mowing once a years, fescue, maybe meadow mix. About 30" off the ground. Will mow under, only one post in the middle on each location, driven into ground I beam, about 6 feet. About 250 posts.

Mr. Millias: Because of the value of the panels, when your done, you would remove everything and would go back to grass?

Mr. Smith: Yes, owner would pull up the facility and recycle it. Will be topping trees over 30 feet because of shading, will be asking to do that (Con Com)

Mr. Millias: so the whole thing is in the Industrial Zone.

Mr. Smith: Yes, over in Plympton it's called commercial, so from the road to here is wetlands, so the Form A

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will look like this,. We are taking the frontage on the Halifax side, back to the wetland line. Maybe to the old property line.

Mr. Andrews: So what are you looking for tonight?

Mr. Smith: Well, a plan review is required, and asking for approval.

Secretary: We have received 2 comments back, one from the Fire Department and one from the Conservation. Members reviewed comments.

Mr. Andrews asked what his time frame is.

Mr. Smith advised they would like to start in October 1.

Mr. Andrews, you have to go from here to Conservation?

Mr. Smith: Yes. We came here a couple years ago for informal discussion.

Secretary advised of Planning Board time deadline. (July 31)

Mr. Andrews: I don't see any problems here.

Mr. Millias: Has anything changes since the last time you were here.

Mr. Smith: No, the only thing that has change is the cost.

Mr. Andrews asked if they will be paving in from the street a short distance (entrance into the site)?

Mr. Smith: Yes, about 100 feet in, plan show s 50, but can do a hundred if you want.

Mr. Andrews said, no, just want to be able to have entrance paved so truck can pull in to wait and open the gate is fine.

Mr. Millias asked about how big the trailers coming in, 51 feet long?

Mr. Smith: During construction, but not after. Only large thing in the future to come in is a transformer, Come in an enclosure. 2 or 3 inverters, about 500 KV doing 2.5 mega watts would be five.

Mr. Millias: so it would be a container type box.

Mr. Smith: yes, 8 feet, locked doors.

Motion to approve Site Plan Review as presented and prepared for Landcraft Corporation, Map 105 Lot 2, Monponsett Street, Halifax, MA. (A portion of Lot 2 Map 105 as shown on plan drawn by Silva Engineering, Sheet 1, dated June 6, 2014. Site Plan for Independent Solar Generator for Landcraft Corporation.

MOTION: Larry Belcher

SECOND: Mark Millias

AIF

Mr. Smith noted that they will be doing a Form A for Lot 2, to isolate the lot.

Secretary advised that the Meeting Minutes are not ready for approval as the computer system has not be available. Also noted and discussed the Multi-family requirements as Amanda Estates does not have the buildings on individual lots and we need to have it clarified. Does if fall into subdivision with individual lots or multifamily. Leads back to 50' setback.

Site Plan Review: Halifax Trails, Multi-family Development 265 Monponsett St.

Present: Alan Comeau and Greg Driscoll

Mr. Driscoll: Revised set of plans and drainage calculations, just checking in, have about 2 weeks before comments are in.

Secretary: responses due today, and have 2 weeks for decision. Put them together for review by board

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Members reviewed comments, drainage calculations and new plans.

Mr. Driscoll: So what is the concern with the Association?

Mr. Millias: So as far as the ownership of the road and the maintenance,

Mr. Belcher: Plowing, sanding, potholes

Mr. Driscoll: Right, it's not going to be a Town Road, handled by the Association.

Mr. Andrews:

Mr. Millias: Where they able to delineate around pond?

Mr. Driscoll: Yes, 100' line, wetland line, grading change, changed the swale. Refined the grade and drainage calc and the design. Eliminate this basin because this basin was big enough to take the flow from these areas, this catch basin and this building. Redirected this swale going like this, to this basin which I took away and redirected this way.

Mr. Andrews: That's just the swale area?

Mr. Driscoll: Yes, it's similar to this one, that flows right out to there to go into the grass channel for treatment.

Mr. Driscoll: This goes right over the pavement there, that line is actually a foot wide gravel stone diaphragm, level spread. Mr. Andrews: How does that work for plowing?

Mr. Driscoll: Will have to try to stay away from it and go that way. This is a side strip. We also added septic tanks and doing our official soil tests on the 18th with the Board of Health. Septic will go here, here, and this building will have the septic here. They want one tank per unit. Actual chambers and inverse will be designed after we have the soil testing. File by the 23rd for conservation, and drainage calcs will also go to conservation.

Mr. Belcher: You only have 5 joined houses and the rest are going to be individual units? Mr. Driscoll: Its' a common foundation, with patios in between.

Mr. Belcher: Physically together?

Mr. Comeau: Yeah, one each is just one foundation, but the units are separated by patios, but it's all on one continuous foundation.

Mr. Driscoll: Kinda looks like a duplex per group.

Mr. Millias: You have them staggered so the windows would only open from one way from each, so you wouldn't see in between them.

Mr. Comeau: your neighbors all facing your patio has no windows.

Mr. Millias: So you have privacy on one.

Mr. Comeau: Will have a wall in the front and wall in the back so you have total privacy.

Mr. Driscoll: On the revision, the grading doesn't change. And these are the details for the two basins, and the grass channel flows right into it. Control structures, spill ways.

Mr. Andrews: that was it for the revision.

Mr. Driscoll: Yes, the board of Selectman wanted the sidewalks extended, so we brought the sidewalk right along here, so Cumberland Farms is and Grill 58 is across the street, so people can walk up this way.

Mr. Millias: so will it connect to the existing sidewalk, or will there be a gap by the housing authority.

Mr. Driscoll: I don't think there is no sidewalks on this side, there is a sidewalk by Grill 58.

Mr. Millias: So you're going to construct one in the front but it will dead end on the end of the property, there is nothing in front of Halifax Meadows.

Mr. Driscoll: No, there isn't, so we were thinking it matters this way, if someone is going to walk somewhere, we'll put this sidewalk in this way and a crosswalk over to the sidewalk to Grill 58.

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Mr. Andrews: Is Grill 58 right there at that point?

Mr. Belcher: Yes, right there.

Mr. Andrews: So the sidewalk goes just beyond your property line.

Mr. Driscoll: Yes ... Mr. Comeau: So to get to Cumberland Farms you'd have to cross the street twice.

Mr. Millias: At least someone could safely walk to the center, and access any of those stores.

Mr. Comeau: It's actually not a bad idea heading down town. Heading in the opposite direction we're going nowhere, it's like having a sidewalk in the Sahara Desert.

Mr. Driscoll: We haven't addressed all of the comments at this time. There were a few over the phone.

Secretary requested a response letter on all the comments for the record

Mr. Andrews: How are you addressing the lots?

Mr. Driscoll: We are going to file with ZBA for a new petition for a variance to the provision for lots, for each building on a separate lot. So that will eliminate a lot of the individual variances we are asking for.

Mr. Andrews: So you're going to subdivide that into lots?

Mr. Driscoll: No, I'm not, that's what they originally wanted, that is what it says in the by-law, about each building on a separate lot. And ZBA kinda said, no one has come before them before doing it that way, so they said just ask for a variance to that. Eliminate a lot of the other stuff we're asking for.

Mr. Millias: Wouldn't that be a variance to us, isn't that an issue to us.

Secretary: Not necessarily, because they are the Special Permit Authority

Mr. Millias: So you would deed out the units individually, and the overall property would be the Association?

Mr. Driscoll: Yes, the whole property would be common area owned by the Association. Each lot/unit would be individually owned, the unit, patio. The lands, driveways, maintenance, landscaping all that, the fees would cover and be under the Condo Association.

Mr. Andrews: So the ZBA is saying you can file for a variance and you don't have to put it on individual lots.

Mr. Driscoll: Correct. We are going to ask one variance to that provision in the by-law, rather than multiple variances we were asking to each out, with the individual ...

Mr. Andrews: And what is the request to the variance, how do you request that variance? As a hardship? Our Zoning, I don't understand where they come from 90% of the time.

Mr. Comeau: It didn't make a difference if the Association owned all the land in one piece, or own the land as five pieces.

Mr. Andrews: The only thing I question is that they have to be on separate lots. And we have a zoning board that says...

Mr. Comeau: The by-law is 40 years old.

Mr. Millias: Not stepping over....

Mr. Andrews: When are you going back to them.

Mr. Comeau: July 14.

Mr. Andrews: We have a question, we'll have to pose the attorney about the lots. You're not the only one coming up right now, we want to get this squared away. I don't think Zoning can give you a variance to get away from that. That is a requirement of the by-law and has to be addressed.

Mr. Driscoll: We'll have to decide if we start a new petition or continue with what we have already.

Mr. Andrews: We're just going to make a call to get an answer. But I don't really see any issues with what you have presented.

Mr. Driscoll: I did sit down with the Water Superintendent.

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Mr. Comeau: What do you think about the development in general?

Mr. Millias: I think it does, it looks nice, seems like a nice project. There is that issue with the deeded lots, you guys don't meet that as we see it. So that's an issue, but as far as everything looks, it looks nice.

Mr. Driscoll: It could be if we had a plan, we took it out. We did have a plan with the individual lots, asking for all the dimensional variances, based on having to put on individual lots.

Mr. Belcher: We'll be here next week.

Mr. Driscoll: So we're on the agenda for next week. 7:45

Secretary: Make it 8 p.m., I still have a few ahead of you.

Mr. Belcher: If we don't have an answer, we won't have something for them.

Secretary: We still need them to come in case we have to do an extension again.

Mr. Driscoll: I have one copy of the revisions, I can get more and get them over to you.

Mr. Andrews: There really isn't that many changes in it anyway.

Mr. Driscoll: Just mostly intergrading the utility sheet

Mr. Belcher: Just moving that one basin

Mr. Driscoll: This got a little bit smaller.

Mr. Andrews: And the other plan shows the separate lots

Mr. Driscoll: Yes

Mr. Andrews: And with the separate lots, what was it that you didn't think you could meet?

Mr. Driscoll: some of the setback rules, and need waivers.

Mr. Belcher: Yeah some are 70 feet behind, and need 100 there, and tight, on frontage.

Mr. Driscoll: We have frontage for most of the lots except for this one.

Mr. Andrews: And where were your lots, did they come to the center of that and split up.

Mr. Driscoll: No, they came to this, right along, here creating a private way around here, this line is still on here.

Mr. Millias: so that doesn't give you to the center, couldn't use that as the setback?

Mr. Driscoll: No, to get frontage width, that's why we create this as a private way.

Mr. Andrews: So you couldn't get setback on frontage? Could you maintain rear setback, you have side line, or didn't get that either? Between the buildings you have.

Mr. Driscoll: yes

Motion to continue Site Plan Review for Halifax Trails to July 17th at 8 p.m.

MOTION: Mark Millias

SECOND: Larry Belcher

AIF

Solar Farm – 280 South St. –

Secretary presented Site Plan Review- petitioner will be coming in on July 17, 2014 at 8:15 p.m.

Members review plans briefly, discussion on wetland line, FEMA line, 200' river, 100' buffer zones.

Adjourn:

Motion to adjourn meeting.

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MOTION: Mark Millias
SECOND: Larry Belcher AIF

It was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Date Approved: _____

Terri Renaud
Planning Board Secretary

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