



Office of  
**THE PLANNING BOARD**  
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Lance J. McNally, Chairman      Christopher Nocella, Vice Chairman      Laura E. Shifrin, Clerk  
Kathleen Araujo, Member      Edwin H. Howard, II, Member      Jerrilyn T. Bozicas, Associate  
Member

Minutes  
Monday, April 25, 2016  
Townsend Memorial Hall, in Room 2  
272 Main Street, Townsend, MA 01469

**I. PRELIMINARIES:**

**1.1 Call the meeting to order: LM opened the meeting at 7:05PM.**

**1.2 Roll call:** Lance McNally (LM), Ed Howard (EH), Chris Nocella (CN). Laurie Shifrin (LS) arrived at 7:09PM. Karen Chapman, Land Use Coordinator, took notes.

**1.3 Additions or Deletions to Agenda Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting:** None

**1.4 Acceptance of Minutes:** none

LM recessed the meeting at 7:26 and reopened the meeting at 8:00PM.

**II. APPOINTMENTS:**

**2.1 8:00 p.m. Continue Public Hearing – Review Petition to Enlarge Ground-Mounted Solar Overlay District**

LM reopened the public hearing at 8:02PM.

Public Comments:

Carolyn Sellars (90 West Meadow Rd.) – concerned but not opposed to solar. Not of lot of detail in the bylaw. My property is surrounded by the proposed properties. Wants to protect the residential character of the town. Need to be thoughtful about how these project move forward. Concerned about the floodplain.

Bob Winter (46 Greenville Rd.) – Town shouldn't have the sole right to have these businesses. Make it a regular building permit.

Paul Boundy (537 Main St.) – The acreage that Mr. Craven owns is on top of the Aquifer Protection District. What will do once these are up?

Sellers – Shouldn't approve these by-right but consider the effects.

The Energy Committee's memo was read into the record (LM).

Sellers – the Wind bylaw is much more extensive.

John Barrett (38 Highland St.) – Any questions on what was submitted? Only three parcels – owned by the town – Misconceptions about how the all works. Concerns about security.

A question was asked about potential leaking from the panels.

Palmer Moore (PM) from Nexamp. Nexamp is a MA company with 100s of projects in MA so they have a lot of experience. The site will be surrounded by 7 foot fence with a locked enclosure. Panels are strong enough to withstand storms and wind. There are no Chemicals in panels should they be broken.

The Board asked what is put under the panels.

PM – clover is usually put down. Vegetation growth has to be 36” before it is a problem. Trim vegetation once a year.

The Board asked what the benefits to the Town are.

PM. 1. Financial. Personal property taxes on facilities. NEXAMP leases the property.

The Board asked if any of the completed projects were in residentially zoned areas.

PM – Some are in agricultural areas and residential districts. The majority are in industrial areas.

2. Net metering credits – community shared system. Half to 100% of credits are given to residents of the communities. Anyone in town can join up. Homeowner’s annual bill reviewed and direct credits to decrease bill 15%. Our money is 85% of the credits, SREC sales and tax credits.

The Board asked how their process will ensure fairness.

PM. Customers who want to sign up for the project can do so. Nexamp will proactively work with town to establish initiative with workshops in town. Anyone with a Unitil account can join including commercial and industrial and residential. Every project doesn’t have to have the same method of including people. They are open to system of community sharing that the community agrees with.

The Board asked, This may not be the type of project that is used (i.e., Nexamp). Why this area?

PM said Open areas, conservation land, not a lot of density or electric load. Can only put a project near or on Main Street. Previously disturbed areas (i.e., farms). Proximity to infrastructure, energy consumers, and open space.

The Board wanted to know what the concrete benefits to the town were.

Barrett responded that tax revenue, property owners will preserve their land. At the end of the 20 year life, it goes back to farm land. Benefit to some residents on their bill.

Sellers said she supported solar but too much too quickly. Prior ATM vote was concerned about controls. Because town let it go. Consider withdrawing from ATM and look to making bylaw stronger.

Barrett said other towns create project Townsend loses out on the net metering if we wait.

[Submitted photos of property]. PB could work on amending the bylaw in the future.

Bounty – I abut these properties and will see a field of panels.

LM shared concerns that:

1. This would put a commercial enterprise in a residential area

2. Need to do things carefully and have due diligence
3. Energy Committee concurred with these concerns
4. Not in favor

CN shared concerns that:

1. Forming the town in to a solar farm
2. Everyone is going to want in if they have land.

Barrett responded not all properties are conducive.

PM – no town in MA has become a solar town. Utilities won't allow with technical constraints, net metering, and utilities.

LS shared concerns that:

1. Not against solar – credit aspect causes reservations
2. Not fair that some people are excluded
3. Need more provisions for abutters – can there be mounds?
4. Unfair to approve at the expense of neighbors
5. Let the towns people decide.

LM Closed the hearing at 9:05PM.

CN moved to report to town meeting that the vote by the Planning Board was 2-2. LS seconded. AIF.

### **III. WORKSESSION:**

- 3.1 Mandatory Referral from ZBA: re: Accessory Apartment Variance/Appeal/Special Permit: PB supports the ZBA issuing a variance
- 3.2 Discuss, vote and sign Draft Report to Town Meeting for Alyssa Drive Road Acceptance: CN moved to accept the draft with the exception that Ed Kukklula report when finished. LS seconded. AIF.
- 3.3 Discuss, vote and sign Draft Report to Town Meeting for Amendment to Ground Mounted Solar Overlay District.
- 3.4 Discuss Planning Board Administrator Position: LM will meet with Karen Chapman, to interview candidates.

### **IV. CORRESPONDENCE:**

- 4.1 Notices from Townsend / Other Towns: Noted

### **V. ADJOURNMENT:**

- 5.1 CN moved to adjourn at 9:09PM. LS seconded. AIF.

**Next Regular Meeting Date: Monday May 9, 2016, at 7:00 p.m.**

Submitted by Michele Decoteau and transcribed from Karen Chapman's notes