

Palmer Planning Board

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 19, 2018

I. Call To Order

Chairman Michael Marciniac called the meeting to order at 7:09PM on Monday, March 19, 2018 in the Town Hall meeting room. Present were members Norman Czech, Kathleen Burns, and Paul Burns-Johnson. Tom Skowyra was absent. Also present was Town Planner, Linda Leduc, and Gillian Davis recording minutes.

II. Public Hearings

7:00PM - Borrego Solar Systems, Inc. - 271 Breckenridge Street, Palmer

Site Plan Approval and Special Permit to install a 6.4 MW ground-mounted photovoltaic system at 271 Breckenridge Street, Palmer. Parcel also known as. Assessors Map 19, Lots 60-63.

The chairman opened the site plan approval public hearing at 7:09PM. This meeting was continued from January 22, 2018 and February 26, 2018. Chairman then opened the special permit hearing for large scale solar array located in the secondary recharge area in the aquifer protection district. Chairman stated both public hearings will be held concurrently.

The applicant Steve Long, P.E. from Borrego Solar Systems, Inc. was present to discuss the project.

John Furman, P.E of vhb was present representing the Planning Board.

J. Furman went over memo dated March 19, 2018.

J. Furman explained there are three waivers being requested:

- Waiver of televising underground stormwater utilities.
- Waiver of Formal Landscape Plan per Section 171-29-D [4] [h].
- Waiver of verification of Estimated Seasonal High Groundwater Elevations.

J. Furman stated the Landscaping Plan has been revised and now complies with the 50% open space that is required.

J. Furman reminded the board of the discussion last meeting about the 12 utility poles. He continued to question whether the buffer is sufficient to provide screening from the poles which are 35'-45' off the southerly property line.

M. Marciniac questioned the curve in the roadway and asked for it to be straightened to push the poles away from the southerly property line.

J. Furman stated the Stormwater Operation and Maintenance plan should be turned into an agreement prior to the pre-construction meeting.

Member Tom Skowyra arrives at 7:15PM.

J. Furman said a packet was submitted regarding secondary containment area for the inverters and the product is acceptable.

The containment plan was provided to the Board members.

M. Marciniec asked what the process is if there is a spill and who would be responsible.

S. Long replied that there will be a site supervisor present during construction and a post construction contact number will be posted on the fence entrance.

J. Furman stated at the last meeting the public had questions about the fire department and specific training.

S. Long submitted a document regarding fire hazards to address the concerns and gave a hard copy for the Board to look over.

J. Furman reminded the Board that last meeting, the public also had questions about the noise of the inverters.

J. Furman stated the noise level of the inverter is 55-dB at 1 meter. He consulted Jason Ross, vhb Director of Noise and Vibration, on the level of this noise and its implications. The actual measure of sound impact should be measured at the property line of the abutting properties per DEP regulations. As designed, the closest inverter to the property line is approximately 300 feet away. 100 feet of this distance is a natural, wooded buffer which will permanently remain. J. Ross has performed sound analysis for other solar projects, and using that data, the sound level from the inverter can be expected to drop 40dB by the time it reaches the property line, not including any other reduction from the buffer.

J. Furman stated there is no sound ordinance for this application. He further explained the DEP required measurement cannot increase 10 dB over ambient conditions at the property line.

J. Furman said from 300' the dB level would fall at 40dB. He continued to explain the property line would be around 15dB and the ambient range being between 15dB-20dB.

J. Furman then stated in Jason Ross' opinion, the sound is not an issue and the sound from the inverter will not violate DEP requirements.

M. Marciniec asked Steve Long if there was anything he wanted to add.

S. Long stated all have been addressed except for the curve of the road. He further stated the road is curved now to avoid the wetland area on the south side of the roadway.

S. Long explained the poles can move closer to the system but no closer than 60 feet because they do not want the poles to fall on the fence.

L. Leduc stated they would like to see the roadway moved to the north.

M. Marciniac said he would like the roadway away from the property line as far as it can be.

N. Czech expressed concerns with National Grid dictating where the poles would go.

S. Long stated he is aware of those potential concerns and will be attending the site inspection visit with National Grid.

M. Marciniac brought attention to incorrect notes on the submitted plan, C-4.0 & C-6.1, regarding the tree line. He stated they need to be corrected and resubmitted.

S. Long stated the Conservation Commission has an onsite meeting on April 6, 2018 at 10:30AM

P. Burns-Johnson stated concern with the road and that he would like to see a greater buffer.

S. Long said a new plan will show the house for a reference to the road.

Chairman Marciniac opened to the public for questions.

Mark Sininsky, 285 Breckenridge St, asked about the transformer, spills and the sign on the fence identifying who to call.

M. Marciniac replied that vhb is satisfied with the containment of the transformers.

T. Skowyra, referring to the water supply protection district, asked if there was any follow-up on the protection of ground water.

J. Furman replied Meddie Perry, Senior Hydrogeologist of vhb, stated since the panels are impervious, there is no significant change in hydrology, due to the fact that the panels are tilted and allow runoff onto the ground.

T. Skowyra further asked about ground water levels and expressed concern about levels being affected.

J. Furman said vhb looks at negative impacts when looking at hydrology. He further stated, no test pits were done because there are no deep cuts for this project, all work is surface regrading only. The deepest they are going down is about one foot.

S. Long agreed with J. Furman, stating there will be minimal grading on the site.

M. Marciniac restated, this project will not go down lower than the topsoil layer.

T. Skowyra also asked about what will be done to control mud onto Breckenridge Street.

J. Furman referred to the plan set, C-6.0, which shows all sediment and erosion controls.

A motion to continue the public hearing to April 2, 2018 at 7:30 PM was made by P. Burns-Johnson, seconded by N. Czech. The motion passed (5:0).

7:30 PM- Palmer Paving Corporation -- 863 Ware Street, Palmer

Special permit to remove earth materials from the property. Parcel is also known as. Assessors Map 31, Lots 28 & 28-1.

The chairman opened the special permit public hearing at 7:52PM. This meeting was continued from March 5, 2018.

The applicant, Michael Shea was present for Palmer Paving Corp.

Donald Frydryk, P.E. of Sherman & Frydryk Engineering was present and spoke on behalf of the applicant.

John Furman, P.E. of vhb was present to represent the Planning Board.

Dan Marchant from the Fish Hatchery was present.

J. Furman went over his memo dated March 19, 2018. He reminded the Board that this application is for a new 3-year permit.

J. Furman stated two waivers have been requested as part of this Application:

- Waiver for test soil borings, granted for the last permit
- Waiver of televising underground stormwater utilities.

J. Furman noted a waiver of section 11.7(j) requiring a setback of 150 feet from excavation activities to structures in order to allow the house to remain. All utilities have been cut so structure is now not habitable. He stated this should be noted as a condition of approval.

J. Furman said no new landscaping plan has been proposed. The Board was to conduct a site visit to view front landscaping for additional discussion.

D. Frydryk stated the top row of trees is about 20'-25' above the road. He continued by saying the road is 445' and the house and top of slope is at 465'.

M. Marciniac said he would like to see more plantings along the south side of the driveway and on the berm.

J. Furman stated the volume of topsoil is estimated at 4,500 cubic yards.

J. Furman explained the applicant has confirmed that the operating hours requested will match that of the first permit.

J. Furman also stated a new O& M agreement has been provided.

D. Frydryk spoke about the performance bond. He stated for the 12.9 acres site a bond of \$64,000 is due and will include the Stormwater bond which is \$1,250.

J. Furman explained the final grading buffer needs to add plantings on the driveway, berm, and add to original trees by adding another row behind.

D. Frydryk said he will submit a new plan with the additional items.

N. Czech stated eventually the house will need to be removed.

M. Marciniak stated he does not seem to have an issue with the house as it seems they have a use for it.

A motion was made to grant the waivers requested by N. Czech, seconded by P. Burns-Johnson. The motion passed (5:0).

A motion was made to grant the special permit by N. Czech, seconded by T. Skowyra. The motion passed (5:0).

A motion was made to grant the Stormwater permit by N. Czech, seconded by P. Burns-Johnson. The motion passed (5:0).

III. New Business:

Meeting Minutes of March 5, 2018:

A motion to approve the meeting minutes of March 5, 2018 as amended was made by N. Czech, seconded by T. Skowyra. The motion passed (4:0).

Abutting Town Notices and the Monthly Interest Allocation Report were distributed to the Board.

Town Planner Update:

An email was received March 12, 2018 from Mirick O'Connell stating the final marijuana regulations have been released by the Cannabis Control Commission (CCC).

L. Leduc stated a draft of this ordinance needs to be written and hopes to have a draft by the meeting on April 23, 2018. Once that draft is written, it will be sent out for additional comments.

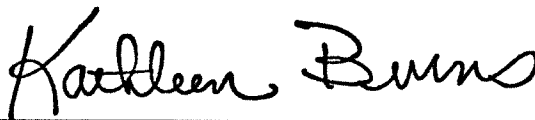
IV. Old Business:

Knox Pond Construction Report # 125:

A motion was made to acknowledge receipt of Knox Pond Construction Report #125 by P. Burns-Johnson, seconded by K. Burns. The motion passed (5:0).

V. Adjournment:

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:38PM by P. Burns-Johnson, seconded by T. Skowyr. The motion passed (5:0).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Burns". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathleen Burns, Clerk