

Palmer Planning Board
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 4th, 2021

I. Call to Order

Chairman Michael Marciniac called the meeting to order at 7:00PM on Monday, October 4th, 2021, in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Chairman Mike Marciniac, Vice Chair Norm Czech, Clerk Kathy Burns and member Jeff Florence were present. Tom Skowrya was absent. Also present was Town Planner, Linda Leduc, recording minutes.

II. Public Hearings:

- **7:00 pm - Dumplin Brook LLC, Blue Wave Solar** - Major Amendment to the existing approved site plan to include the relocation of the access road, stormwater management, redistribution of solar panels and a battery storage facility.
- **7:30 pm - Site Plan Approval, Continued from 9/20/21,** - Sejdera Landscaping, 285 Wilbraham St, Palmer. To operate a tradesmen base of operations for a landscaping company.

III. New Business:

- Meeting Minutes: September 20, 2021
- Cellular Service Mapping
- New Zoning Enforcement Officer
- Abutting Town Notices
- Interest Allocation Report

II. Public Hearings:

7:00 pm - Dumplin Brook LLC, Blue Wave Solar - Major Amendment to the existing approved site plan to include the relocation of the access road, stormwater management and redistribution of solar panels.

M. Marciniac opened the public hearing at 7:00pm. L. Leduc read the public hearing notice.

Josh Lariscy, Project Development Director and Michael Zimmer, Managing Director of Solar Development from BlueWave Solar were present on behalf of the applicant. Kevin C. McGarry, PE, and Project Manager from Fuss & O'Neill was also present.

K. McGarry submitted two new plan sheets: a cover sheet with an updated locus and one with abutters noted as parcel IDs.

J. Lariscy began by describing the changes that were made to the site plan originally approved on October 7, 2019.

- LOCUS: The project locus had expanded to include parcel L29 (map18, lot-29), owned by Lauren, Lise and Christopher Battaglia. The reason for this was to make use of an existing logging road on parcel L29 for access to the solar field.
- ENTRANCE ROAD: The entrance road has shifted northeasterly on Mt. Dumplin Road and is now located across from the entrance to the Meadowbrook Condos. The construction of this road will require cutting approximately half the amount of cu. yds. and be less impactful overall.
- SOLAR ARRAY: The system is currently sized at 8MW a slight increase over the originally approved 7.98 MW system. The updated solar modules are larger than originally designed and will require additional spacing between panels. As a result, greater shading impacts were observed. The clearing area has expanded to address these shading issues. Overall, the solar array phases have shifted from east to west. Array “phase A” is now located on the easterly side of the project and “phases B and C” are to the west.
- BATTERY STORAGE: The battery storage enclosure is 10’x40’x8’ and resembles the look of a typical storage container. It is located to the north of the “phase A” array.
- STORMWATER: The system has been redesigned to handle the stormwater from the new access road and redesigned solar array. This has resulted in a slight change to the Stormwater calculations.

M. Zimmer stated that BWC will be purchasing the L28 and L29 parcels from the Battaglia’s and will transfer ownership to the Strzemienski’s or may decide to sell L28 as it is no longer part of the project. M. Marciniec stated that L28 is shown to be part of the locus and if it is not part of the project, it should be removed from the updated locus the Board just received.

The Board had general questions about the location of the new access road on Mt Dumplin, the shifting of the arrays and the battery storage facility. K. McGarry went over a plan sheet that highlighted the old project in red and the new project in black. L. Leduc asked if the submittals included any ambient sound readings for the battery storage system and reminded the Board that they required a previous solar applicant on Breckenridge to submit baseline sound readings, a noise pollution plan and conditioned the approval on submitting quarterly sound readings for 1 year after the system becomes operational. J. Furman agreed that additional information needs to be submitted, in particular, a narrative detailing the size, the number of units, cooling units atop the cabinet and sound generation.

M. Marciniec asked what the highest elevation of the new panels was compared to the original configuration. K. McGarry stated that the shifting of “phase C” further south resulted in the panels being approximately 20’ higher, from 527’ to 545’. M. Marciniec expressed concern that the panels will be visible off site. J. Lariscy stated that the viewshed analysis shows no change in visibility. He then went over the digital analysis on the large-screen monitor. He explained that 3 tests were performed at each of the original locations: Topography, Project Trees, Foreground Trees, and that none failed all three tests verifying that the array will not be seen off site. K. McGarry stated he would submit the Viewshed Analysis to the Board as a separate file so that they could get a more detailed look, if desired. K. McGarry asked if, besides the individual file, did the Board needed any additional information on panel visualization. The Board agreed no.

John Furman, P.E., vhb was present on behalf of the Planning Board and went over his peer review memo dated 9/29/21. He began by stating that the applicant has requested 2 waivers; a Landscaping Plan required by Ch. 171 and televising of the stormwater piping required in Ch. 145.

He continued that parking areas on the project site need to be identified as well as the off-site parking areas noted on other land of the Strzemienskis. He recommended that these areas be placed on a larger aerial view so their location can be referenced to the actual project. He also stated that the application is silent on traffic. Construction related traffic could cause delays on local roads. The applicant should comment on what type and number of construction vehicles can be expected during construction. Additionally, given the proximity to the entrance drive detention basins to the roadway, vhb would recommend installing a guardrail along the edge to prevent accidental vehicle entry.

M. Marciniac asked what the grade of the access road is as it meets Mt. Dumplin? K. McGarry stated it was 2% for 40' and then increased to 8% and then averages out at about 4% for the rest of the length. It follows an existing logging road and is 2,300 ft long. M. Marciniac expressed concern over stormwater entering Mt. Dumplin. K. McGarry confirmed that the stormwater is directed to a swale along the gravel road to the detention basins on either side of the driveway.

J. Furman note that earthworks analysis shows an import of approximately 1,770 CY. With 10-CY dump trucks, this equates to 177 vehicle trips. It is understood that the type of imported material is for construction and burying conduits and is not currently on site, but the applicant should review and determine if the site can be additionally balanced to eliminate these trips. J. Lariscy stated that the intent is to balance the site.

J. Furman stated that some of the insurance components expired in December 2019. The applicant will need to provide current certificate for these items. The Decommissioning Surety has been recalculated to consider the larger array area and battery storage facility. The new surety amount is \$200,125. However, it is unclear if that amount accounts for the additional topsoil needed to reclaim the 8" roadbed. The applicant should confirm this.

J. Furman further commented on the Utility Interconnection Agreement. Its execution date of 5/21/2018 is outdated and the schedule provided in Attachment R needs to identify actual calendar dates.

J. Furman then went over the Stormwater section of his peer review memo. He asked that the total disturbed area of the project be confirmed and include those areas that will be managed for shade. K. McGarry stated that the total disturbed area has increased from 38 acres to 53 acres. This is largely due to the additional shade management. The limit of clearing is 53.7 acres, and the grubbing area is 31.4 acres.

Regarding the seasonal high groundwater elevation, J. Furman stated that soil testing was performed along the former driveway location, but no testing had been performed for the new location. It is vhb's recommendation that the equivalent number of test pits be performed along the new road to confirm soil characteristics and presence of groundwater. Additionally, test pits should be performed in the two driveway infiltration basins to confirm ground water depth and the minimum required 3' separation.

Specific to the basins, Basin 3-A, located on the east side of the drive outlets to 3-A2, on the west side. Basin 3-A2 is reported to discharge towards the wetland area over a broad crested weir. Commencing at the 10-year storm, the flow rate begins to become substantial. The location of the weir is not shown on the plans. The applicant should identify the location of the weir and verify that the flow path from the weir to the wetlands will not cause scouring of the existing surface further requiring rip rap protection.

The re-design of the project has reduced the overall flow to the Design Point DP-2 Infiltration basin located at the north of the project area. Below this system is the Town's school, which is known to have groundwater issues. This reduction in pre- and post-construction flows to this wetlands system should positively impact the school campus.

J. Furman continued. The Erosion and Sediment Control Plan should provide for additional measures to ensure erosion is kept to a minimum and contained on site. No measures are proposed which will divert stormwater around work areas. The methods proposed to protect the work area from sedimentation have not been provided and should be included as part of this application for review and comment. Additionally, the Applicant should confirm that interim stabilization measures for each phase of an Array will be completed and stabilized prior to commencing with the next phase.

These measures should be fully defined as part of the SWPPP and a copy provided to the Board, as well as copies of the recurring inspection reports.

A copy of the Operation and Maintenance Agreement has not been provided. The applicant was reminded that a recorded copy of the O&M Agreement, including construction inspection dates and a 5-year bond period of a surety in the amount of \$42,000 will be required as a Condition of Approval and required at or before the project pre-construction meeting.

K. McGarry requested time to respond to J. Furman's review memo in writing, as well as time to work on the other submittals and geotech engineering of the roadway basins. The applicant thought they could have this new information submitted to the Board by the end of the month.

A motion to continue the hearing until 10/25/21 at 7:30pm was made by N. Czech, seconded by K. Burns. The motion passed 4:0.

8:45pm- Site Plan Approval- Sejdera Landscaping 285 Wilbraham St, Palmer; Continued from 9/20/21

A letter was submitted to the Board by Keith Terry, P.E., Sherman & Frydryk, dated October 4, 2021, on behalf of the applicant, requesting to continue the public hearing to the next available meeting date in October. The letter stated "the parties are still negotiating the drainage easement on Parcel 5-13 for this project, and we will deliver a copy of the agreement, along with revised site plans and supporting documents as soon as we can"

A motion to acknowledge receipt of the letter and continue the public hearing to October 25th, 2021, at 7:00pm was made by N. Czech, seconded by J. Florence. The motion passed 4:0.

III. New Business:

9/20/21 Meeting Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes as written was made by N. Czech, seconded by J. Florence. The motion passed 4:0.

Cellular Service Mapping: L. Leduc stated that the town is running a month-long campaign to bring awareness to cell phone service issues and dead zone areas in Palmer. This comes through a partnership with Cell Coverage Mapping, LLC, who has created an on-line survey to gather data on coverage issues. Upon completion, the Town of Palmer will be able to use the data collected to assess service issues and facilitate possible solutions with wireless service providers. A link to the survey has been posted on the town's web and Facebook pages and closes on October 31, 2021.

New Zoning Enforcement Officer – L. Leduc stated that a new part-time Zoning Enforcement Officer has been hired. This position will report directly to Bonnie and will work on enforcing both the zoning code and the building code.

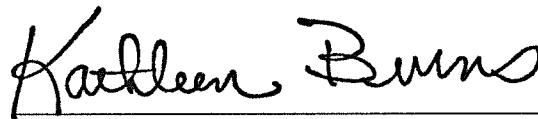
Abutting Town Notices were distributed to the Board for their review.

Interest Allocation Report – there was no new report to distribute

Next Meeting Date: 10/25/21

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 pm was made by N. Czech, seconded by J. Florence. The motion passed 4:0.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Burns". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Kathleen Burns, Clerk