

PLANNING BOARD

TOWN OF GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
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GREENFIELD PLANNING BOARD **Minutes of November 1, 2012**

Department of Planning and Development **114 Main Street, Greenfield**

The Planning Board meeting was called to order by Chairperson Wedegartner at 7:03 p.m. with the following members:

PRESENT: Roxann Wedegartner, Chair; Linda Smith, Vice Chair; Mary Newton, Clerk; James Allen; and Clayton Sibley

The Economic Development Committee meeting was called to order by Chairperson Devlin at 7:03 p.m. with the following members:

PRESENT: Patrick Devlin, Chair; Mark Wisnewski; Keith Zaltzberg; and Mark Maloni

ALSO PRESENT: Council President David Singer; Councilor Norman Hirschfeld; Councilor Marian Kelner; Eric Twarog, Director of Planning & Development; GCTV; and Anita Fritz of the Greenfield Recorder

Chairs Statement that the meeting was being recorded by both the EDC and Planning Board and asked if anyone else was recording. GCTV responded yes.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: Moved by Sibley, seconded by Smith and voted 4:1:0 (Newton abstained due to absence at that meeting) to approve the meeting minutes of October 18, 2012.

Public Hearings:

- a. Revised Proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments to allow "Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installations" by special permit in the Rural Residential, Suburban Residential, General Commercial, and Office Districts, to amend Section 200-7.16 of the Zoning Ordinance, and to add a new section to the Zoning Ordinance on "Non-Commercial Scale Solar Energy Installations".

Wedegartner read the public hearing notice and reviewed the public hearing process. Wedegartner opened the public hearing for public input.

Diana Roberts, 63 Newell Pond Road

Ms. Roberts read from a prepared statement. She supports Amendment #1 but does not support Amendment #2 because of no limitations on size, acreage or capacity. She supports Amendment #3 which would allow large-scale solar on municipally owned land. She stated that the rural agricultural character of Greenfield is one of its most precious assets.

Marcia Starkey, 638 Colrain Road

Ms. Starkey suggested that the source identify “Prime Agricultural” lands be required to be listed such as the USDA. She also suggested that agricultural lands of “State Significance” be required to be identified.

Norman Hirschfeld, 41 Meadow Lane

Councilor Hirschfeld stated that his primary concern is protecting forest land and farmland. He stated that the “Foodshed Study” prepared by students of the Conway School of Landscape Design on behalf of the FRCOG calls for an additional 8,000 acres of farmland in Franklin County in order to be locally self-sufficient. He doesn’t support allowing large-scale solar installations on forest lands or farmland. He would like to slow down and research additional communities.

Marian Kelner, 389 Plain Road

Councilor Kelner stated that she agrees with the previous comments on protecting forest lands and farmland. She stated that she is concerned with the language “The ~~Planning Board~~ **Reviewing Authority** may waive documentary requirements ***under compelling circumstances*** ~~as it deems appropriate.”~~ She stated that she would like this language amended.

Tom Tolg, Greenfield

Mr. Tolg asked if a study was done on available municipally owned land for large-scale solar installations. Director Twarog responded that a preliminary analysis was done and there are just a few parcels available that could be developed for large-scale solar. Mr. Tolg inquired about the availability of rooftops for solar installations. Director Twarog responded that the Director of Public Works has looked into this and there are limited opportunities for solar on rooftops utilizing municipally owned buildings.

Wedegartner asked folks if a farmer is able to both farm and have large-scale solar, what would the issue be. Ms. Starkey responded that in the meadows, most farms are protected through the MA DAR’s Agricultural Preservation Restriction.

Councilor Zaltsberg suggested that in considering a size limitation, a requirement could be added for dual use, both farming and solar. Councilor Devlin cautioned about moving too quickly and stated that the ordinance can always be amended in the future.

Peter Larson asked how large-scale solar and farming can co-exist. Councilor Zaltsberg responded that other states have experimented with this issue as well as UMass and have concluded that grasses grow better with some shading so cattle grazing and large-scale solar can co-exist.

Pat Hines from Montague stated that she has a farm and solar panels and that in her experience solar and farming can co-exist. The primary issue in her estimation is the aesthetic issue.

Councilor Hirschfeld asked about timing for approval of the proposed zoning amendments. Wedegartner responded that the Planning Board has 21 days to forward a recommendation to the Town Council. Director Twarog added that within 90 days after the EDC’s public hearing, a vote must be taken by the full Town Council. A two thirds vote of the full Council is required for approval.

MOTION: Moved by Smith, seconded by Newton and voted 5:0 to close the public hearing at 7:43 p.m.

MOTION: Moved by Wisnewski, seconded by Zaltsberg and voted 5:0 to close the public hearing at 7:43 p.m.

Preliminary Subdivision Plan:

a. Preliminary Industrial Subdivision for the Former Bendix Property

Director Twarog presented the preliminary subdivision to the Board. A discussion of whether sidewalks should be provided ensued. Waiver presented the three waiver requests to the Board.

MOTION: Moved by Smith, seconded by Newton and voted 4:1 (Allen voted no) to approve the request to waive all fees.

MOTION: Moved by Newton, seconded by Allen and voted 5:0 to approve the request to allow a 24 foot pavement width.

MOTION: Moved by Newton, seconded by Sibley and voted 5:0 to deny the request to waive the requirement to provide sidewalks/pathways/trails for a principle road.

MOTION: Moved by Newton, seconded by Smith and voted 5:0 to approve the Bendix Preliminary Subdivision Plan with the provision of a sidewalk on the south side of the proposed road from Laurel Street Extension to the proposed 15 foot gravel emergency access drive.

ZBA Recommendation:

- a. Application of Walter H. Kleeberg, Jr. for property located at 576 Leyden Road which is located in the Rural Residential (RC) Zoning District, for a Special Permit pursuant to Sections 200-6.1(C) and 200-8.3 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow the parking of a tank truck and to allow the storage of portable toilets at this location.

The Board discussed the issue of exterior storage.

MOTION: Moved by Sibley, seconded by Newton and voted 5:0 to forward a positive recommendation to the ZBA on the application of Walter H. Kleeberg, Jr. for property located at 576 Leyden Road which is located in the Rural Residential (RC) Zoning District, for a Special Permit pursuant to Sections 200-6.1(C) and 200-8.3 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow the parking of a tank truck and to allow the storage of portable toilets at this location with the condition that everything be stored inside with no exterior storage.

Next Meeting was set for 7:00 p.m. on November 15, 2012 at the Department of Planning and Development at 114 Main Street.

Adjournment

MOTION: Moved by Smith, seconded by Allen, and voted 5:0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eric Twarog, AICP
Director of Planning and Development