

**FARMINGTON PLANNING BOARD**

**153 Farmington Falls Road  
October 17, 2016 – 6:00 P.M.  
Minutes**

Planning Board members present were Clayton King, Tom Eastler, Lloyd Smith, Donna Tracy, Craig Jordan, Gloria McGraw, Jeff Wright and alternate Michael Otley. Bill Marceau was unable to attend.

Others present were Town Manager, Richard Davis; Code Enforcement Officer, Steve Kaiser; Code Enforcement Assistant, Lori Simpson; applicant Rod Gardner; Bill Haslam and Jane Parker representing Nordica Homestead; Aaron Svedlow and James Cote representing Ranger Solar; and reporter Ann Bryant

**1. Designate alternate members (if necessary)**

Alternate member Mr. Wright was designated as a voting member by Mr. King in place of Mr. Marceau.

**2. Review minutes of September 12, 2016**

Dr. Eastler made a motion to accept the minutes of 9-12-16 as written.  
Mrs. McGraw seconded.

VOTE: 7 Affirmative - None opposed  
Motion Carried

**3. Ice Cream Shoppe (Gardner)  
16-SR-13  
Remodel of existing space into apartment  
171 Wilton Road  
Map U31 - Lot 7**

Mr. Kaiser said Mr. Gardner is to follow NFPA-101 life-safety requirements in this project.

Dr. Eastler made a motion to approve Mr. Gardner's application.

Mr. Smith seconded the motion.

Mrs. McGraw said she thought the garage was already rented.

Mr. Gardner said he decided to renovate the space into an apartment instead of renting as commercial space.

VOTE: 7 Affirmative - None opposed  
Motion Carried

**4. Snack Shack (Moore)**  
**16-SR-16**  
**16-SS-07**  
**860 SF Addition**  
**108 Narrow Gauge Square**  
**Map U15 - Lot 58**

Mr. Jordan stepped from the table to represent this application for Mr. Moore, and he said John and Jen [Bjorn] were out of town.

Alternate member Mr. Otley was designated as a voting member for this item by Mr. King in place of Mr. Jordan.

Mr. King asked Mr. Jordan to explain the project.

Mr. Jordan said they're doing an addition for [commercial] rental purposes, and referred to the elevation sketch.

Mr. King asked if this project was UMF related and Mr. Jordan said no.

Dr. Eastler made a motion to approve Mr. Moore's application.

Mr. King seconded the motion

Mr. Otley asked what the "private system" was.

Mr. Jordan said they're on their own system.

Mr. Wright asked how this differed from the sewer and Mr. Jordan said they have their own drainfield.

Mrs. McGraw asked what part of the rendition is the addition.

Mr. Jordan said it's on the right.

Mr. Smith said the square footage varies in both applications.

Mr. Jordan said its 860 SF.

VOTE: 7 Affirmative - None opposed  
Motion Carried

**5. Granite Heights (Cousineau)  
16-SD-01-M  
Subdivision Modification  
Map R20 – Lots 28/29**

Mr. King asked if anyone was here to represent this item.

Mr. Kaiser said he emailed Joey Cousineau to remind him of the meeting as he has been very busy. He gave the background on this item, saying it was necessary to modify the common line of these two lots, which are both owned by the Cousineaus, in order for them to meet the setbacks for a new house, and the size and frontage of the lots will remain conforming.

Dr. Eastler made a motion to approve the Cousineau modification.

Mr. Wright seconded the motion.

Mr. Jordan said he was worried about the precedent of approving something with no one representing the item.

Mrs. McGraw asked Mr. Jordan to elaborate, and he said he just doesn't want any submittals without representation in the future.

Mr. Wright withdrew his second.

Dr. Eastler reiterated his motion to approve Mr. Moore's application.

Mr. Smith seconded the motion.

Mr. Jordan reiterated his concerns.

Mr. Otley and Mrs. McGraw asked where lot 30 was.

Mr. Kaiser referred to the current Tax Map which showed no lot 30, and said this item referred to lots 28 & 29.

VOTE: 2 Affirmative - 5 Opposed  
Motion Failed

Mrs. McGraw made a motion to table this item.

Dr. Eastler seconded the motion.

VOTE: 7 Affirmative - None opposed  
Motion Carried

**6. Nordica Homestead  
Timber Harvest  
116 Nordica Lane  
Map R13 - Lot 007**

Mr. Wright stepped from the table as he is on the Nordica Board.

Alternate member Mr. Otley was designated as a voting member for this item by Mr. King in place of Mr. Wright.

Mr. Haslam introduced himself and Nordica Board member Jane Parker. He said while most of this harvest will be in the Farm & Forest district, some will be in the Residential district, and Mr. Kaiser said this portion requires Planning Board approval. He added that about 1/3 of the standing volume in the Residential district will be harvested.

Dr. Eastler made a motion to approve this item.

Mr. King seconded the motion.

Mr. Kaiser read from the applicable Zoning Ordinance definition which covers this activity which requires Planning Board approval per the Table of Uses.

VOTE: 7 Affirmative - None opposed  
Motion Carried

**7. Ranger Solar Presentation**

Mr. Aaron Svedlow described the potential solar project development making the following points:

- Ranger Solar is not a rooftop or backyard solar developer
- He's done 12 years of primarily wind development
- He's now working for solar development because of its economical pricing
- He's currently working on a 20 MW project in Vermont, and has worked on four others there
- There's little maintenance with solar arrays
- The installation costs are declining - used to be 60¢/watt and now 40¢/watt
- They take one tax credit, and use no subsidy money
- This project will probably be 80 MW
- They've reviewed the Town's draft Zoning Ordinance additions for solar power
- Much of the proposed project has been moved from floodplain to upland areas
- They want to screen the solar arrays as much as possible
- They anticipate filing with DEP when they apply to the Town - probably in 2017
- ISO NE will not have their application processed until 2018
- He pointed to the potential leased areas and substation locations in the handout
- The project was going to be primarily on York land but now others are involved

- They hope to have project area finalized by spring 2017
- He's discussed the possibility of installing solar arrays on the Town's old dump site as it's near the project
- A portion of the York land will now be set aside so they can keep farming
- The solar panel arrays will be supported by driven posts
- Electrical collector lines will be ditch-witched at 18" bury depth to inverter locations then to substation

Mr. King asked why is northern New England their focus v. southern states where there is much more solar potential?

Mr. Svedlow used Germany as an example of a northern latitude area installing a lot of solar, and said New England has lost its nuclear power and other conventional sources. He added that solar power really helps in times of peak demand, especially in southern New England, by providing reasonably priced energy. Mr. Svedlow said they chose Farmington as the existing substations and transmission lines were near potential sites.

Mr. Wright asked if the power will stay in Maine.

Mr. Svedlow said no, it's going to southern New England, although he wishes it would stay in Maine due to its fixed low cost. He said there will be tax benefits to the Town.

Mr. Wright asked if the development would be pretty well hidden.

Mr. Svedlow said mostly, the arrays are about 12' high will be visible on some cleared land.

Mr. Wright asked if they'll be reflective.

Mr. Svedlow said it won't be a bright reflection, but a dull one because of the panel color and glass coating.

Mrs. McGraw asked Mr. Svedlow to point out and identify the various features on his aerial map, which he did.

Mr. Jordan asked how old Ranger Solar was.

Mr. Svedlow said it was formed a couple of years ago, and its staff have experience from working on hundreds of projects, among which was a recent 75 MW one in Maryland.

Mr. Jordan asked how long the lease will be.

Mr. Svedlow said the lease will be 40 years, with a 20 year panel life.

Mr. Jordan asked what the ambient temperature is at solar sites.

Mr. Svedlow said there will be no change, as nothing heats up, and there will be grass growing under and around the panels.

Mr. King asked if they're doing the Presque Isle project.

Mr. Svedlow said yes, and also the Loring and Sanford projects.

Mr. King asked if they're in partnership in these projects.

Mr. Svedlow said yes, with a renewable developer.

Dr. Eastler said the original sites in the floodplain average 6' of flood inundation so it's good you're moving upland. He added that he is concerned about loss of CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration with the tree loss from land clearing and resultant increase in greenhouse gasses.

Mr. Svedlow said they've finished their study which took into account CO<sub>2</sub> from component manufacturing processes and the loss of sequestration from tree loss. The net result is 50,000 tons of carbon production over the project lifetime v. 600,000 tons of carbon production over the same period if conventional power sources were used.

Dr. Eastler asked what the size will be of the project.

Mr. Svedlow said up to 80 MW, and with 5-6 acres needed per MW this means a 500 acre area.

Dr. Eastler said he likes the idea of the old landfill being utilized as part of the solar project.

Mr. Davis said DEP may not allow such installations on closed landfills.

Mr. Svedlow said we use concrete block mounts v. pile support in such situations.

Dr. Eastler described the components of the landfill's cross section, and its hydrology, then asked Mr. Svedlow about the project's capacity factor.

Mr. Svedlow said 10-20%, to which Dr. Eastler said was more like 14% for this lat/long.

Mr. Svedlow said the panel's increasing efficiency allows us to pay landowners more [in royalties].

Dr. Eastler said the inverters at utility scale photovoltaic installations make unwanted sound - and asked how many [inverters] will there be.

Mr. Svedlow said probably one per 10 MW.

Dr. Eastler complemented Mr. Svedlow on his presentation, and then stated that

Solendra and 13 other solar developers have recently gone bankrupt domestically, and much State and federal money was put into these failures.

Mr. Svedlow said Ranger is solely funded by private investors.

Dr. Eastler continued that there have been 114 solar development failures worldwide recently, and he's concerned about the risk to the York's and the Town. He said Abengoa, a Spanish firm that is the largest solar developer in the world, almost went bankrupt recently, and the surety required to make this project happen locally is essential - citing various financial instruments and approaches for doing this - for assurance of financial protection to the Town and landowner.

Mr. Svedlow said he shared financial guarantee requirements with Mr. Kaiser that were based on wind development experience.

Mr. King asked where the inverters would be located.

Mr. Svedlow said on the hill, not near the substation where new transformers would be located to step up voltage for the grid. He said the larger central inverters are the size of a pickup truck, they hum and will therefore be placed carefully, and they will also use string inverters which make less noise.

Mr. King asked who the other landowners were.

Mr. Svedlow said there are no agreements yet, but are looking for those that would help interconnect the different areas proposed.

Dr. Eastler asked about total cost, and Mr. Svedlow said about 70 million.

Dr. Eastler said that size project requires a large guarantor like Lloyds [of London] in case of a walk-away.

## **8. Draft Odor Performance Standards**

Mr. Smith started this discussion by saying he doesn't see the need for these, but made a motion for an up or down vote.

Mr. King seconded the motion.

Mr. Jordan said odors such as those from marijuana grow facilities can be a serious problem, and he has heard from many people.

Mr. Davis said he and Mr. Kaiser had been working with existing facilities on voluntary compliance and odor controls such as filters do work. He said he feels the draft standards look cumbersome and the idea of an odor committee is ridiculous.

Mr. Kaiser said we can just rely on Title 17 Nuisance laws, as we do now, or go this route.

Mrs. McGraw said on another note she looked up the new marijuana law in anticipation of recreational legalization, noting the tax would only be 10% and there is allowance for local zoning control and municipal regulation. She added she didn't view the current medical marijuana program as a problem.

Mr. Davis brought the discussion back to that of odor performance standards.

Mr. Wright spoke in support of such, saying we may need them in the future.

Mr. Otley was in favor of taking a wait and see approach.

VOTE: 5 Affirmative - 2 Opposed  
Motion Carried

## **9. Wireless Discussion**

Mr. Otley began by discussing his disagreement with how the Board handled certain aspects of the last tower approval, especially in regards to the FCC.

Mr. Kaiser said that the Appeals Board validated the administration and adjudication of the Wireless Ordinance by the CEO and Planning Board in this case and that this matter is a settled issue. He added that if Mr. Otley didn't like the Appeals Board decision he could have appealed it to Superior Court.

Mr. Otley said he wanted to propose changes to the ordinance.

Mr. Kaiser if any of these changes pertained to items adjudicated and validated by the Appeals Board it would be a total waste of time.

Mr. King asked Mr. Otley to draft any changes he wants to propose and submit these to the Planning Board.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lori Simpson.

---

Planning Board

---

Date