

**FRANKLIN PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING MEETING**

June 26, 2019

6:00 p.m.

Minutes

Call to Order:

☐ Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Roll Call Present: MSD Deputy Director Brian Barry, Jo Brown, Christine Dzujna, Tim Flaherty, Kathy Lauer-Rago, Chairman Dave Liberatore, & David Testerman. Also, present: Planning Director Richard Lewis

Absent: Mayor Tony Giunta, Tim Stangroom, and Donna Tully

☐ Approval of May 22, 2019 Planning Board Minutes Motion made by Member Dzujna and seconded by Member Brown. No changes were noted. All were in favor.

Old Business:

P19-05: Sun Development Group, LLC / General Properties, LLC, owners and GSSG New Hampshire, LLC, applicant, are seeking Site Plan approval to install a 3-megawatt solar panel array on approx. 13 acres of abutting properties [147-404-00 & 147-051-00, Map Sheet L9 & M9] between 293 Sanborn Street and Duffy & Mark Streets in the R1/RS [Low Density Residential/Single Family Residential] zoning districts.

Naomi Praul, Nobis, mentioned that they provided additional photographs last week that were posted on the city website. They have also flagged the trees on an abutting property where the owner requested that several trees be saved from cutting.

Member Testerman asked about the 'Plans to Decommission' as written in the draft approval. Mr. Clarke Fenner, Granite State Solar Gardens, stated that a decommission plan would be provided with the building permit. Member Testerman then stated that the 3 megawatts that GSSG is proposing is greater than what is allowed and asked if they were betting on getting approval. Mr. Fenner said that the current statute allows for one megawatt per property. There are two properties here listed under two different LLCs and purchase of these two properties took place before the project was proposed. So, they are good for at least 2 megawatts. They are betting that the Governor's veto will be overturned and they will be able to generate 3 megawatts. If not, they will put in fewer panels. Member Testerman asked if they had considered further subdividing the properties, but Mr. Fenner said that Eversource won't recognize a parcel if the subdivision is done strictly for the purposes of solar. Member Testerman said that he doubted that the Governor's veto would be overturned. Planner Lewis asked if only 2 megawatts were allowed, would they have to separate the panels from the continuous line from north to south. Mr. Fenner said that would be the case. Planner Lewis mentioned one project from 2015 that was recently subdivided to create two 1-megawatt arrays. Mr. Fenner said that for single meter projects that is okay, but it is the net metering that the State is restricting.

Member Lauer-Rago asked about the final decision on the vegetative screening. Mr. Fenner said that they will provide what is needed after the fencing and panels are all in place. At that point they will be better able to determine what is necessary and come to a collaborative solution on screening.

Chair Liberatore opened the meeting to public comment, stating that only new questions that haven't been previously asked will be considered. Mrs. Farmer asked for confirmation that construction access would still be solely through the Foundry site. Mr. Fenner said yes.

With no further questions or comment from the public, the discussion was brought back to Board. Planner Lewis had passed out a revised draft decision, which contained a minor revision to the Findings and Conditions: New Finding: G. The applicant, through the Project Engineer Ms. Praul, submitted two emails relevant to the project. *One, date 6/3/19, contained photos of solar panel systems, and a fence [like the one to be installed for this project] that has privacy slats. The second, date 6/18/19, contains pictures showing three (3) trees in the area of 243 Kendall Street that will not be cut during the land clearing work.* And New Condition: 8. *In conformance with Finding G, the applicant shall insure that the privacy fence slats conform to what is shown in the referenced photos, and the trees in the area of 243 Kendall St. are protected and preserved during the land clearing operations.* In response to Member Lauer-Rago's question, the plans show additional screening on three lots, but given the uncertainty about how the finished project will look, screening will be evaluated at the completion of project. Planner Lewis added one last comment, "My approach with decisions such as this is to give a little bit of background and then go into the findings before drafting the decision and the conditions for that decision, so it is all tied together to eliminate any uncertainty".

Member Brown made a motion to approve the site plan for P19-05. Member Flaherty seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and **the motion passed with a vote of 7-0-0.**

New Business: None

Public Comment: None

Other Business: None

Planner's Update: Mr. Lewis stated that the first solar project on city property that will be moving ahead will probably be the one at the end of River Street, near the wastewater treatment plant. They've started the alteration of terrain permit work with the Department of Environmental Services. Mr. Lewis has contacted them asking if they've received the necessary access through the State's wastewater treatment plant. They indicated that they would start working on that. The next solar project that might come up is the privately held parcel at the end of Commerce Drive. With the approval of the Zoning and Planning Boards, that parcel was subdivided so they could potentially put 1 megawatt on each of the three new parcels. One site that was permitted in 2015 was a parcel out on Hill Road that is currently used by the Municipal Services Department for stockpiling materials. That has come off the table since the lot is so critical to the Municipal Services Department.

Several months ago, the Edmunds filed a variance application to subdivide the Hill Road gravel pit property into four residential lots with only one lot being about 8.4 feet short of the

required road frontage. After postponing the application, they ended up withdrawing it. From what Mr. Lewis has heard from the surveyor, they are now looking at putting in 5-6 lots, which means every lot will need a variance.

Independence Financial Advisors bought the Odd Fellows building, the stucco building immediately east of that building [which houses Granite State Hedgehogs], and the former Dan's Pharmacy property. Renovations are nearly complete on the Odd Fellows building, creating a new façade for the Sessler law office, the former candy shop and the IFA office. IFA has taken the rear portion of the candy shop, which had a sizable footprint, and incorporated that into their office space.

The Chinburg project is a work in progress. They are investigating some development options and financing. It is a big project. When it was first announced, it was estimated at \$24 million and now it is up to about \$32 million. They are still planning on utilizing Historic tax credits, which means that any exterior work on the building would have to go through the same review & approval process as the CATCH project.

The white-water park project has received \$400,000 in tax credits from the CDFA (Community Development Finance Authority). They have to sell \$500,000 in tax credits and CDFA takes \$100,000 in administrative fees. That money will go toward one of the features in river that creates standing waves, along with going toward the match for the TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) grant from the Department of Transportation. The DOT grant agreements have all been signed. Hopefully the city will be having a Scoping session with the DOT project manager around the middle of July. From that meeting, the City will put out a request for qualifications for an engineering firm to look at the structural issues related to the Trestle Bridge and the plan for the installation of a pedestrian walkway across the top of the bridge. Starting in the next month or so, some clearing and site work for the Mill City Park will commence. Mill City Park is the land-based component of the white-water park and the public park. Member Flaherty asked if that paid for The Kayak Man installation. Mr. Lewis answered that the statue and the permanent pad was paid for through donations.

Work is moving ahead on Vulgar Brewery with an early August opening date. Cumberland Farms continues to be a work in process. The Mayor is meeting with one of the property owners of that collective three parcel site and will hopefully get things back on track at bit. All being well, the city will have a meeting with Cumberland Farms and their real estate people later on in July. Packers was purchased by Al's Pizza. Right now, they are using it for parking. There was some thought of reusing the building, but there was a lot of fire and water damage. If they take the building down, they could create more parking.

Member Dzujna asked about the old grocery store next to the former Nanou-Nanou restaurant. Mr. Lewis said that the grocery store will be demolished around late July. The City has been working with a demolition company on several projects. The first demo project was done on the old Macosko site on Chance Pond Road. Additional DES grant money has been received and will be used to finish up the sitework there. The idea is to turn the Macosko site into a parking

area and bridge to allow for access to the Northern Rail Trail. Nanou-Nanou is moving slowly. They will be coming before the Heritage Commission for exterior colors and signage. Mr. Lewis mentioned that he has a meeting on Friday with the developer David Jenks and the abutter to cover some aspects of the construction for the Dominos restaurant. The developer needs to install a grated drainage system across the driveway to keep the rain water from rushing out into the street.

DES issued a letter to both the Ferraris (the current owners of Stanley Mill) and Stanley Tool saying that there is contamination on the property and they are the responsible parties for the cleanup. After 4 months, Stanley Tool hired an environmental firm, a historical/archeological sort of group, that did a lot of research. Two months ago, Stanley Tool submitted a letter to DES outlining their findings. Their conclusion is that they aren't responsible for any of the contamination because they were using different constituent chemicals than what was found in the soils. Stanley Tool only owned the property for about 5 or 6 years. DES asked Stanley Tool for a clarification as to whether they bought the business from the Griffins or the property.

As for the Armory building, Jeremy with Blackfly canoes is looking at the structure to see if it would give him the workspace he needs to make plastic white-water canoes. He flew a drone over the place to check out the roof. He is hoping to get back in the building in the next week or two and get some estimates for repairs. Currently, the Armory is owned by the Ferraris. The thought is that if Jeremy feels the building will work for him, he'll approach the Ferraris and a lease agreement will be drawn up. The rental money will go into a city fund for the assessment and/or cleanup of the property. Then the City would purchase the property for \$1 from Ferraris and the city would be eligible for some grants. The EPA cleanup of both sites has a \$2 million price tag. If the Mill building is demolished, 66 more parking spaces could be created, along with room along the shoreline of the river for green space.

Adjournment: Brown/Dzujna motion/seconded at 6:45pm

- The next Planning Board regular meeting is scheduled for July 24, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. and the application dead line date is July 3, 2019.