PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES, WEDNESDAY, July 17, 2019

The North Brookfield Planning Board held their meeting on Wednesday, July 17, 2019 at 7 PM at the Senior Center. Chair King called the meeting to order with members Jason Spangenberg, John Tripp, and John Turner, Susan Lyons and alternate Jeff Smith in attendance. Amy Yanover, Clerk took notes.

Bill K. asked for motion to approve minutes of June 19, 2109. Susan Lyons made a motion to approve the minutes of June 19, 2019. John Tripp seconded the motion. Motion unanimously approved by all members.

Richard Keenan, North Brookfield Water Department Superintendent advised the Board that there is no watershed protection plan in our town. He stated there have been many issues over many years with abutters such as stockpiling manure within 400 feet of Horse Pond, and fencing livestock from pond access. Keenan stated he would like to review a state proposed watershed protection bylaw. He stated he would also like to see the town have right of first refusal on land abutting Horse Pond. Keenan stated the DEP recommends bylaws based on state DEP regulations but does not enforce anything without a town approved bylaw. Susan Lyons asked if this was usual or common for DEP to handle it this way. Keenan said yes. There was discussion regarding testing the water to determine the source of e-coli. Keenan stated water is our single most important resource. He said the MRWA will help write a protection plan but he wanted to come before the Board for their opinion before moving forward. Keenan will provide copies of his information regarding bylaws to the Board and would like a letter from the Board once they have reviewed it with their opinion.

John Couture, North Brookfield Building Inspector questioned who is the present enforcement authority. He stated a watershed protection overlay district could be considered and placed on a town meeting warrant for voter consideration.

Couture came before the Board to discuss the issues with nonconforming uses, structures and lots. He stated there is a problem with the present bylaw language and we need to fix it. Couture stated there have been some changes since the bylaws were written, but the current bylaws speak to non-conforming uses only. He presented excerpts from the Town of Sutton laws and suggested changes to the Board. Couture will work on specific changes and present them to the Board. Chair King stated the Board could present it to the November town meeting if we have a hearing by October. John will get back to the Board.

The solar hearing for 55 West Brookfield Rd. was continued to August 21, 2019.

Chair King stated a prelim subdivision letter was sent to the owner of 25 Oakham Rd.

Chair King confirmed the 6/25/19 email vote for approving surety bonds for Hanrahan & Brookfield Orchards/Gustafson solar projects and the Board signed the revised plans dated 6/12/2019. Bill K. also discussed Dale Kiley’s remarks about signing the two bonds.

Chair King stated we are waiting for information from Greg Hering regarding Atlantic Specialty Insurance Company’s rating and a list of manufacturer components for his project solar panels.

John Turner stated he and Susan Lyons would represent the Board regarding the Master Plan. They plan on reviewing the current plan, obtaining contact information for all town departments, talking about new goals and meetings with different town committees/commissions. Chair King stated we need to contact the CMRPC to get a community survey form sample and we need another large zoning map for our meeting room.

J. Turner stated he attended the East Quabbin Land Trust meeting in West Brookfield regarding decommissioning of solar projects. He stated there was much discussion regarding safety and that there was no agreement on potential cost for decommissioning. He stated many people want to adopt the $100,000 per kilowatt formula for bonds and that several people mentioned bonds were not the way to go.

J. Turner stated there were issues in Warren when they had their Fire Department attempt to reach the contact numbers at the current solar fields. He mentioned amending our solar bylaw to include batteries. Mr. Turner stated other concerns at the meeting included specifying battery types, fire suppression regulations and specific surfaces for battery storage. Turner will be visiting Sterling on August 15th to see their solar array. Chair King asked Mr. Turner to research the best lithium battery brand and other town solar battery bylaws regarding screening and road/ abutter setbacks.

The mail was read which included a Notice of Public Hearing from the Spencer Planning Board on August 20th regarding an amendment to Stormwater Permit/Major Site Plan Extension by ZPT Energy Solutions and Demeter Realty Trust at 103 North Spencer Road and a Notice of Public Hearing from the Spencer Planning Board on August 20th regarding a Special Permit from NVEnergy and Chris Dodge & Sambra Redick at 138 Wilson Street for a small scale ground mounted solar array.

It is noted that two members of the Board met at Shore Rd. with Matt Parlon before the meeting to review the interconnection pole locations for the Hayes/Chipman solar project. The question arose as to why this project has four poles and the Hanrahan project has seven poles. G. Hering needs to be contacted.

Next meeting is August 21, 2019

John Tripp made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Susan Lyons seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously voted.

 Meeting adjourned at 9 PM. Minutes are 2 pages plus the attendance sheet.

Amy Yanover, Planning Board Clerk

Attendance – July 17, 2019 meeting of the North Brookfield Planning Board

Rich Kennan, Superintendent, North Brookfield Water Department

John Couture, North Brookfield Building Inspector