

DRAFT
Town of Fitzwilliam
Planning Board Meeting
June 7, 2016

Members Present: Terry Silverman, Robin Blais, Paul Haynes, Tom Parker, Matt Buonomano, Suzanne Gray, and Susan Silverman, Selectman's Representative.

Others Present: Eversource Team: Allwarden, Kavarnos, Boivin, Jiottis, Kurylo, Purington, Brewes; David Coate, Town consultant, Dana and Cheryl Pinney, Attorney Jason Reimers, Robert Ford.

Call to Order: 7:00 PM

Preliminary consultation. Cory Rice to discuss a business he hopes to locate at the Crossroads. Mr. Rice described the process of powder coating, sand blasting and oven curing. The 10 foot oven is 41/2 feet wide and 6 feet tall and is located in the warehouse section of Crossroads. Ventilation is provided through the left hand overhead garage door, which Mr. Rice said was sufficient. The coating booth is fitted with a filter, and the dust is inert and eco-friendly. Gray asked if parking might be an issue. Mr. Rice didn't expect it to be a problem but he hasn't got any customers yet. Sand blasting will be done off site. There is a vacuum and filter with an air compressor in the shop. He is the only employee at this time. Mr. Rice asked about signage and was directed to Mr. Yoeger to discuss adding a hanging sign to the existing Crossroads sign. The Board agreed they didn't see any problems with the business as described and he was all set.

7:00 Public Hearing, continued. Ed Yoeger/Crossroads application for a boundary line adjustment between Crossroads property and the Cranberry House property, located on Route 12 S, Map 34, Lots 26 & 27, General Business District.

Mr. Grasewicz presented the plan, describing it as the same as the preliminary plan presented earlier. The plan calls for the Cranberry House lot to be at 40,000 sf and the Crossroads will have full access to the existing fire lane. The plan also makes one setback less non-conforming. He said the septic field is within a fenced area.

Blais moved, Gray seconded and the Board approved the boundary line adjustment between Lots 26 and 27. Silverman and Blais signed the plans and Mylar, which staff will register at the CCRD.

7:15 PM Public Hearing continued. Eversource (PSNH) application for a conditional use permit for proposed wetland impacts within the Wetlands Protection Overlay District, Fitzwilliam ordinance Section 127-16.1, D.4., to co-locate the new Q166 transmission line with an existing line and install poles in a utility corridor; and associated application for a site plan review of this corridor and existing substation, including a sound study report and landscaping plan.

Attorney Allwarden noted that a lot of progress had been made since the last meeting given the collaboration efforts of Burns and McDonnell's Ian Brewes and David Coate, the Board's sound consultant. Mr. Brewes said the collaboration was very productive, and they feel they have a good options to present. They had to move the sound wall back from the transformers to avoid the oil containment pan and have chosen to create a cantilevered wall to add height and achieve a 10 decibel reduction in sound. The proposed Noishield Barrier wall is a sound absorptive perforated steel and solid steel wall with blast walls between transformers. Eversource presented the Noishield brochure to the Board. They also presented a set of drawings entitled "Fitzwilliam Sound Wall" drawings 1, 2, 3 and visualizations 1, 2, 3. The height of the proposed sound wall is 31 feet, which includes a vertical section of 17' 10-1/2 inches, and a cantilevered section which adds 13 feet, 1-1/2 inches to the height. The wall will enclose the substation on two sides. They investigated adding a third segment but found that there

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would be no sound reduction benefit.

David Coate noted that the goal of the sound wall is to reduce the sound at the Pinney residence and the Ford residence. He said it is very difficult to measure a subjective response to sound at the residents' locations. He said that he and Mr. Brewster and Mr. Howell have used the ANSI standards in their measurements.

Mr. Ford asked if this wall will meet the noise standard outlined in Mr. Coate's report. Reductions of 10 decibels at the Pinney residence, 8.8 reduction at the Ford residence and an overall 10 decibel reduction as outlined in the report. Mr. Coate said that a reduction of 10 decibels was very good.

Mr. Ford, noting that the wall is proposed on two sides only, asked about sound reduction at the VFW, noting that it is a community gathering place. Mr. Coate said it was unlikely that noise reflection would cause any problems at that site.

Mr. Ford said the goal is to protect citizens from the noise. Mr. Coate said modeling will enable them to look closely at different scenarios, and if there are problems the wall can be extended vertically. He noted, however, that there are diminishing returns as one adds height. Silverman asked if there are other options to explore. Mr. Coate said this is a retrofit and there are 'blue sky' options but they are not necessarily feasible. If the wall was built as part of the substation construction there may have been other feasible options.

Mr. Jiotis said it was impractical to enclose transformers retroactively, adding that enclosure retrofits are complex. One has to consider the effect on reliability; if a transformer goes down, it must be exchanged for a working transformer.

Mr. Ford asked if the cantilevered section could be extended. Mr. Brewster said it would be difficult to engineer and Mr. Coate said they could investigate the benefit with modelling. He added that they are at a 10 decibel reduction with the proposed wall, an extension may not achieve much more. Mr. Ford asked that they do everything they can to do it right. Mr. Coate said all the physics point to a great improvement.

Mr. Coate and Mr. Brewster both committed to investigate options and feasibility through modelling to achieve the maximum decibel reduction.

Mr. Pinney asked if the foundation was strong enough to support additional wall height. Mr. Jiotis said there has to be as much foundation as there is wall.

Mr. Pinney asked if noise cancellation would work at the residence. Mr. Brewster said it just wasn't feasible. Mr. Pinney said another firm would be able to do it, mentioning "tomb silencers."

Gray asked about weather conditions and the effect they have on the sound. Mr. Coate said applying a 10 decibel reduction will produce a very low level but the noise may still be detectable at certain times.

Mr. Ford asked about a third wall. Mr. Brewster said it would not be effective and Mr. Coate agreed. Mr. Ford asked them to investigate sound levels at the VFW.

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Attorney Reimers asked about monitoring, noting that the MOU suggests testing and ongoing monitoring. Mr. Coate said the sound wall works and will not degrade, continuing to work for 40-50 years. He added that the absorptive material may begin to degrade and Mr. Brewé said there should be visual inspections of the absorptive material. Mr. Pinney said transformers get noisier as they age and wondered if there was a replacement schedule for them. Mr. Jiottis said there must be some sort of ANSI testing over time and asked Mr. Coate and Mr. Brewé to research.

Silverman said the testing/monitoring issues can be part of the MOU. There was some discussion about a meeting to finalize the MOU. Silverman wanted information on sound dispersion waves for a cantilevered wall.

Gray asked if the wall would be lighted. Mr. Jiottis said it would not be lighted. Silverman moved the discussion to the MOU. He thanked Mr. Coate and Mr. Brewé for their comments.

Silverman noted that Attorney Arthur Cunningham had reviewed the MOU and made suggestions for revision to simplify it some and to indemnify the Town. Attorney Allwarden said some revisions have removed issues that addressed the Pinney and Ford concerns. Everyone found it difficult to read the various versions. Attorney Allwarden offered to consolidate the revisions for a draft the group could consider at the next meeting. There was some discussion regarding the changes Attorney Cunningham made. Silverman said they need agreement that the wall meets the 10 decibel reduction proposed by Mr. Coate and Mr. Brewé.

All agreed it would be best to have a special work session for the purpose of finalizing the MOU. This will be a public meeting. Silverman moved, Blais seconded and the Board voted to continue the public hearing to June 16, 2016 at 7:00 PM for the purpose of a work session to finalize the MOU. Attorney Allwarden said he would have a draft to the Board for review prior to the meeting.

8:00 PM Preliminary consultation. Ranger Solar Representatives Aaron Svedlow, director of Environmental permitting, and CJ Walsh, Development Manager to discuss a proposed utility solar project on property located between Fullam Hill Road and NH Route 12 South.

Mr. Walsh described the siting plan they have for Fitzwilliam. He said their goal is to avoid any direct wetlands impacts. They are looking at private property on NH Route 12 South because there are contiguous properties that are flat and close to an electric source. Gray asked if they were buying or leasing. He said they are offering both. The utility may produce up to 60 megawatts of power.

Mr. Svedlow wanted to discuss the economic benefits of the project to the town, above and beyond the taxes paid. He described it as the largest project in NH.

Buonomano asked about vegetation management under the solar panels. Mr. Svedlow said they would clear and grub 5 acres at a time, stabilizing and controlling erosion. The entire area will be re-seeded. The panel arrays will be 16 feet row spacing. He added that there is an escrow account specifically for maintenance of the panels and ground cover. He added that areas adjacent to the panel will become pollinator areas.

Silverman asked if there was a possibility of getting three phase power to other parts of town. Mr. Svedlow said an economic package might include that.

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Mr. Svedlow also said the project had to be permitted by the SEC. They plan to connect to an existing 115KV power line that crosses their land. They will not be connecting through the Eversource substation.

Regarding noise, he said they will meet the town noise ordinance requirements, adding that their inverters produce less noise than transformers. They expect to sell power in NH and/or to ISO New England.

Buonomano asked how they would connect their non-contiguous properties. Mr. Svedlow said they will use a 34 KV line to cross Route 12.

Mr. Ford suggested that this proposal is such a large project that the Town may want to consider forming a committee to deal with the project as it develops, to identify impacts, problems and issues. Selectman Silverman said the Select Board needs to discuss the next steps.

Buonomano asked about a decommissioning plan. What happens after the federal tax credit expires and subsidies are discontinued. Mr. Svedlow said that the project viability is not based on federal investment, and the company only has to qualify by 2019. He added that there will be funds in escrow to bond for decommissioning. Gray asked if they plan to sell the utility before 40 years, the presumed life of the panels. Silverman asked about the disposal of spent panels. Mr. Svedlow said they would be recycled.

Mr. Pinney asked if they were a licensing company, noting that they are incorporated in Manhattan. He asked if they have their own construction crew. Mr. Svedlow said Ranger Solar is a development company. They do site procurement, permitting and engage contractors. They provide partner equity to own and operate the facility. Mr. Svedlow said any documents the Town signs with Ranger Solar are for development.

Mr. Pinney asked if an electrical corridor exists that they can use, or will they have to build a new corridor. Mr. Svedlow said they would have to investigate that and perhaps bury the proposed 34 KV line. Mr. Pinney asked if they would promise that this utility will not be connected to the Eversource substation. Mr. Svedlow said Eversource will not be involved in the project. They will interconnect with ISONE. He said it will be a year-long process.

Buonomano recommended that no chemicals be used in vegetative management and that they do research regarding maintenance under the solar panels. Gray said the Town had been through this before and knows now that all agreements must be put in writing; for instance, agreements regarding creation of vegetative buffers, and protecting viewsheds and wetlands complexes.

Minutes. The Board reviewed minutes of the 05/17/16 meeting. Silverman moved, Blais seconded and the Board approved them as written.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.