

6/18/2021

Starks Planning Board
Attn: Gwen Hilton, Chair
57 Anson Road
Starks, ME 04911

Re: Extension of Site Plan Approval – Anson Road Solar Project

Dear Ms. Hilton and Members of the Planning Board,

Please accept this letter as a formal request to extend the expiration deadlines associated with our Site Plan approval, originally granted on July 20, 2020, for an additional twelve months. I can confirm that all federal and state permits remain current and we continue to push forward to commence construction.

Since receiving approval from the Town of Starks Planning Board, we have worked hard to finalize our plans and start construction. However, we have run into a substantial issue with Central Maine Power ("CMP") that is causing significant delays to the project schedule and is not within our control. Despite having received initial approval to interconnect the project, paying for the grid upgrades in full, and signing all needed documentation, CMP is requiring a regional "cluster study" to assess impacts to the electric transmission system in the region. CMP is actively in the process of conducting the study alongside ISO-NE (the New England grid operator), but the study timeline has already experienced a 9-month delay and further delays appear imminent. Meanwhile, we must await definitive results from CMP and ISO-NE before breaking ground on our project.

We greatly appreciate the Planning Board's patience and consideration of our request as we work through a challenge that we do not control. If there are any questions please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Best,

Jordan A. Betts

Jordan Betts
Starks Holdings LLC

**Final Decision Document on Starks Holdings LLC's request for a permit extension for its
Project under the Site Plan Review Ordinance for the Town of Starks
Planning Board, Town of Starks, Maine**

Date: July 7, 2021

1. Name of Project: Starks Holdings LLC

Applicant: Jordan A. Betts; Starks Holdings LLC

Contact Person: Jordan Betts

Address: 2 Union St. Suite 500

Portland, Maine 04101

Telephone: (207) 805-3777

Cell Phone: (207) 631-0113

Email: betts@wishcamper.com

2. Description of Proposed Changes: Request for a 6 month extension of permit approval initially granted July 20, 2020 for solar array project located on the Redtail Rd. off Anson Road

3. Summary of Submissions: Letter submitted June 18, 2021 making formal request for extension (attached)

4. Process: Board met on July 7, 2021 to consider request

5. Findings and Conclusions:

In accordance with Section 9.1 of the Site Plan Review Ordinance approvals in the July 20, 2020 Final Decision Document are extended for a period of six months effective the date of this document. All other provisions remain in full force and effect.

Motion made and carried to approve Starks Holdings LLC's request

Approved: Town of Starks Planning Board July 7, 2021

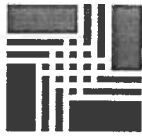
Gwen Hilton, Chair *Gwen Hilton*

Ken Lust, Vice Chair *Ken Lust, Vice Chair*

Claire Nelson, Secretary *Claire Nelson*

Joe Hartigan *Joe Hartigan*

John Newsom *John W. Newsom*



12/22/2021

Starks Planning Board
Attn: Gwen Hilton, Chair
57 Anson Road
Starks, ME 04911

Re: Extension of Site Plan Approval – Anson Road Solar Project

Dear Ms. Hilton and Members of the Planning Board,

Please accept this letter as our formal request to extend for an additional six months the expiration deadline of our site plan approval, originally granted on July 20, 2020. All federal and state permits remain current and we await approval from CMP and ISO-NE to commence construction.

Since receiving approval from the Town of Starks Planning Board, we have endeavored finalize our plans and start construction. However, we ran into a substantial issue with CMP that has caused significant delays to the project schedule and is not within our control. Since our last extension request CMP required, and we completed a cluster study CMP approved the study and submitted it to ISO-NE (the New England grid operator) with a recommendation for approval. Once we have a definitive response from ISO-NE, which we expect in February, we expect to be able to commence construction.

The Starks Zoning Ordinance requires “substantial completion” of the project by the end of the approval period, which would be in July, 2022 if the PB approves the requested extension. Due to the delays incurred, completion of our project is not achievable within this timeframe. If the PB approves our request for a six month extension, this will give us the time to request an undue hardship variance from the Starks Board of Appeals to allow the PB approval to be extended from six months to a later date that will provide enough time for the project to be completed. We plan to request this variance right away and, if the variance is granted, to return to the Planning Board to request that approval be extended to a date allowed by the variance.

We greatly appreciate the Planning Board’s patience and consideration of our request as we work through a challenge that we do not control. If there are any questions please do not hesitate to reach out to me or to my colleague Joe Wishcamper.

Best,

Jordan Betts
Starks Holdings LLC

Dec 23, 2021, 11:14
AM (4 days ago)

Joe Wishcamper <jwishcamper@wishcamper.com>

to Gwenhilton88@gmail.com, Jordan

Dear Ms. Hilton:

My name is Joe Wishcamper and I am Jordan Betts' employer and colleague.

Jordan and I decided I should write you to explain an issue in the permitting and hopefully get your reaction as to as to how we plan to proceed. We plan to apply for a second extension of the existing permit which I will email to you later today.

Even with the extension, the issue we face is that the limitations in the town ordinance prevent us from qualifying for a long enough extension of the permit to complete our project. We really need to get a variance from the ZBA or else we will be forced to file with the PB for an entirely new permit.

The timing problem was not of our making. It was created completely by delays in the CMP and ISO-New England review processes that continue to this day.

Here is a summary of the issue;

1. We received the PB approval on 7/20/20 for one year.
2. This past July, the PB granted one six month extension through 1/19/22.
3. The ordinance allows us to request only one more six month extension, which would extend the permit until 7/18/22.
4. The ordinance requires that the project reach "substantial completion" by the end of the permit period.
5. We are still waiting for final ISO-NE approval which we now expect in February.
6. We can then construct the project. Both we and our lender need to be sure when we start that the project will be permit compliant through completion.
7. The construction will take about 9 months barring any unforeseen delays. We have to build into our schedule a time cushion in the event of delays beyond our control so we are figuring a 12 month overall construction period. Therefore, at a minimum we would need the permit to run for 12 months beyond the current permit expiration date of

1/19/22, but we would much rather have an extension of 15-18 months rather than 12 months..

8. We think we need to promptly apply to the ZBA for a variance that would enable the PB to grant an extension longer than 6 months. Our application to the ZBA would be based on a hardship beyond our control, namely, the delays by CMP and ISO-NE in granting us the required approvals.
9. Assuming the PB grants our request for a second 6 month extension in January and that the ZBA grants the variance,, we would return to the PB after receiving the variance to request that the length of the permit be extended from 6 months to whatever the variance allows.

I would request the opportunity to talk with you (and hopefully with the ZBA chair) to discuss our plan.

Our project will be beneficial for the grid in the Starks area because it will involve the replacement by CMP (at our cost) of 1.7 miles of 3-phase lines plus installation of additional protective equipment.

In terms of the local concerns behind the proposed moratorium, I plan to forward separately the initial project study by CMP showing that the substation and grid capacity remaining after our project comes on line will restrict, if not prevent, any additional large arrays on the Anson substation. WE have some ideas how the town can achieve its goals regarding solar arrays and would be happy to share them with you.

I look forward to meeting and talking with you.

Sincerely,

Joe Wishcamper

Cc: Jordan Betts

WE HAVE MOVED. PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS

Joe Wishcamper

The Wishcamper Companies, Inc.

One Canal Plaza Suite 805

Portland ME 04101

(207) 805-3777 ext. 1 (office)

(207) 776-4423 (mobile)

Final Decision Document on Starks Holdings LLC's request for a permit extension for its Solar Project under the Site Plan Review Ordinance for the Town of Starks

Planning Board, Town of Starks

Date: January 5, 2022

1. Name of Project: Starks Holdings LLC

Applicant: Jordan Betts: Starks Holdings LLC

Contact Person: Jordan Betts

Address: One Canal Plaza Suite 805

Portland, Maine 04101

Telephone: (207) 805-3777

Cell Phone: (207) 631-0113

email: jbetts@wishcamper.com

2. Description of Request:

Request for a second 6-month extension of permit approval initially granted July 20, 2020 for solar array project located on the Redtail Rd. off the Anson Rd. First extension granted July 7, 2021.

3. Summary of Submissions:

Formal letter requesting extension dated December 22, 2021 and addendum by Joe Wishcamper dated December 23, 2021 (attached).

4. Process:

Board met on January 5, 2022 to consider request

5. Findings and Conclusions:

In accordance with Section 9.1 of the Site Plan Review Ordinance approvals granted in the July 20, 2020 Final Decision Document are extended for an additional six month period beyond the current expiration date to July 20, 2022. All other provisions remain in full force and effect.


Decision on a request by Starks Holdings LLC for a 6 -month permit extension under
the Site Plan Review Ordinance for the Town of Starks.

**Motion made and carried to approve Starks Holdings LLC request for an additional
6-month extension.**


Gwen Hilton _____ Date 1/5/2022


Ken Lust _____ Date 5 Jan 2022


Claire Nelson _____ Date Jan 5, 2022


Joe Hartigan _____ Date 1.5.22


Leigh (Eric) Hoar _____ Date 5 Jan. 2022