

Starks Planning Board Meeting
October 5, 2022

Present: Gwen Hilton, Ken Lust, Claire Nelson, Joe Hartigan, Eric Hoar, Tiffany Bellefleur

Guests: Henry Barrett (Nexamp), Lorraine and Ed Aube, local landowners

Adequate public notice was given of the meeting, a quorum was present, and no conflicts of interest or bias were reported.

The minutes of the September 7, 2022 meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

Old Business:

Draft of Amendments to the Site Plan Review Ordinance focusing on Solar Energy Facilities

The Aubes addressed the Board with concerns that certain proposed amendments to the Site Plan Review Ordinance, particularly as related to farmland, would essentially prohibit the installation of a facility on their acreage. Henry Barrett confirmed that Nexamp has expressed interest in developing a 20 acre site on land owned by the Aubes located on Rt 43 across from the Lynds Road. At the heart of the issue is the recognized need to preserve valuable and shrinking farmlands versus the right of landowners to determine how best to utilize their property. This is particularly salient given the economic challenges faced by today's farmers.

After much discussion:

A motion was made and carried to strike 7.20.2 H of the draft amendment prohibiting solar facility installations on prime farmlands. Revised language proposes to prohibit such facilities from building on existing Floodplains, Shoreland Zoning areas, intervalles and wetlands.

Strategy and timeline for moving forward

The current plan would involve finalizing the draft at our upcoming meeting and scheduling a public hearing in January/February 2023. The proposed Ordinance would then be slated for a vote at the Annual Town Meeting in March.

Rustic Roots Dog Kennel pre-application conference

Brianna Erb was again unable to attend tonight's scheduled meeting to discuss her dog kennel operation. She has agreed to attend an October 24th meeting set up specifically to accommodate her

New Business:

The Board discussed various enforcement issues.

Adjourn 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Nelson, Secretary