

Conway Planning Board, March 19, 2024

Attendees: Jennifer Mullins, Jeff Lacy, Bill Moebius, Cheryl Case, Conway Planning Board; Joe Strzegowski, Associate Member of Planning Board; Grace Larson, Conway Conservation Commission; Chris Larabee, Greenfield Recorder; Rob Bukowski, Weston & Sampson, civil engineer and consultant; Danielle Beaulieu, Blue Wave; Kimberly McPhee, FRCOG.

1. Meeting called to order at 7:04. Jeff moves to approve. Jeff, Cheryl and Jenn aye; Bill not present at the time of vote.
2. Rob and Danielle, future Special Permit and Site Plan Review Applicants for Solar array on Roaring Brook Road presented their question, proposed earlier via email, about the fees for their land-use permits. Total project area is a large, (30+ acres) proposed dual-use project with agricultural use underneath solar tracking panels. DOER (Dept of Energy Resources) allows dual-use “agrivoltaics”. Calculating fee according to the bylaw as-written will cost the applicant \$57,000 and a higher fee will “kill” the project.
 - a. There were questions about the location. Joe requested the applicants reference the parcel by the map and lot and cease the use of Zero Roaring Brook Road. The address may be 88 Roaring Brook Road. It is the Boyden parcel at the corner of Roaring Brook Road and Route 116. Danielle discussed the positive aspects of the “dual-use” system. She says it keeps the farming operation the same and does not reduce the land they farm or the crops they harvest. Rows between panels need to be wider to allow farming equipment.
 - b. Blue Wave leases the land from the farmer (Boyden) and sells the power to Eversource. MDAR reviews and must approve for dual-use. SMART incentives require that the land remain in agriculture and be dual-use. Danielle said the Incentives in SMART program in MA are a better incentive because they’re ecologically more effective. She noted that shading helps the crops not get burned. 20–40-year life span. Jeff said he is leaning toward this proposed reduction of fees but if more land ends up being disturbed the fees would be increased. Jenn noted a reluctance to vote tonight.
 - c. Jeff moved to vote on a reduction of land-use application fees proposed by the applicant and presented in their revised fee schedule, calculated on the amount of disturbed land being less than the gross project area, with a caveat that the fee can be increased later if the disturbed area turns out to be greater than originally proposed. If the project changes size it will be reflected in the application. Jenn seconded Jeff’s motion, Jenn, Jeff, Cheryl, Bill in favor.
3. Kimberly has put together the final version of the memo to attorney Donna Mac Nicol and will meet with her tomorrow to review the questions we formulated at our last meeting. She will be able to report back to us at the next meeting. At the last meeting we received paper copies.
4. Site Plan Review application may need to be changed to reflect the need to have sign-offs by various factions (ZBA, Con Com, Natural Heritage, etc.)
5. Kimberly has a conflict for our next meeting April 2nd. Feels we are at a good stopping point now. She will report on her 3/20/24 meeting with Donna Mac Nicol. We will then move in our review to Section 9, Development Standards.

Planning Board members need to sign off on two old/expired Special Permits so they can be recorded in Franklin County Registry of Deeds.

Jeff Moved to adjourn at 8:28 pm. Cheryl seconded.