

PLANNING BOARD - TOWN OF KNOX - ALBANY COUNTY

P.O. Box 56, Knox, N.Y. 12107

Established 1822

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes: 14 January 2016

Present: Bob Price, Brett Pulliam, Betty Ketcham, Tom Wolfe, Dan Driscoll

- Meeting called to order at 1932.

Approval of the draft minutes from the previous meeting.

- Minutes of the December 2015 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

Old Business

Zoning Ordinance-Commercial Solar Array (16th Amendment)

Tom Wolfe discussed the draft Commercial Solar Array ordinance that he had sent out to Planning Board members for review. It is based on a modification of the WECS ordinance.

Definitions:

Residential Solar - Solar electric systems up to 25 kilowatts (kW) for residential customers.

Small Business Solar - Solar electric systems up to 200 kW for non-residential application including larger multi-unit buildings, businesses, schools, not-for- profits and government.

Commercial and Industrial Solar - Solar electric systems over 200 kW.

Dan Driscoll, who was sitting in the audience, suggested that Tom include a Findings section, similar to that in the WECS ordinance where issues specific to solar arrays are highlighted in order to ensure that they are reviewed in the Full Environmental Assessment Form. Among other things discussed, the applicants will be required to set up an escrow account (for \$7,500) to be used if the Planning Board needs to hire an environmental expert to assess impacts (e.g. wildlife, wetlands, etc.)

Tom stated other requirements should be supplied by the applicant. Examples include: storm water pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), transportation plan, fire plan approved by the fire department, decommissioning plan and a complaint resolution process.

The zoning districts where commercial arrays would be allowed would include the Business District 1 and the Agricultural District.

Tom was asked whether large solar arrays have an effect on property values. He will look at other towns' regulations to see if this was mentioned.

Dan suggested the need for three buffers:

- A buffer for access to the panels
- A buffer to which the vegetation needs to be kept trimmed
- A buffer of trees around the array to screen it from neighboring properties

Zoning Ordinances

Bob Price reported that the Town Board had been given an abbreviated copy of Revision 14 which dealt with the creation of the Business District 1. It did not include the new maps and cover sheets. It is expected that the Town Board will review and approve the proposed Noise changes and the proposed Lighting regulations created by Dan Driscoll and Bob Gwin respectively. These changes will become Revision 14 and will include the newly prepared Zoning, Business District 1 and the Infrastructure maps.

Typing errors in the current zoning ordinance have been identified and would probably be included with the Revision 14 changes.

Other Discussion

Time Warner Cable (TWC) has agreed to expand broadband service in the Town in areas where there are 12 or more houses per mile and no existing cable. Bob Price stated that the Town Board asked the Planning Board to come up with a list of roads which meet these criteria. Brett Pulliam volunteered to complete this task.

Bob Price also mentioned that the Town Board is considering the creation of a law that would allow the Town to demolish abandoned buildings and charge the landowner for the costs. The Town Board asked that the Planning Board gather information about this subject and report back to the Town Board at the next meeting.

Brett Pulliam made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Tom Wolfe seconded the motion. There were 4 Yea and 0 Nay.

Meeting adjourned at 2040. Next meeting - Thursday, 11 February 2016 @ 1930.