

**PLANNING BOARD
TOWN OF KNOX
ALBANY COUNTY
Established 1822**

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

June 10, 2010

Present: Dan Driscoll, Bob Gwin, Stew Kidder, Bob Price, Brett Pulliam, Tom Wolfe

Meeting called to order at 1937

The Board began by reviewing the **May minutes**. Motion was made to approve as written, motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Price stated that the published agenda would be amended at the request of the attorney representing the Scott Property. Mr. David Juneau, Attorney for Ms. Theodora D'Amico, the Real Estate agent for the Scotts, petitioned the board for the creation of a minor subdivision of the Estate of Michael Scott. Mr. Juneau walked the board through the proposition of the subdivision of Mr. Scott's Property into 4 parcels. The first parcel, Parcel #1 is to be purchased by the Zimmers as it is adjacent to their current property. The owner of the 60 +/- acre parcel which touches the SE corner of Parcel 1 would like access to his property for hunting purposes. Mr. Zimmer proposes to create a 3 acre parcel from his existing land that will be contiguous to Parcel 1 and the existing 60 acre parcel so that a 30 ft. wide easement/egress could be created to reach the 60 acre parcel. This was proposed and agreed to by the Zimmers and the owner of the 60 acre parcel. However Chairman Price informed Mr. Juneau that the Town of Knox requires a 50 ft. wide right of way. Mr. Juneau agreed to make the change.

Parcels #2, #3, and #4 are on the west side of Route 157A from Parcel #1. Lot #2 is a 50 acre lot that encompasses a home and barns. Lots #3 and #4 are 30 acre lots each that contain no buildings. The children of the Estate have agreed to acquire lots #3 and #4 if they can not sell the lots for a reasonable amount of money, however they do wish to sell lot #2 with the house and barns regardless of profit. Chairman Price noted that Tom Wolfe purchased a piece of the Scott property under the Knox One Cut Rule. Dan Driscoll suggested that the subdivision be classified as a major subdivision. There was discussion about whether the plan should be classified as a minor or major subdivision. The consensus was that it could go either way and Mr. Juneau requested that it be approved as a minor subdivision as a major subdivision would require many more requirements for the aforementioned parties to address. Dan Driscoll moved to approve the sketch plans for the minor subdivision of the Scott property. The motion was seconded by Tom Wolfe and carried by the board. There will be a public hearing at the next Planning Board Meeting on July 8th. Chairman Price instructed Attorney Juneau to notify by mail all residents adjacent to the Scott Property and surrounding area of the upcoming hearing.

Chairman Price reported that he brought up the issue of shared driveways at the Knox Town Board Meeting on June 11th. He said it was his understanding that the Town's requirements banned shared driveways but that there was a problem with land divisions that occurred with the application of the One Cut Rule since there is currently nothing in writing in Town law that states this. Chairman Price was told by the Town Board that the Planning Board was well within their right to deny shared driveways. Chairman Price stated that he explained to the Town Board that was fine only if the Planning Board was involved and the Planning Board should not be telling One Cut Rule applicants that it was Town policy to ban shared driveways when there was nothing in

writing. In an effort to clarify the Town's position on shared driveways, Chairman Price suggested the Planning Board create a memo or proposal suggesting the modification to the regulations stipulating that the Town prohibits shared driveways. Tom Wolfe suggested that the Town create an ordinance prohibiting shared driveways to make things clearer. A discussion about how best to address the issues took place and ultimately ended with a resolution passing to draft a letter from the Knox Planning Board to the Knox Town Board. This letter should state that the Knox Planning Board strongly recommends the Town of Knox change the Zoning Ordinance to stipulate that there will not be any shared driveways.

Dan Driscoll then shared with the board his notes from a June 1st Webinar, “Wildlife Research & Planning Tools for Wind Energy” given by Edward Arnett of Bat Conservation International. This webinar is available on podcast at geo-search.net. Mr. Arnett first presented research data on the impacts of wind birds (mainly song birds) that indicated that 3 birds were killed per megawatt of wind power. Chairman Price inquired into the timeframe that this data was collected (i.e. 3 birds per megawatt in a month, a year, or 5 years?). Mr. Driscoll indicated that Mr. Arnett did not state the time period. Also discussed was the fact that Mr. Arnett's research indicated that less Raptors were killed by increasing the speed of the turbines. The presentation then turned from birds to bats. According to Mr. Arnett there are over 1100 species of bats, they are slow to reproduce, and wind turbines kill prime breeding age adult bats. Mr. Arnett also stated that 12-53 bats were killed worldwide per megawatt or 25,000-145,000 per year. In the past research had indicated migratory tree bats being killed more over other species, but that now it appeared to be 57% cave bats. Bats appear to be attracted to wind turbines but we still don't know why. It was noted that there is a 52-93% reduction of bats being killed by increasing the speed of the wind turbines. There is also a 20-50% chance of deterring bats with sound by putting a \$20,000 device on each turbine. Another notable item was that white strobe lights may attract more bats than red strobe lights.

Finally the Board heard from Russ Pokorney of Helderberg Community Energy regarding the bus trip that took place to the Fenner and Madison Wind Farms on May 22nd. Mr. Pokorney stated that there were members of Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy, Helderberg Community Energy, Helderberg Watch and residents from the towns of Berne, Knox and New Scotland on the trip. Their first stop was the Fenner Wind Farm on Route 20. There are 20 wind turbines there but none were operating at the time of the trip. Apparently one turbine had fallen and they were retrofitting the other 19 to ensure the same thing didn't happen to them. After visiting the Fenner Wind Farm they met with the Fenner Town Supervisor and other town residents at the Free Center. The opinion about the wind farm seemed to be that it has been a decent experience, the town has benefited financially and that most people didn't have issues with it. The next stop on the trip was the Munnsville Wind Farm in Bouckville. This wind farm consists of approximately 20 turbines. They then went to the Madison Wind Farm where there are 7 wind turbines. Karl Stone is the owner of 5 of those 7 turbines and he spoke with the group. Mr. Pokorney said that the Madison Wind Farm is the most comparable to what Knox is looking at doing. Karl Stone has benefited from the farm but not as much as the town has. Mr. Pokorney suggested that anyone that has not visited the Madison wind farms go and experience it first hand.

Public Comments

Ed Ackroyd asked if the minutes to the planning board meetings can be updated on the town website and asked if the agendas for the meetings could be posted there as well. Chairman Price said he would look into it.

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 20:55

The next meeting will be held on July 8th @ 1930