

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

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 11, 2011

Present: Earl Barcomb, Dan Driscoll, Bob Gwin, Bob Price, Brett Pulliam, Tom Wolfe, Betty Ketcham.

Meeting was called to order at 1928.

The meeting began by **Chairman Price** asking if there were any changes/corrections to the minutes of the July 14, 2011 meeting. **Member Barcomb** made the motion to approve minutes as written, seconded by **Member Wolfe** the motion was carried unanimously.

The first order of business was to open a Public Hearing regarding the application of Nancy and Rick Franze for a major subdivision totalling 30 acres on Rte 157A (the former Mike Scott property). The parcel will be divided into 17.6 and 12.6 acre plots. The location of the driveway will be moved per suggestion made at the previous meeting They came prepared with all the necessary copies of the Plat as presented at the last meeting, along with the receipts for the certified notifications that were sent out. **Member Driscoll** moved that the preliminary Plat be approved, seconded by **Member Ketcham**, **carried unanimously**. **Member Driscoll** then moved that the preliminary Plat be accepted as the final Plat, seconded by **Chairman Price**: carried unanimously.

Chairman Price reported that on the previous Tuesday night Town Board Meeting, the Town Board, by a vote of 3-2, approved a change to the Town Zoning Ordinance regarding the use of Full Cut-Off Lighting fixtures in new construction in the Town. Now, before a Certificate of Occupancy can be issued, the Building and Zoning Administrator must verify that all outside lights meet the Full Cut-Off criteria. This does not apply to flag pole lights as no building permit is needed for flag poles.

Chairman Price relayed some information about a group of Vertical Wind Turbines being tested which work in close proximity to each other and thereby contribute to their efficiency by sharing the vortices created in a manner similar to fish swimming in close proximity to one another. Member Driscoll that at the test site the wind turbines were installed in pairs and the turbines rotated in opposite directions. . The Town of Knox currently has two vertical axis wind turbines on Bozenkill Road. Member Ketcham asked about the effect of these types of wind turbines on birds. That is unknown at the moment. Member Driscoll asked Bob Delaney, the BZA, why there was no site plan review for these? Member Driscoll noted the VWT would need to apply for a variance during site plan review to address the requirement for the minimum height of the turbine blades.

Member Driscoll completed the updated version on EAF part of the draft Wind Turbine Ordinance. Page 1 and page 21 have new information on them. On Page1, the changed item stipulates that the applicant must have completed parts 1, 2 & 3. For that reason, as a condition for the Negative Declaration for the Ordinance, the Ordinance prohibits commercial wind turbines.

Member Ketcham and Member Wolfe researched the wind turbine impact on plants and animals, as well as bats, as there are lots of caves in the Town of Knox. Nothing major was noted. Noise component was put in the ordinance, which eliminates commercial wind turbines because of noise limit regulations. Aesthetics - changes are too great to be permitted, thus Commercial Turbines cannot be permitted.

Member Price requested a change to the end of the statement. Member Driscoll will work on changing the wording for our next meeting. He will email the information to all once it is completed.

Member Barcomb went on the NYSERDA website to review what information was available regarding the allowable power that could be produced by various sizes of wind turbines. He reported that residential turbines can produce up to 50 kW; Industrial turbines can produce from 50kw - 250kw and utility connected turbines can produce from 900kw to 2mw.

The CAC wants to give the Planning Board information regarding hydrofracking guidelines. Chairman Price asked if we need to think about this. Cannot drill on any state lands. Hydrofracking is the drilling down into shale formations and the insertion of various fluids under very high pressure to fracture the rock formation to release natural gas. One of the drawbacks of the process is the very large quantity of chemically treated water that is used in the process. Chairman Price's question is should the Planning Board be concerned about prohibiting natural gas drilling/fracking in the Town? Member Driscoll said it will have a significant impact on the Town of Knox if it is allowed. Member Driscoll said that it would not be difficult to modify our original ordinance to include a prohibition regarding this process. Member Driscoll was of the opinion that it is not likely that anyone would come into our area to drill as the Marcellus shale lies too close to the surface here. It was decided that we need to learn more first before modifying the ordinance.

One member of the audience asked if there were any drilled water wells in the Town of Knox that produced natural gas. Apparently are some well where natural gas is present, but none that are actual gas wells only.

Bob Delaney, the Building and Zoning Administrator, asked to address the Board. His questions were: Can a person use an over the road trailer to store hay? The interpretation is that the trailer must be road-worthy, so that they would not be considered a "junk vehicle." Then he had a repeat request from the same person who wanted to know if they could use a one of the large steel storage boxes for hay storage. They would sit directly on the ground. One consideration is that if is larger than 144 sq. ft, it needs a building permit and a foundation and must meet all set back requirements, etc.

A motion was made by **Member Driscoll** to adjourn, **Member Barcomb** seconded, carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2117.