



# Town of Knox Planning Board

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Minutes: October 12, 2023

Present: Todd LaGrange, Ed Ackroyd, Betty Ketcham, Deb Nelson, Zachery Martineau, alternate member Deirdre Keating.

Absent:

Chairwoman Deb Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

***Betty moved to approve the September 14 meeting minutes, Zach seconded and the motion passed unanimously.***

The Monroe/Kryzak application for lot line adjustments will be considered by the Albany County Planning Board (ACPB) because they are within 500' of an agricultural district or a state highway or park.

State highways in Knox are:

- Township Rd., Rt. 146
- Berne-Altamont Rd., Rt. 156
- Thompsons Lake Rd., Rt. 157
- Warners Lake Rd., Rt. 157A
- Helderberg Trail, Rt. 443

The Board discussed the need to define and publicize the requirements for changes to properties that meet these criteria:

- A cheat sheet to identify properties that fall into this category and to guide site plan review
- Specific instructions for applicants to help them prepare more complete documentation for site plan review
- DEC's review of new driveways on state highways

ACPB will meet on October 19. Betty completed an EAF, SEQR and other requirements and forwarded the materials to ACPB within the requisite ten days before their upcoming meeting. Because this application is already conditionally approved by the Knox Planning Board, it will be effective and can be filed if it is approved by ACPB.

Travis Rosencrans and Josh Koppel of Creighton Manning representing New Leaf Energy's Reservoir Road solar project application explained their plan layout. Betty, Deirdre and Zach recently visited the site with Tyler Garrity and described their findings:

- Much of the area is soft, wet ground.

- The area where trees were removed several years ago has grown up some and does not appear “clear cut.” They noted a number of dead red pine trees.
- They saw ruts from logging equipment that loggers will need to remediate per the contract with the Village of Altamont.
- The two reservoirs are outside the project site area. They both hold some water, although they are no longer used as drinking water supplies.
- The project site is well off the road so visibility issues would be minimal.
- Much of the site is fairly level, and the adjacent sloped area will not be impacted. The project site is on the highest part of the property.
- A 4 acre wetland and a 4.5 acre wetland are on the project site. They may not be regulated. Travis submitted their wetland report to planning board members on 12/12/22. \*Travis offered to re-send the wetland report and a paper copy of it has been provided

The following site plan review considerations were discussed:

- Specs for the foundations for the racking system will be determined after bore samples are analyzed. Poles rather than concrete footing pours would be used.
- Plans for access road improvements were noted.
- Storm water runoff mitigation would include two collection pools.
- The plan for grid connection is by overhead poles in a “pole farm” on the east side of the project, set back about 200’ from the main road, with limited visibility. The CESIR has been done, but planning board members would prefer an underground connection if National Grid would allow it.

The developers are awaiting review and analysis of the wetlands with Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) to determine the mitigation ratio and requirements. The data from their study is needed by the developers so they can evaluate the financial viability of the project. It is needed by the planning board so they can complete their review. ACOE has not yet visited the site.

In addition to reviewing the ACOE assessment of the wetlands and mitigation measures, the planning board will consider storm water management, impacts to karst, water quality and quantity, value and compatibility. They have no concerns with visibility and slopes.

Application for 20’ Cell tower expansion from 96’ to 116’ tall on property owned by Chris Kryzak:

- Local Law 1-2007 Cellular Tower Law specifies maximum height of 125’:  
[https://www.knoxny.org/uploads/3/9/1/5/39151279/knox\\_local\\_law\\_1-2007.pdf](https://www.knoxny.org/uploads/3/9/1/5/39151279/knox_local_law_1-2007.pdf)
- The expansion request must be processed as a new permit application. \*Deb will review this requirement with Zoning Board of Appeals Chair Kristian Snyder and Building and Zoning Administrator Dan Sherman.
- \*Deb will respond to Dan Sherman and the applicants and refer them to the design requirements and to the 2007 local law.

These requirements should be added to the zoning ordinance.

Some considerations for site plan review: necessity, location (co-location is preferable to a new location), setbacks of 1.5 times the height of the tower (this will determine minimum lot size), clearance to nearby structures, minimal visual impact. A balloon test could be requested to assess visibility. Structural analysis is needed to determine whether the expansion can accept the height and weight of the additional equipment.

\*The board members will compile a list of questions to send to the applicants in the next two weeks.

Solar moratorium: The ACPB is requesting a hard date for the moratorium. It depends upon when it was filed with the Albany County Clerk.

Members will continue their review of the materials that were provided at the last meeting.

- Decommissioning requirements should add a two year grace period to allow for inspection of the land reclamation measures.
- Ed has a potential conflict of interest which may require him to recuse himself from voting on some solar development resolutions.
- The board would like to request Town Attorney Michelle Storm to attend the next (11/16/23) planning board meeting.

Other business:

- The board agreed to move their next meeting a week later, from November 9 to the 16<sup>th</sup>.
  - \*Deb will ask Traci to post the change to the town website.
- Deb announced a training opportunity in NYC. The specifics for the February session in Saratoga have not yet been announced.
- The members agreed to recommend Garry Bunzey for appointment as a new member of the planning board. \* Deb will re-send his resume to the town board for their consideration.

***Todd made a motion to adjourn, Deb seconded and all approved.***

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 19, 2023 at 7:30pm

Respectfully submitted by Amy Lauterbach, filling in for Planning Board Minutes Recorder vacancy