



# Town of Hopkinton

## Planning Department

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### HOPKINTON PLANNING BOARD

#### MINUTES MAY 13, 2020

Members present: Chairman Bruce Ellsworth, Vice Chairman Michael Wilkey, Ex-Officio Anna Wells, James Fredyma, and Alternates Clarke Kidder and Gregory Sagris. Members absent: Jane Bradstreet, Celeste Hemingson, Rich Steele, and Alternate Timothy Britain. Staff present: Planning Director Karen Robertson.

- I. **Call to Order.** Chairman Ellsworth called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, the Planning Board is authorized to meet electronically.

A roll call was taken with all members announcing that there was no one else in the room with them at the time.

- II. **Review of Meeting Minutes and Notice of Decision of April 14, 2020.**

Anna Wells, seconded by Michael Wilkey, moved to **APPROVE** the Minutes of April 14, 2020, as presented. Motion carried unanimously in the affirmative by Roll Call: Wilkey - yes, Wells - yes, Fredyma – yes, Kidder - yes, Sagris – yes, and Ellsworth - yes.

Michael Wilkey, seconded by Clarke Kidder, moved to **APPROVE** the Notice of Decision of April 14, 2020, as presented. Motion carried unanimously in the affirmative by Roll Call: Wilkey - yes, Wells - yes, Fredyma – yes, Kidder - yes, Sagris – yes, and Ellsworth - yes.

- III. **Conceptual Consultations.**

Michael Redding of New England Solar Garden presented a conceptual plan showing solar arrays proposed on two adjoining parcels, located off Pine Street. Parcel one is identified on Tax Map 220 as Lot 22. The parcel is landlocked except for an easement over the driveway of Excalibur Shelving Systems, located off Burnham Intervale Road. The second parcel is identified on Tax Map 221 as Lot 33 and fronts on Pine Street. The total proposed array value for both parcels combined is 6.5 MW. The solar design uses a tracking system that runs north to south and follows the sun from east to west.

Mr. Redding provided a Google image of the area showing access off of Burnham Intervale by the Excalibur facility. In addition, an existing rail-trail and a large wetland were shown. Both areas will be avoided.

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*Approved: 06/12/2020.*

In addition to the Google image, Mr. Redding provided images of the design of the tracking system, which will involve posts being power driven into the ground 3-4 feet using a machine similar to a small skid steer. If they encounter bedrock, they will use a drill.

At this time, Board members reviewed the conceptual plan showing the layout of a gravel road network along the perimeter of the project that is to be used for maintenance, fire access, and utility access. The facility will be gated for security purposes. Overhead power lines will enter the facility as required by Eversource. After that, all power lines will be underground and will be connected to transformers that will be located throughout the facility. The proposal includes a 20-foot buffer along the perimeter of properties that are not related to the property owner. Additionally, the solar company will enter into an agreement with abutter John Herrick to remove trees to the south.

Chairman Ellsworth inquired about the sizes of the parcels and the visual impact of the facility. Mr. Redding responded, explaining that one parcel is 32 acres in which they will be using a majority of the acreage. The second parcel consists of 62 acres; however, they are proposing to utilize approximately eight acres for 1 MW. Again, the facility will be secured by fencing and a gate. There is no lighting proposed.

Mr. Wilkey inquired about the rail trail. Mrs. Wells responded that the trail way or former rail bed is well used. It is important as it ties into other trail ways regionally. Mr. Redding concurred that there is community value to the trail; therefore, where the facility intercepts the trail, they are proposing to create an eight-foot corridor around the fence of the facility that will eventually reconnect to the trail. It was noted that the existing trail is on private land.

In conclusion, Chairman Ellsworth recommended that when submitting a formal application, Mr. Redding should be prepared to address questions concerning endangered species, traffic, and noise. Mr. Redding agreed and indicated that he had already reached out to the Fire Chief and planned to meet with the Conservation Commission. He hopes to submit an application in late June or July.

#### **IV. Applications.**

Subdivision #2020-06, Surveyor Dan Higginson of Higginson Land Services on behalf of TAAG Home Improvements, owners of Lot 46, shown on Tax Map 251, located at 1363 Hopkinton Road in the R-4 (Residential/Agricultural) district. The Applicant proposes a subdivision creating one (1) new lot.

The property consists of approximately 8.43 acres with 1,103.97 feet of road frontage. The proposal is to create a new residential building lot consisting of 2.78 acres with 568.28 feet of road frontage off Jewett Road. The remainder of the lot will contain the existing residence with 8.43 acres and 320.12 feet of frontage off Jewett Road and 215.57 feet of road frontage off Hopkinton Road. Wetlands Scientist Timothy Ferwerda inspected the property and found no wetlands.

Mr. Kidder questioned whether recent events involving the property owner and the

Zoning Board of Adjustment were applicable to the Planning Board's review of the subdivision. Mrs. Robertson replied, no.

Clarke Kidder, seconded by Michael Wilkey, moved to **ACCEPT** Application #2020-06 as complete and for consideration. Motion carried unanimously in the affirmative by Roll Call: Wilkey - yes, Wells - yes, Fredyma – yes, Kidder - yes, Sagris – yes, and Ellsworth - yes.

Chairman Ellsworth opened the public portion of the meeting.

Abutters Chris Dymont and Katherine Tomlinson of 1341 Hopkinton Road expressed concern that the subdivision would not be for residential purposes and the increase in traffic at 1363 Hopkinton Road. In response, Mr. Higginson noted that the new lot is to be used for residential purposes, as indicated on the subdivision plan. The current owner of the property is business known as TAAG Home Improvements, which is owned by Glen Brehio. Mr. Higginson clarified that Mr. Brehio hired his company Higginson Land Services to survey the property and present the application for a subdivision. Mr. Higginson has no other association with TAAG Home Improvements or Mr. Brehio.

Ms. Tomlinson noted that the owner is currently doing a lot of work to the rear of the property. In response, Mr. Higginson pointed out that Mr. Brehio is leveling the property for his daughter to use as a place to practice soccer.

Board members briefly discussed the potential driveway access from Jewett Road with Mr. Higginson explaining that the NH DOT, when relocating Jewett Road, referenced on their plans future access to the lot in questions. He is currently waiting for a letter of confirmation from NH DOT concerning the pre-approval.

Chairman Ellsworth closed the public portion of the meeting.

Michael Wilkey, seconded by James Fredyma, moved to **APPROVE** Application #2020-06 as presented with the condition that the Applicant provides the Planning Department with confirmation of approval from the NH DOT for the driveway to Lot 46.1. Motion carried unanimously in the affirmative by Roll Call: Wilkey - yes, Wells - yes, Fredyma – yes, Kidder - yes, Sagris – yes, and Ellsworth - yes.

Site Plan Review #2020-07, Erin Tullar, owner of Lot 11, shown on Tax Map 232, located at 860 Sugar Hill Road in the R-4 (Residential/Agricultural) district. The Applicant proposes a wellness center as a home business.

Ms. Tullar presented her request to operate a wellness center as a home business, explaining that she has received approval from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Mrs. Robertson agreed, noting that the Zoning Board of Adjustment had improved a condition that there be no more than five (5) hours per week of group sessions (10 vehicles with a maximum of 20 people). In the meantime, groups smaller than five (5) people are permitted between the hours of 8 AM – 8 PM.

Mr. Wilkey confirmed that the services will be limited to those indicated in the application and that there were no intentions to operate a health care facility. Ms. Tullar agreed, stating that she planned to offer a place for reiki treatments, life coaching, the ability to talk about crystals or rocks, and in general, speak about spiritual questions or life paths.

Mr. Kidder inquired whether State permits were required to operate the wellness center. Ms. Tullar replied, no.

Michael Wilkey, seconded by Anna Wells, moved to **ACCEPT** Application #2020-07 as complete and for consideration. Motion carried unanimously in the affirmative by Roll Call: Wilkey - yes, Wells - yes, Fredyma – yes, Kidder - yes, Sagris – yes, and Ellsworth - yes.

Chairman Ellsworth opened and closed the public portion of the meeting as there was no one from the public present wishing to give testimony.

James Fredyma, seconded by Greg Sagris, moved to **APPROVE** Application #2020-07 as presented. Motion carried unanimously in the affirmative by Roll Call: Wilkey - yes, Wells - yes, Fredyma – yes, Kidder - yes, Sagris – yes, and Ellsworth - yes.

- V. Other Business.** There was no other business to come before the meeting.
- VI. Adjournment.** The meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM. The next regular scheduled meeting of the Planning Board is scheduled for 6:00 PM on Tuesday, June 9, 2020.

Karen Robertson  
Planning Director

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*Note: Due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, the Board was authorized to meet electronically. There was no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. In accordance with the Emergency Order, public access to the meeting by video and telephone was provided. All members of the Board had the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Zoom platform, and the public had access to contemporaneously listen and, if interested, participate in the meeting through the website: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89461674272> or by dialing the following phone # 1-646-558-8656 and using Meeting ID: 89461674272.. A mechanism for the public to alert the Board during the meeting if there were problems with access was provided.*