

PLANNING BOARD  
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Christopher Cooper, Chairman  
Edward Bertozzi  
William Costa Sr.  
Tomas Ennis  
Jake Kramer  
Patrick Landry  
Lenny Mills Jr.  
Lynne Ferreira, Assoc. Mbr.  
Daniel Roach, Town Planner

**Meeting Minutes  
May 19, 2021  
Remote Meeting  
7:00 PM**

Present: Edward Bertozzi, William Costa, Sr., Tomas Ennis, Jake Kramer, Tish Vadnais, Patrick Landry, Lynne Ferreira, Associate Member, and Daniel Roach, Town Planner.

Absent: Christopher Cooper.

Ms. Vadnais made a motion for Mr. Bertozzi to chair the meeting.  
Mr. Kramer seconded the motion. Motion passes

Mr. Bertozzi began the meeting with the Pledge of allegiance at 7:08

**Form A**

**1. 21-04A – Farley – Barney Ave.**

Ms. Rachel Smith of Otis Dyer's Office was present.

Ms. Smith presented plans.

Mr. Bertozzi asked the board if there were any questions?

Ms. Vadnais asked when they put in the new driveway, is it on the existing dirt/gravel cart path or is it on the other side?

Ms. Smith stated it will be the existing dirt/gravel cart path to the back.

Mr. Ennis asked will there be an easement? It looks like part of the driveway is on the existing lot.

Ms. Smith stated they are going to move the driveway over to make sure it's just on the retreat lot. They may want to put an easement on it.

Mr. Bertozzi stated could you add that to the plan. He believed the driveway would have to be on its own for a retreat lot.

Ms. Smith stated it only had to be at the beginning to access the frontage.

The board requested plans to be marked to be clear.

Ms. Vadnais made a motion to endorse the plan.

Mr. Costa seconded the motion.

Mr. Bertozzi stated we need a declaration of restriction.

Ms. Smith replied yes.

Mr. Bertozzi asked if there was any further discussion?

Mr. Bertozzi asked the audience if there were any questions, there were none.

Roll call vote; all replied aye.

**Public Hearing**

May 19, 2021

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1. Winthrop St - Morra, LLC – 297 Winthrop St. – 15-05SPA, 15-02 Solar, 15-04 GWSP (amendment)

Mr. Steve Gioiosa of SiTec Engineering was present.

Mr. Gioiosa presented plans with amendments.

Mr. Bertozzi asked next to the equipment pad there's the ESS, right?

Mr. Gioiosa stated yes.

Mr. Bertozzi stated to his recollection that was added prior to the initial application. Asked Mr. Gioiosa to explain that.

Mr. Gioiosa stated that those are pads for the battery storage units. They have been sized in accordance with the manufacture's requirements. Explained further.

Mr. Bertozzi stated to tell him again the rating of production of the entire facility.

Mr. Gioiosa stated around 1 megawatt.

Mr. Bertozzi stated to tell him the capacity of the batteries.

Mr. Gioiosa stated that was beyond his capability.

Mr. Bertozzi asked are these going to be the same type, lithium-ion phosphate? Lithium-ion, if it escapes or there's a fire, is toxic. Is there some type of containment facility?

Mr. Gioiosa stated not usually. There are no liquid components that can be released. It is a sealed system. They can be set with a containment berm. The problem with that is unless you have some form of covering over the entire structure, you're always going to be accumulating rain water and other things with in the area. You have defeated the purpose of containment. Unless you can provide some type of cover over the structure. We tend to avoid that.

Mr. Bertozzi stated the particular company that's providing the battery, there's a SDS. It talks about how there's a hazard here if it gets in contact with water. It will release flammable gas. Do not allow contact with water. In case of fire use appropriate media. There's a hazard that this could catch on fire.

Particularly if it gets too hot. We are told that these are perfectly safe. He blames the town engineer for not alerting the board of these issues.

Mr. Gioiosa stated he's aware that there are some earlier versions of the battery storage units that had some isolated instances that there were problems. Those are not in production at this time. The technology has changed. If there was a fire on site, you wouldn't be bringing in water. It's going to be an electrical fire. The Fire Department is aware of this. He could understand the concern. We can get you the data sheets and provide more information from the supplier.

Mr. Bertozzi asked how far away the nearest building was?

Mr. Gioiosa stated 100's of feet away.

Mr. Bertozzi stated he would like to see something in the file that is authoritative. So, we can relax about this issue.

Mr. Costa asked do you have an alarm system if you have extra heat that's developing from the batteries? So that the Fire Department can be called in.

Ms. Erica Buster from Sun Connect was present.

Ms. Buster spoke in regards to the battery safety concerns. The batteries that are being installed are Samsung batteries. They're going to be housed in a container, which will be climate controlled. There's going to be ventilation, air conditioning, heating. Making sure that these batteries are staying at proper temperature. There're two monitoring mechanisms. One hooked up to the battery, measuring the environments temperature and conditions. One hooked up to the battery measuring how the battery is doing. Is it getting too hot, too cold. It will be shut down remotely if that is the case. If in the event of a fire, there's also fire suppression units with in that system that will be realized to help tap it out. As well as warning alarms that will be sent to us, the Fire Department, and anyone else it needs to be sent to. We are having these batteries warranted and monitored by NG North America. They will be watched 24/7.

Mr. Bertozzi asked who Ms. Buster's employer was?

Ms. Buster stated Sun Connect Corp. She's the developer with Winthrop Street – Morra, LLC.

Mr. Bertozzi asked what her title was?

Ms. Buster stated Vice President.

Mr. Bertozzi asked for her to give the board a short description of her expertise?

Ms. Buster introduced herself and gave her background.

Mr. Bertozzi asked where her office was?

Ms. Buster stated Naples, FL.

Mr. Bertozzi asked if she could provide, in writing, something that confirms what you are saying?

Ms. Buster stated she had data sheets. She can reach out to the manufacture to see if she could get a safety statement or a letter that describes this in detail.

Ms. Vadenais stated that Ms., Buster stated that the batteries have a mechanism to notice when there is heat. How is it going to detect the heat? Is there something covering the batteries?

Ms. Buster stated they are in a container.

Mr. Ennis stated Ms. Buster you mentioned that the battery containers are being monitored by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party company, correct?

Ms. Buster stated they have local offices in Mass. In Boston or around the Boston area. They have gigawatts of power across the state and batteries that they manage.

Mr. Ennis asked will they do preventative maintenance on the systems on a routine basis?

Ms. Buster stated yes. We will be doing our own maintenance measures as well.

Mr. Ennis asked you would expect a response time for any issue that may occur within an hour or so?

Ms. Buster stated if it's a fire alarm, yes.

Mr. Bertozzi asked are the monitoring systems dependent on uninterrupted power supply?

Ms. Buster stated that the monitoring systems are hooked up to the grid. They are dependent on power supply. However, the fire suppression systems are not. They are separate.

Mr. Bertozzi stated that in Rehoboth we lose electricity often, that is a concern.

Ms. Buster stated that is one perk to having the battery back up system. That monitoring will run off the battery back up system and send a notice via cell signal. If the battery dies, we'll be completely off. It's a small charge for the monitoring system that she didn't think that would become an issue.

Mr. Bertozzi asked regarding the batteries, do they have enough capacity to actually supply electric through the night?

Ms. Buster stated yes, it's a 500-kilowatt battery. It could charge several houses through the night.

Mr. Bertozzi replied ok.

Ms. Buster stated it has been required by the state of Mass. That any project over 500-kilowatts must have battery storage attached to it. Part of that is spread out the load over peak hours. Stabilizing the grid.

Mr. Bertozzi stated ok. Asked if there were anymore questions from the board, there were none.

Mr. Bertozzi asked if the audience had any questions, there were none.

Mr. Roach stated the he had been asked by Mr. Gioiosa to pass the information of the project to Fuss & O'Neil, to have them start the review. In an effort to keep the process moving forward on their end. He had informed the applicant that the board has the final say as to who reviews the project. They wanted to move forward knowing the risk. Plans have been provided to Fuss & O'Neil. The applicant has provided payment to start the review.

Mr. Roach read a question from the chat. Currently there are walking trails and paths along the proposed site area. Will there be a perimeter wall/fence surrounding the entire parcel or will walking trails still exist?

Mr. Gioiosa showed the fence location on the plan. Along the outer perimeter of the project will be open. If there are rights to pedestrian access, they would be able to walk through there.

Mr. Bertozzi asked does anyone have questions or concerns in asking Fuss & O'Neil to review this? There were none.

Mr. Costa made a motion to refer the review to Fuss & O'Neil.

Mr. Ennis seconded the motion. Roll call vote; all replied aye.

Mr. Bertozzi stated to tell the board what the schedule is going to be.

Mr. Gioiosa gave an update as to where the project stood at this moment. The applicant is looking to initiate construction early this summer, late spring. This is a project that is fully funded. The critical point

for them are the owners/developers need to order equipment. They'd like to get the shortest continuance as possible for this evening.

Mr. Bertozzi stated that the next Planning Board meeting is June 2, 2021.

Mr. Roach stated that he will reach out to Fuss & O'Neil tomorrow and let them know the board's decision to use their services for peer review. He stated that he will ask for a time table for review at that time.

## **New Business**

### 1. Substation – Reynolds Ave. – Progress Report

Ms. Melissa Fields of National Grid, Project Manager was present.

Ms. Fields provided an update on the project. She reviewed plans to resume construction on the project site mid-June.

Mr. David Arthur of National Grid, Manager to the Project Mangers, was present.

Ms. Vadnais asked if you are going to start in August?

Ms. Fields stated the civil construction crews will start in August, the access road up to grade. Prior to that we will have our landscape contractor come in mid-June.

The board discussed this further.

Ms. Vadnais asked what happens if this project get 95% done and then you say you have budget issues? Who's funding this?

Mr. Arthur stated that it is funded through rate cases on a 5-year cycle. National Grid will continue to do work.

Mr. Bertozzi asked how do they determine how much money to spend in Mass.?

Mr. Arthur stated we will check in monthly with budget issues, if any.

The board discussed this further.

Mr. Bertozzi spoke in regards to money spent on the project so far.

Ms. Vadnais stated that a portion of the money is for the power lines. Is it all in the area of Reynolds Ave.?

Ms. Fields stated that 6 million dollars was in the area of Reynolds Ave.

Ms. Vadnais asked is it possible that there was a delay because they're trying to update the power lines?

Ms. Fields stated through out the transmission line in Rehoboth and Norton, that's another project. No, my time line was not delayed due to that other project. Part of my project was upgrading 6 structures right outside Reynolds Ave.

Ms. Vadnais stated she would like to have someone to keep us informed as to what's going on.

Mr. Bertozzi stated this budget process, it must get adjusted every month. Can you tell us how much money has been approved for this project that remains to be spent?

Mr. Arthurs stated that each month we review what has been spent.

Ms. Fields stated that fiscal year estimates she had. We won't know until next Tuesday what has been approved for this project. For the remainder of the year between the substation work and the distribution engineering on going, she estimated 5.77 million dollars.

Mr. Bertozzi asked the remainder of the fiscal year or calendar year?

Ms. Fields stated fiscal year is April 1<sup>st</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

Mr. Bertozzi asked has that been approved?

Mr. Arthurs stated as of last month that has been approved.

The board discussed this further.

Mr. Arthurs stated this could always change.

Mr. Bertozzi asked what the total budget for this project was?

Ms. Fields stated 13 million dollars has been spent to date. The total estimated project cost is approximately 100 million dollars. That includes the 90 miles of distribution. That will not only serve Rehoboth but also Norton, Attleboro, and Seekonk. Those will be done over several years.

The board discussed this further.

Ms. Ferreira stated when you have your monthly meetings and budget meetings, instead of just informing us if something is going to be off, can you give us an update each month. Either say yes, we're still on schedule. Yes, we're exactly where we want to be or this is going to change. She personally would feel more comfortable being inside the loop as to really know a) are we on track or b) are we off track. Mr. Arthurs stated absolutely. The substation is 4.675 million dollars. He didn't want to give the impression that because it was budgeted for Reynolds Ave. that there won't be a decision that they take that budget and move it elsewhere. His team and Ms. Fields are pushing for this project. Mr. Costa stated in project management you have a budgeted amount. How much of those 4.67 million dollars has been obligated? Mr. Arthurs stated the switch gears and the transformers. There are no monthly payments. Everything is paid yearly. This was discussed further.

## 2. Reorganization of the Board

Ms. Vadnais made a motion to nominate Mr. Bertozzi as the chairman.  
Mr. Bertozzi declined.  
Ms. Vadnais made a motion to nominate Mr. Bertozzi as vice-chair.  
Mr. Bertozzi declined.  
Mr. Costa made a motion to nominate Mr. Copper as chairman.  
Mr. Ennis seconded the motion. Motion passes.  
Mr. Kramer made a motion to nominate Mr. Costa as vice-chair.  
Mr. Ennis seconded the motion. Motion passes.  
Mr. Ennis stated he would continue as the liaison to the Gravel Committee.  
Mr. Costa seconded the motion. Motion passes.  
Mr. Costa made a motion to nominate Mr. Bertozzi to the Community Preservation Committee.  
Mr. Kramer seconded the motion. Motion passes.  
Mr. Bertozzi made a motion to nominate Ms. Vadnais to the Agricultural and Natural Resource Committee.  
Mr. Costa seconded the motion. Motion passes.  
There was discussion that Ms. Vadnais is already on that committee via the Water Commission.  
Ms. Vadnais made a motion to nominate Mr. Cooper to the Agricultural and Natural Resource Committee.  
Mr. Costa seconded the motion. Motion passes.  
Mr. Costa made a motion to nominate Mr. Ennis as the liaison to the Stormwater Committee.  
Mr. Kramer seconded the motion. Motion passes.  
Mr. Costa spoke in regards to the map review committee.  
Mr. Bertozzi made a motion to nominate Mr. Costa to the Map Review Subcommittee.  
Mr. Ennis seconded the motion. Motion passes.

## 3. 469 Winthrop Street – Concern

Mr. Roach stated this is the old golf cart property that previously had a site plan approval. The concern was brought up about construction vehicles and transformers that were on the ground. He spoke with Mr. Bill McDonough, Zoning Enforcement Officer, who has had communication with the owner in the past. Mr. McDonough is going to reach out to the owner and will make sure they are compliant. If they are not in compliance the appropriate action will be taken.  
Ms. Vadnais asked has he received any input back from them?  
Mr. Roach stated he would speak to him and ask for an update.

## 4. Planner Update

There was no update.

## **Old Business**

### 1. Eastwood Estates – Phase I – Roadway Acceptance and As-Built

Mr. Roach stated he had spoken with the Highway Superintendent. All of the concerns he had in regards to Phase 1 of Eastwood Estates have been addressed. Fuss & O'Neil have signed off on this project.

Mr. Costa made a motion to recommended acceptance of the roadway.

Mr. Kramer seconded the motion. Roll call vote; all replied aye.

## **Meeting Minutes**

### 1. January 20, 2021

### 2. February 3, 2021

The above-named meeting minutes were tabled until a future meeting.

Mr. Kramer made a motion to table the meeting minutes until a future meeting.

Mr. Costa seconded the motion. Motion passes.

## **Adjournment**

Mr. Costa made a motion to adjourn at 10:10 pm

Mr. Kramer seconded the motion. Roll call vote; all replied aye. Motion passes.

Respectfully Submitted



William, Costa, Sr., Chairman



Jake Kramer, Vice-Chairman