

Conservation Commission –April 21, 2018

Members present were Mr. Freddy Friedman, Ms. Rona Easton, Mr. David Hosford, & Mr. David Herrick.

Meeting was called to order at 10:15 AM.

Meeting minutes of March 17th 2018 were accepted as prepared.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to tape the meeting for the 5 Village News.

Sunrise on Knight Road, LLC Hearing: Present for the hearing was representative, Ms. Colleen Puzas, of SWCA Environmental Consultants. Also present were property owners Mr. & Mrs. John Palfini, Ms. Tara White, Ms. Robin Schultz, and Mr. & Mrs. Nathaniel Yohalem. Property location is Knight Road. Applicant submitted a RDA for the purpose of installing a 6.16 MW (DC) solar energy facility in the northwest section of parcel. The proposed large-scale solar array will be constructed on approximately 16 acres; the total area associated with solar project is 23 acres. Access to the array will be from Knight Rd and will utilize an existing wood road which will be upgraded to a 12 foot wide gravel road. The Commission completed a site visit with Ms. Puzas prior to the meeting. Ms. Puzas mentioned that the delineation report has been completed, and since the project area is not in the buffer zone a RDA was submitted. Ms. Puzas also mentioned that 10 feet will be available for mowing and there will be erosion controls in place. Mrs. Louise Yohalem, an abutter mentioned that she has a pond on her property connected to an intermittent stream close to the location of the solar panels and is concerned that the installation and operation of the solar facility will have an impact on the pond and its runoff. The Commission said that since the stream is intermittent it is not jurisdiction of the Wetlands Protection Act, and even if the pond is within jurisdiction, it is over 200' from the solar panels and therefore the panels are outside the buffer zone. Ms. Shultz was concerned about seeing the panels from her property and pollution coming from the panels. Ms. Puzas stated that there is a maintenance and operation plan and there is no pollution coming from the panels. The Commission suggests that Ms. Shultz's talk with the solar company and ask them to put up a row of shrubs. After discussion a motion was made, seconded and so voted to close this hearing. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to approve this application with the determination of a negative #4.

Old Business:

Gilmore: The commission received an email from Mr. Craig Okerstrom-Lang, Okerstrom Land LTD, Landscape Architects, requesting to withdraw the NOI, for project on 100 Foley Hill Road. A motion was made, seconded and so voted to accept the withdraw notice.

The Commission reviewed the delineation report and the bigger maps per their request from Solar Park Avenue – for the special permit application on Mill River Southfield Rd. Ms. White was present on behalf of the Mill River Water Takers. Ms. White had mentioned that DEP had

concerns about the access road for the gravel pit which is in zone 1. Applicant has revised the the plans to move the access road out of zone 1. After discussion the Commission decided that the findings for the Board of Selectmen will be for applicant to file a RDA with the Commission and to be in touch with the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program.

New Business:

Mr. Dennis Regan of Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) was present to discuss the assessment of Konkapot River Stream. The HVA would like either the Commission or Board of Selectmen to co-sign a letter being sent to property owners along the Konkapot River in New Marlborough. Mr. Regan mentioned that the HVA would like volunteers who live along the Konkapot River to conduct a visual assessment of the river banks and river bends since they would know the conditions of the river; volunteers would either walk or paddle to complete the assessment. Mr. Regan also stated the association will do training for the volunteers; and this project was done in Great Barrington along the Green River last year. Mr. Regan said the source of the Konkapot River comes from Lake Garfield. Mr. Regan also mentioned that they would like to start the trainings in two weeks and recommend that volunteers work in pairs for safety's sake. The Commission reviewed the draft letter from the HVA and requested that a request for property land owner's permission is added to the letter. The Commission will also discuss this issue with Town Counsel to see if there any issues before they decide to sign the letter or refer to the Selectmen to sign.

The Commission reviewed the special permit for Sunrise on Knight Road LLC. The Commission Comments to the Board of Selectmen will be that the applicant already filed a RDA and application was approved with a negative #4.

The commission reviewed the mail:

- Comments from Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program – Forest Cutting Plan – Hartsville Mill River Rd – Stalker – approved with conditions
- Common Ground News letter March/April, 2018.
- Forest Cutting Plan – Stalker – Hartsville Mill River Rd – Approved.
- MACC – upcoming regional meetings.
- Berkshire Natural Resources Council – 2017 annual report.

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May 19th at 10:00 AM.

A motion was made, seconded and so voted to adjourn at 11:42AM

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Chretien
Secretary