

HOLLIS PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

January 5th, 2016

“FINAL”

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Doug Gagne - Chairman, Cathy Hoffman – Vice Chairman, Doug Cleveland, R. Hardy, Brian Stelmack, Chet Rogers, and David Petry, Ex-Officio for Selectmen (dialed in)

ABSENT: Dan Turcott – Alternate.

STAFF: Mark Fougere, Town Planner; Wendy Trimble – Planning Secretary

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The Chairman Doug Gagne called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

2. Zoning Changes – Solar Energy Systems

M. Fougere began by stating he had been unable to get his expert to come to the meeting due to a conflict however Frank Grossman had brought his expert with him to help with any questions the board might have. The ordinance that was sent out to the board was the ordinance that had been discussed at the last meeting, with some minor changes as he had gone over them with the Town Attorney Bill Drescher, and he had added in some conditional use permit suggestions. M. Fougere had included within the packet a list of issues that were raised from the last meeting from both board members and the public. This list of issues and/or concerns will help with discussions tonight. He wants the board to go through the wording of the ordinance together with these issues and concerns to rewrite as required. This would then be ready for the public hearing on January 19th 2016. There were also three photographs that had been supplied by Frank Grossman. The bottom photograph was from Hollis.

Frank Grossman approached the podium and he was joined by his expert, Stefan Bazelmans, a System Designer and Independent Consultant. He explained the reason behind providing these particular photographs which show panels on a tracking device as the board had raised a few questions at the last meeting about tracking devices. He explained they track at a very slow rate, and are designed to go slow therefore with the safety concerns it takes a five minute process to restart them, and they are designed to be safe. R. Hardy asked what the height of these particular panels where. F. Grossman explained that this was another reason for showing these photographs as it goes over the 10 ft height that had been previously discussed. The reason a tracker is used is if they have smaller space and to get the full benefit of the sun. A 10kw set of panels gets you 3 – 4 hours of sun per day and this is what things are based on. So if you track the sun, then you will get more electricity out of the panels. But they are higher than 10 ft. This was to make the board aware that they come in various sizes.

Other issues discussed between members of the board, Frank Grossman and Stefan Bazelmans, Independent Consultant included:

- Height of the panels both with tracking and without. It was concluded that with tracking it could be as tall as 21 feet plus or minus.
- Complete size of the panels as they could be built.

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49 • View of the panels in the photographs show they are visible from the road which in
50 impacting to the area and neighbors. There is no buffering or screening.

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52 • Non tracking panels are smaller as they do not need to be so tall. They can be any
53 size.

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55 • D. Gagne asked if there were any other communities in the State dealing with this
56 type of thing. M. Fougere had only found the Town of Peterborough which is having
57 its own larger system installed at the moment. It's actually a consortium of a
58 number of communities that have gone in on a grant together.

59

60 • Screening and buffering of the panels and the details of the evergreen plants needed
61 to do this.

62

63 F. Grossman explained that PUC defines a customer generator has to be on the customers
64 land and behind a residential meter and a maximum size of a megawatt which is around 4
65 acres of panels. If this was referenced then no one could do bigger. He suggested that by
66 using the comparison of customer generator versus industrial generator as defined by the
67 PUC. This also explains that a customer generator can only do group metering and net
68 metering. R. Hardy said that 4 acres is very large. He raised the subject of needing to
69 protect the rural character and being careful how it will impact the town, neighbors and the
70 influence on other homes in the town. If for example four neighbors in a row decided to fill
71 4 acres each the impact would be huge.

72 R. Hardy stated that maybe we should just focus on limiting the area rather than using State
73 definitions. Until it has been tested, and we see how it plays out we should just start with
74 the smaller projects and the screening and see how it goes. D. Gagne asked R. Hardy what
75 he defines as smaller. R. Hardy said he would eliminate the 40,000 sq ft large scale system
76 completely.

77 B. Stelmack asked if the tracking panels could be mounted on a roof. S. Bazelmans said
78 they could be maybe put on a commercial property roof but he has never seen them on a
79 residential roof.

80 D. Gagne asked S. Bazelmans to explain the tracking seasonally. In the winter they will be
81 almost vertical and rotate east-west. This would be the highest as the sun is at the lowest.
82 In the summer they will be flatter - maybe almost flat. The rotation will be 180 degrees. D.
83 Gagne feels this is important with regard to the screening.

84 R. Hardy asked S. Bazelmans if they use fencing. He said that the trackers he has been
85 involved with have been mostly in Mass and their regulations are different, and they are not
86 fenced. R. Hardy is concerned that we are in a residential neighborhood and that safety is
87 very important, and he would suggest the units are fenced.

88 D. Gagne asked if an application came to the Planning Board what type of information be
89 provided. S. Bazelmans explained that he would provide a visual to show the impact on the
90 area. They would be customized packet showing all the information requested, such as what
91 they would be installing on the specific site and the ground that needed to be cleared and
92 any other detail that was requested. He also said a survey of the site would be done on

- 93 larger applications of 500kw but he didn't know if the smaller applications would have a
94 survey carried out. However, this would be the type of information the Board would like to
95 receive for the smaller applications as it is important to have all the details from a site plan
96 application. F. Grossman suggested the detail may be proportional to the size of the project
97 due to the economics.
- 98 C. Hoffman suggested that in addition to the 'purpose' of the ordinance we add 'goals' to
99 define clearly that we are aiming to protect for example to reduce adverse impacts, etc.
- 100 C. Rogers suggested that if it not a hardship to anyone, we agree to restrict the size to
101 40,000 sq ft, the height to 10ft and to fence it with a chain linked locked fence. F.
102 Grossman didn't think it would be a hardship but suggested that maybe stick to 1 acre
103 (43000 sq ft approx) as working in acres is easier.
- 104 R. Hardy asked if we were not quite ready and it was advertised that it would have to still be
105 followed. M. Fougere explained the last meeting we can have on this is February 2nd as it
106 needs to be with the Town Clerk on February 3rd. And the earliest we can post a new
107 ordinance is 90 – 120 days before the scheduled town meeting, so that would be November
108 2016. If we want to get this ordinance on this year's town meeting we have until February
109 2nd.
- 110 M. Fougere suggested that the board now go through the ordinance now to give their
111 suggestions for him to amend before the next meeting. C. Rodgers queried the criteria
112 needed for coming before the board. At this moment in time, the residents would just
113 require a building permit, so depending on how the ordinance is written will depend on
114 what needs planning approval.
- 115 D. Petry stated after further discussion that we have two choices. One would be to work on
116 these ordinances for the next year or two have all solar applications come to the planning
117 board for review to see just what applications are submitted.
- 118 D. Gagne discussed the land area of the application and the square footage of the panels.
119 This would include calculating the area of panels, plus perimeter around each panel and the
120 boundary around the site.
- 121 C. Hoffman wanted to be clear that the ordinance reads the wetlands buffers are to be
122 followed.
- 123 M. Fougere then went through the ordinance as it is written now to conclude how it will be
124 amended for the next meeting.
- 125 • Add Goal section after Authority and purpose
 - 126 • Definition section – delete "Solar Energy System Passive"
 - 127 • Small medium and large distinction will be referred to as one with a maximum of 1 acre
 - 128 proportional to total size of the lot.
 - 129 • Determining how the size of the application site will be measured. Including the screening
 - 130 and security.
 - 131 • D. Petry suggested looking at Cumberland ordinance, to get some guidance.
 - 132 • What is the height being limited to 10ft?
 - 133 • The size and type to be clarified. Ground mounted will require CUP.
 - 134 • Conditional Use Permit

- 135 • Specifications as considered by Attorney Dresher
136 • Setbacks to clarify wetlands and specify the need for ‘screening’ which will mean evergreens
137 and berms.
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139 **2b. Medical Marijuana Ordinance**

140 M. Fougere stated that Attorney Dresher had made a couple of minor amendments by
141 adding some clarification under the standards of review, did not change the intent of the
142 ordinance. He wants the title to change to ‘Location of State Authorized Alternative
143 Treatment Centers’.

144 **3. Subdivision Regulations Changes – Performance Guaranty, landscaping.**

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146 M. Fougere stated that Attorney Dresher had made a couple of minor amendments for
147 example he wanted the bonding company to be a qualified bonding company and that it is a
148 non-lapsing letter of credit, otherwise the bonding language was good.

149
150 He also explained that prior to this meeting tonight he had met with D. Gagne and R. Hardy
151 to work on another requirement, relative to the town and timing of landscaping installation.
152 When a subdivision comes in and landscaping and buffering is required we need to state at
153 what point the landscaping will be installed and ensure that this is done at the beginning of
154 the project instead of the end.

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156 D. Gagne asked the board if they were happy with the changes and language
157 recommendations made by the Town Attorney. Everyone agreed. He confirmed that these
158 will continue onto the next meeting on January 19th 2016.

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162 C. Rogers made a non debatable motion to adjourn the meeting. D. Cleveland seconded. All
163 in favor none opposed.

164 The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM

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166
167 Respectively submitted by,

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169
170 Wendy Trimble
171 Planning Secretary
172 Town of Hollis, NH

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