

# SUBJECT TO PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL

Town of St. Albans  
579 Lake Road  
St. Albans, VT. 05478

The Town of St. Albans  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
Town Hall, 579 Lake Road  
May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

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## Minutes

**Staff Present:** Becky Perron, Zoning Administrator, AJ Johnson

**Public Present:**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

S. Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### **GREEN PEAK SOLAR**

Nathan Vandal of Green Peak Solar, LLC appeared before the Planning Commission to discuss a proposed solar project within the Town. The proposed project will be situated on a parcel of land owned by Tim Camisa and accessed by Wilder Drive in Georgia.

The project is south of the Industrial Park and over 2,000' from any structure. There is abundant natural screening. N. Vandal expects the Town to receive \$16,000 in tax revenue from the project. A letter of credit will be provided to the Public Service Board to be used for decommissioning the project in the event that Green Peak Solar is unable to. The solar panels have a useful life of 25-30 years after which they will be repowered or the land will be returned to agriculture. The solar panels will avoid all wetlands and wetland buffer impacts.

B. Brigham wondered if N. Vandal had been to any houses on upper Route 7 to see what their view of the project will be. N. Vandal stated he had not infringed on anyone's personal property but he did not have a clear view of any houses from the project site and assumed they would not see the project very much from their homes.

G. Henderson recommended driving up to some of the newer developments on the hill to see what their view of the project would be.

B. Brigham stated there are already several solar projects in the Town and wondered how many more the Town needed. N. Vandal responded that their project could create a benefit to the Town and would be unobtrusive and hopefully a better build and design than other projects in the Town.

B. Perron inquired if the project would be fenced in. N. Vandal confirmed it would. B. Perron asked if Green Mountain Power would be purchasing the power from the project. N. Vandal stated they had expressed interest in purchasing the power.

B. Perron stated the project would need to be given a 911 number and recommended N. Vandal speak to the Lister's office to receive one. B. Perron wondered if Site Plan Amendment would need to be obtained to extend Wilder Drive. B. Perron asked if Green Peak Solar was leasing the land. N. Vandal confirmed they were. B. Perron wondered if the project would need to be subdivided from the rest of the land as a developed leased lot.

S. Smith wondered if the power lines would be overhead lines or buried. N. Vandal preferred overhead lines.

A. Voegele joined the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

B. Perron asked if the solar panels were considered impervious. N. Vandal answered they were not, only the road to the project was considered impervious.

B. Brigham asked if the parcel would need to be mowed around the project. N. Vandal stated it would. Property owner, T. Camisa stated he was hopeful he could keep sheep fenced in around the panels for a multi-use parcel. The sheep would keep the grass contained. N. Vandal was unsure if sheep could be permitted on the site.

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B. Brigham asked if the panels would be movable or fixed. N. Vandal was unsure but knew the fixed panels were significantly cheaper to install.

A. Voegelé asked for confirmation the power would be bought by Green Mountain Power. N. Vandal confirmed GMP had shown interest. A. Voegelé stated that was contrary to what GMP was publicly stating. N. Vandal stated GMP has been positive to buying power from projects under 5 MW. It is the larger, 20 MW projects they are uninterested in.

## **BYLAW REVISION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Zoning Administrator, B. Perron presented the PC with suggested changes to the 2016 Unified Development Bylaws.

The PC had a brief discussion of B. Perron's suggestion to change Section 301- Required Improvements and Design Standards number 7. Currently it reads-

"7. Storm water drainage in developments not affected by the MS4 State designation within the Town of St. Albans and not requiring a State permit shall accommodate the twenty-five (25) year storm event for all drainage of the site. Post development volume and flow of storm water runoff shall not exceed pre development volume and flow and may require a reduction in volume. Low Impact Development techniques are encouraged." B. Perron suggested accommodating the 2 and 10 year storm events and/or requirements listed in the most recent Town of St. Albans Stormwater Management Ordinance which may be amended from time to time. The PC agreed to table the discussion until a later meeting.

B. Perron suggested adding frontage requirements to the Lakeshore District. The PC agreed to add a frontage of 100'.

The PC had a lengthy discussion regarding B. Perron's suggestion that Section 500- Development Not Requiring a Zoning Permit (Outside of the Flood Hazard Overlay) number 1, "Maintenance, repair, or renovations that do not structurally alter the exterior dimensions of the structure or change of use," conflicts with Section 501- Development Requiring a Zoning Permit which reads-

"It shall be the responsibility of the owner(s) of record to obtain a zoning permit prior to the commencement of any land development." The definitions list "land development" as "The division of a parcel into two or more parcels, the construction, reconstruction, conversion, structural alteration, relocation or enlargement of any structure or other structure, or of any mining, excavation, or landfill and any change in the use of any structure or other structure or land, or extension of the use of land." The PC discussed ways to alter the conflicting statements but ultimately decided to table the discussion until a later meeting.

The ZA suggested adding requirements for open/ green space as per the Town Plan Section 3.6 (6). The PC disagreed and did not add requirements.

The ZA suggested adding requirements for a Homeowner's Association for all sites which share improvements as per Town Plan 3.6 (9). The PC agreed to add a 6<sup>th</sup> "Application Requirement" under 803- Site Plan Review which shall read the same as the third application requirement under Section 804- Planned Unit Development Review. It shall now read-

"6. A description of any deed covenants, homeowner's association articles and bylaws, and maintenance or management plans."

The ZA suggested altering the signage requirements to better accommodate buildings and PUD's existing prior to 1/16/16 and Pre-Existing Multi-Use/ Occupancy Buildings. Chair, S. Smith suggested dedicating an entire PC meeting to signage and sign requirements. AJ Johnson agreed to add signage to a future agenda.

B. Perron agreed to do further research on marijuana centers and retail marijuana stores as well as adult oriented businesses.

## **TOWN PLAN DISCUSSION**

The PC reviewed a timeline provided by ZA, Becky Perron outlining the proposed warning and hearing dates for the Town Plan. B. Perron has begun to review the current Town Plan and is noting her suggestions. The PC agreed to begin work on the Town Plan ASAP.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

The PC agreed to begin their future meetings at 6:00p.m.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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*MOTION: B. Deso made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. A. Voegele seconded. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,  
AJ Johnson, Administrative Assistant

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**Sam Smith, Chair**

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**Date**

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**Brent Brigham, Vice Chair**

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**Date**

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**Grant Henderson, Clerk**

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**Date**

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**Al Voegele**

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**Date**

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**Brendan Deso**

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**Date**