

TOWN OF HENDERSON PLANNING BOARD MEETING
12105 TOWN BARN ROAD, HENDERSON, NY
Oct 20, 2020 AT 5:00 PM

Committee Members: Chairman, Ned Martelle, Robert Ashodian, John Treadwell, Michael Contino, Carol McGowan

CALL TO ORDER and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ATTENDANCE: All Board members present

NOTE:

Subdivision Requests do not have to be referred to the County.

Town Board Resolution adopted September 10, 1992: NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Henderson hereby agrees that the following actions shall be considered to be of a local rather than of inter-community or county-wide concern and shall therefore be exempt from referral to the County Planning Board pursuant to General Municipal Law, Section 239m: Site Plans/Special Permits for new buildings or additions consisting of less than 500 sq. ft. where the principle use will occur within the new structure; unless the new building or addition will require a new or improved access point onto a State or County roadway; All Site Plans/Special Use Permits for the placement of individual single and two family houses, including mobile homes, or manufactured houses. No applications that fall within these guidelines will be referred to Jefferson County Planning.

CONTINUATION OF:

Request of ME Wilson Development Corp. represented by Military Road Solar, LLC, Nexamp, Inc. and Crawford and Assoc. Engineering, PC

On Parcel # 105.00-1-7.53

In AR-40

Bordering Property Owned by Louis & Ginger Cook IV, Ernest & Debra Thrush, Lee Trust Richard s. and Mark Battista

For proposed installation of approximately 5.0 megawatts of solar energy equipment to be placed on approximately 23 acres of parcel.

DISCUSSION: NEAMP representative Alex Curlin and Crawford & Associates Engineering, PC representative Christopher Knox, PE presented information regarding the revision to the Site Plan and reviewed information with new changes to the original site plan that were presented at previous meetings. Nexamp explained that this will be a Community Solar Project were the area residents will have the opportunity to sign up for discounts to their electric bills. A PILOT agreement will be run through the Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency with the school district benefiting the most through the 15-year agreement. Local subcontractors will be hired during construction and local lawn care and snow plowing maintenance will also be used. This site was selected based on the availability of 3 phase electric from National grid. A handout was available showing why locations and sites are limited and selected, this location is prime. A new screening plan was presented, very robust, included local foliage among evergreens called a sweeping pattern. A visual impact study was presented and available to public as a handout showing the impact of the proposed screening. The concern of the cluster of 5 to 6 utility poles at the entrance of the access road will be addressed with a pad

mounting adjacent to the array leaving one pole at County Route 178 and the utility lines will be buried. The concern of the snow drifting issue will be addressed by payment arrangements being made for snow removal.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: A petition signed by over 130 concerned citizens against the project has been turned over to the Planning Board.

Concerns from several community members included:

The view for tourists traveling to Association Island, KOA park and Wehle State Park and summer homes feeling it will be destroyed by the industrial solar array for 30 years.

The project will be in the Overlay district which is to be preserved as the “Town’s Green Space.” There are several other sites available with the 3 phase that would be off the main road of the tourist attractions.

Concerns as to where the actual property lines are and screening at back of project where their home is.

Snow plowing by the Town on a private road, is it allowed. (It is not allowed)

Is there enough funding in the decommissioning plan to cover the removal?

What effect on assessments will this project do to homes?

The project will cause the snow to pile even higher on Cedarvale Rd due to the fence and screening causing a tunnel effect.

Tourism is main economic source for Town, why put an industrial solar array up that may destroy this?

SEOR MOTION: by Michael Contino second by Ned Martelle, declares that none of the environmental impacts identified are significant and no additional study through an environmental impact statement are necessary and a negative declaration is issued

Roll Call voting yes: Ned Martelle, Michael Contino, Robert Ashodian, Carol McGowan

John Treadwell - abstains

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING MOTION by Michael Contino, second by Carol McGowan

Roll Call voting yes: Ned Martelle, Michael Contino, Robert Ashodian, Carol McGowan

John Treadwell- abstains

DECISION MOTION by Robert Ashodian, second by Carol McGowan denies the Special Use Permit for a proposed installation of approximately 5.0 megawatts of solar energy equipment to be placed on approximately 23 acres of parcel.

Roll Call voting yes: Robert Ashodian, Carol McGowan

No: Ned Martelle, Michael Contino

John Treadwell – abstains

Robert Ashodian’s comments/reasoning:

The overlay district was put in place by the Town of Henderson to preserve the natural characteristics of the area surrounding the lake and to be preserved as the “green space” of the Town. The Town’s Comprehensive Plan was built around these designated areas to promote our primary economic resource which is Tourism. An Industrial Solar Project on the same main throughfare that tourist travel to and from Association Island, KOA campground, Robert G. Wehle State Park and seasonal rental properties is not a proper fit. Even with the numerous compromises and changes Nexamp developers have presented there is still no way to make the industrial solar project blend into the surrounding area.

The Town is not against solar development and they have just approved the other project on County Route 75 which, yes, is in the Overlay District as well but it is a totally different area. The Planning Board agreed to review each project on an individual bases and area specific. The Butterville Rd project is in a predominately large agricultural area with access to a seasonal area called Crystal Lake but the project is naturally screened by trees and scrub brush. The Developer will be adding to the screening as well and the area is not heavily traveled by tourist. Site selection is key to any developer in order for the project to work but the Planning Board has to review each site to make sure it is the proper fit for the area and in this case an industrial solar array on Military Rd./ County Route 178 and Cedarvale Rd. is not. With a petition from residents with over 100 signatures against this project they also agree this is not the proper site for this project.

ADJOURNMENT MOTION by Robert Ashodian second by Carol McGowan adjourns the meeting.
Roll Call voting yes: Robert Ashodian, Carol McGowan, John Treadwell
Ned Martelle, Michael Contino left before adjournment.

Respectfully Submitted
Wendy Flagg, Planning Board Clerk