

Baldwin Planning Board

Meeting Minutes 12/3/2020

Roll Call: Planning Board Members: Chairman David Strock, Jo Pierce, Matt Sanborn, Bob Flint
Board of Selectmen: Dwight Warren
CEO: Wes Sunderland
Others: Dave Kane and Brooke Barns of Longroad Energy

Agenda:

1. Review the minutes of the last meeting
2. Longroad Solar discussion.
3. Consideration of return to virtual meetings after 10 Dec 2020.
4. Entertain motion to adjourn

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

1. The minutes of the 12 Nov 2020 meeting were approved as written.
2. The Board received drawings and draft CUP application from Longroad Energy concerning their planned solar farm on property owned by Jo Pierce. Jo Pierce recused himself from the board while this was being discussed.
 - a. The planned solar farm will be rated at 4.95 MW AC and will use tracking to maximize power output.
 - b. The project will cover an expected 66 acres within a fence, 44 acres of that will be graded. An application by Longroad Energy with Maine DEP is required because the project exceeds 20 acres. DEP will require Longroad post an end of life decommissioning bond of about \$1M.
 - c. Construction is expected to take about 4 months once it gets underway. Construction is expected to start in mid 2021.
 - d. The board requested the applicant provide a statement from a certified wetlands scientist to support the locations of wetlands and resource protection areas shown on the project drawings.
 - e. The chairman requested information from the applicant concerning what land was being leased, number of acres from each lot etc.
 - f. Dave Kane stated he expected that Longroad Energy would be required to pay taxes to Baldwin on the solar farm although current tax rules suggest the project would be tax exempt like business equipment. Under the current rules, the project would be tax exempt and the municipality would be paid fifty percent of the taxes on assessed value by the state.
 - g. The chairman requested Longroad Energy provide information on similar projects they have been involved in within Maine and provide copies of the

conditional use permits issued by those municipalities so that the Planning Board can be aware of issues other towns encountered. Brooke Barnes indicated Gardiner and Augusta would be good examples.

- h. The chairman requested Longroad Energy submit a separate wetland delineation report that clearly shows what changes to the Shoreland Zoning Map is being requested.
 - i. The project site walk was scheduled for 20 Dec 2020 at 1:00 PM. The chairman requested the area to be developed be marked with flagging or tapes in time for the site walk. It was noted that the area is currently covered by tree growth tax exemption and is forested with pines. Visibility of the overall project site will be limited due to the trees.
 - j. Additional discussion of the project was planned for the next meeting on 10 Dec 2020.
3. After a short discussion, the chairman stated that he would issue a decision about returning to remote meetings after the 10 Dec 2020 meeting due to the worsening COVID-19 spread.
 4. It was voted to adjourn at 8:20 PM.

Submitted by: Bob Flint