

TOWN OF EAST GREENBUSH PLANNING BOARD

TOWN HALL, 225 COLUMBIA TURNPIKE, RENSSELAER, NY 12144 (518) 694-4011 FAX (518)477-2386

MEMORANDUM

EAST GREENBUSH PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

July 12, 2023

Members:

Matt Mastin, Chairman
Kurt Bergmann
John Conway Jr.
Robert Jucha
Chris Horne
Ralph Viola

Also Present:

Josh Giller, Director of Planning
Alison Lovely, Secretary, Planning/Zoning
Joseph Slater, Planning Board Attorney

CALL TO ORDER / DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Mastin called the meeting to order and determined that a quorum of six (6) members were present. Don Pantan was absent.

OLD BUSINESS:

SAHASRA DEVELOPERS-743 COLUMBIA TURNPIKE-SITE PLAN MOD.

(23-14)

Nick Costa from Advance Engineering was present to update the Board on the project. Nick Costa stated that there is existing parking behind the building but the applicant is requesting to expand that parking. Nick Costa stated that there is an existing dumpster but it will be relocated as the actual dumpster pad is located in a different area on the site and it will be enclosed.

Chairman Mastin asked if it was noted on the plan regarding the dumpster enclosure. Nick Costa stated that there is a note on the plan.

•Ralph Viola stated that he visited the site this afternoon and that with the proposed orientation of the concrete pad a garbage truck would not be able to access the dumpster, it would need to be modified.

Nick Costa stated that he would note that and make that change.

•Ralph Viola also asked that Nick put the note of the fence designation on three sides, so the opening is shown.

•Ralph Viola stated that one other comment he had was if that electrical transformer was going to be surrounded by asphalt, because if it is then the curb either needs to be raised or provide some type of bollards & maybe make that as a condition.

•Ralph Viola stated the other comment is he doesn't show the limits of the new pavement markings on the plan starting it where the new parking is being added.

Chairman Mastin asked if anyone else had any questions.

•Ralph Viola asked if there was going to be green area between the two doors where there is crusher run right now. Nick Costa stated that they are putting greenspace there.

Chairman Mastin asked if the Board had any other comments. There were none.

MOTION: A motion was made by Chairman Mastin as follows: The Town of East Greenbush Planning Board hereby reclassifies this action as a type II action in accordance with 6 CRR-NY 617.5(c)(18): Reuse of a residential or commercial structure, or of a structure containing mixed residential and commercial uses, where the residential or commercial use is a permitted use under the applicable zoning law or ordinance, including permitted by special use permit, and the action

does not meet or exceeds any of the thresholds in section 617.4 of this Part; and grants final approval of the proposed Site Plan Modification as depicted on the site plan entitled “ 743 Columbia Turnpike” prepared by Advance Engineering, dated July 7, 2023 subject to the following conditions:

- Satisfying outstanding technical details as determined by the Town’s Department of Planning and Zoning.
- All remaining fees are paid to the Town.
- That the site plan be modified to correct the dumpster orientation to face southeast and allow for access for garbage trucks.
- Add protection for transformers in the form of either a higher curb or bollards.
- New pavement markings be added to the east side and the north side of the site plan.

Seconded by Ralph Viola & roll called as follows:

M. Mastin-YES; R. Viola-YES; K. Bergmann-YES; C. Horne-YES; D. Panton-ABSENT;
J. Conway-YES; R. Jucha-YES.

MOTION CARRIED BY A 6-0 VOTE

NEW BUSINESS:

GOLDEN GRAIN PIZZA-118 TROY ROAD-MINOR PLAN

(23-16)

Nicholas Costa was present as well as the owner Zafer Ak. Nicholas Costa stated that Zafer also purchased the adjacent property at 1001 Glaz Street, which is on the corner of Route 4 for a solution to the parking issue. Nicholas Costa stated that in addition to adding more parking spaces, they are also proposing a stockade fence along the easterly property line with landscaping and a one way out from the parking lot onto Glaz Street. Nicholas Costa also stated they are adding a sidewalk/crosswalk for people to get from the proposed parking area to the restaurant and some outdoor seating.

Chairman Mastin stated that he has concerns for the house to the east as it’s a residential property, there will be a public hearing for the special use permit. There should be a no left turn sign installed coming out onto Glaz Street so people don’t use that development as a cut-through to Luther Road. He said there are signs that say no through traffic and at one point, speed bumps were installed to discourage people from driving through. He said the real way to discourage this is to add curbing.

- Chris Horne asked how many parking spaces are they adding. Nicholas Costa stated that there are 15 currently and there will be 31 total.
- Kurt Bergmann asked if they are proposing a fence to block lights from the neighbor. Nicholas Costa stated they proposing a 6’ solid stockade fence.
- Chris Horne asked if any lighting is proposed. Nicholas Costa stated that they are not proposing any lighting.
- Robert Jucha asked if it would be better to put the parking along the fence & then installing that turn to exit right only. Nicholas Costa stated that’s a good suggestion and they will look at that.
- Ralph Viola stated that they should have a crosswalk for pedestrians.
- Chris Horne asked what it is in the building on Glaz Street. Chairman Mastin stated that it was a law firm but they’re not there anymore.
- Chris Horne asked if the building is currently being used. Nicholas Costa stated that the owner will be trying to get a tenant in there.
- Robert Jucha asked what the greenspace is. Nicholas Costa stated that there is 29% on 118 Troy Road & 45% on Glaz Street.
- John Conway asked if there would be any additional curb cuts required for Glaz Street & how many parking spaces exist on Glaz Street. Nick Costa stated there is already a curb cut & there are 6 spaces.

- Kurt Bergmann stated that they anticipate needing to double the parking from where they are now. Nicholas Costa stated that the applicant wants to do a 2-phase construction. He wishes to build the parking spaces closest to the building first & then if the needs arises then he wants to build the spaces closest to Glaz Street.
 - Kurt Bergmann asked for clarification, does Phase 2 include the parking closest to Glaz Street and the exit. Nicholas Costa stated that the exit would be part of Phase 1. After talking with the applicant, the exit will be constructed as part of Phase 2.
 - Chris Horne asked how many spots are being added for Phase 1. Nicholas Costa stated 9 spaces.
 - Robert Jucha asked how many spaces are they losing with the new phase. Nicholas Costa stated they're losing 1 space.
- Chairman Mastin stated that the PPB zoning district doesn't allow for outdoor seating, so they would need a use variance if they wanted that.
- Kurt Bergmann asked if NYSDOT have any comments. Nicholas Costa stated that they're not making any changes so DOT won't be involved.
 - Chris Horne asked where the 6 spaces that are attached to the Glaz Street property. Nicholas Costa stated that they are right in front of the building.
 - Robert Jucha asked if there would be any sidewalks along Glaz and along Troy Road. Nicholas Costa stated that they're not adding any.
 - Chris Horne asked how the house was positioned on the lot next door on Glaz Street. Nicholas Costa stated he believes it's similar. Chairman Mastin stated that he believes every house on that street has a similar setback.
- Chairman Mastin asked the Board if they have any other comments or questions. He stated that he would like to wait to take any action on this project tonight and would like to have them come back with any modifications to the site plan in two weeks.
- Kurt Bergmann asked what was across the street as they have a large parking lot. Chairman Mastin stated he believes it's a combination house and beauty salon.
 - Chris Horne asked what the change in greenspace is. Nicholas Costa stated that 118 Troy Road is going from 28.7% to 29% and 1001 Glaz Street is going from 76.6% to 45.1%.
- Chairman Mastin asked if there were anything else from anyone. There was nothing. There was no action taken tonight.

SEABOARD SOLAR-465 MILLER ROAD-MAJOR SITE PLAN, LLA & SUP (23-17)

- Chairman Mastin stated that this is a presentation only tonight. Steve Wilson from Bohler Engineering as the civil engineer and Bennett Ramsay Project Engineer with Seaboard Solar were present. Bennett Ramsay stated that they are under contract to purchase 195 acres, of which the project site will consist of approximately 60 acres, and looking at a 9.85 megawatts system size, access to the site will be in Schodack. Bennett Ramsay stated that they will be requiring a lot line adjustment as they won't be purchasing the piece of property in Schodack. Bennett Ramsey stated they will be going through Schodack for site plan approval and will need permits for the driveway and interconnecting poles. Chairman Mastin stated a couple of things from Monday's PRT meeting, there is no battery storage; but there will be a small battery for back-up, and no poles, except for maybe 1 at Miller Road and Steve Wilson stated possibly another at a stream crossing.
- John Conway asked how close it comes to Miller Road at the nearest point. Steve Wilson stated about a couple of thousand feet. Bennett Ramsey stated he doesn't feel it will be visible by any residents of East Greenbush, only the sellers of the property.
 - Robert Jucha asked if there is any possibility of expansion in the future. Bennett Ramsey stated it's not something they could currently pursue as they are limited by the interconnection, space on the lines and the substation.
- Steve Wilson stated to clarify, it's two projects, two separate applications, one SEQR review to keep it under the 5-megawatt threshold. One site is 4.975 and the other is 4.875 megawatts. Chairman Mastin asked if it would be built at one time. Steve Wilson stated that is correct.

Chairman Mastin stated another thing that was talked about at Monday's PRT meeting was the proximity to the trails at the East Greenbush Town Park. Steve Wilson stated they updated the initial visual analysis and showed some of the key views of the site to the Board.

•Ralph Viola asked what the elevation difference is to surrounding terrain (average elevation compared for 2 miles). Steve Wilson stated it varies across the site, it's close to the Miller Road elevation.

Chairman Mastin stated there is elevation changes in that area, on the Town's website on the Conservation Advisory Committee webpage there is a mapping viewer and it has contour maps on there and should help.

•Ralph Viola asked for an explanation of the array. Steve Wilson stated that it's a single axis tracker and will move east to west, they are 10'-12' high at the highest and will be surrounded by an 8' high wildlife fence. There will be a 20' wide gravel access road & the site will be monitored off site.

Chairman Mastin asked if the secondary access was at the request of the existing homeowner. Steve Wilson stated that is correct, they are trying to keep things separate.

Chairman Mastin asked the applicant to put something together as far as vehicle traffic during construction, hours of operation, with no weekends or holidays etc.

•Kurt Bergmann asked if the fire department will require access. Steve Wilson stated that they will coordinate with them on the access, a turn around if needed and will get their sign off. Bennett Ramsey stated that there will be a Knox box at the entrance in case they need to get in.

•Robert Jucha asked who would maintain the property. Bennett Ramsey stated that they will take care of it themselves and will come up with a plan.

•Robert Jucha asked how much cut & fill they will need. Steve Wilson stated that they're still working on the grading plan & that there will be a lot of leveling to get the grade below 10%.

•Ralph Viola asked if there has been any enhancement of color, any advancement making them ore appealing to the eye. Steve Wilson stated no.

•Robert Jucha asked how will this project benefit the Town. Bennett Ramsey stated tax revenue for the Town, they have started a pilot a program. Chairman Mastin stated that it's not really a pilot, it's in the solar law that the Town receives taxes for solar projects. Bennett Ramsey stated that they are open to a hosting community agreement, that's another way to put in incentives for the Town and those can take various forms. They will be discussing those with the Town as they go through the process.

•Robert Jucha asked how long the company has been in business. Bennett Ramsey stated over 10 years. Chairman Mastin stated that as part of the solar law, there is a decommissioning plan.

•John Conway asked if he heard correctly that the site is currently being cultivated. Bennett Ramsey stated yes and after construction they still plan to use it for agriculture. There is a deal with the sellers of property that they will be able to continue farming the property outside of the fence.

•John Conway asked how it's being accessed not for agricultural purposes, the same access road. Steve Wilson stated that they use the existing driveway off of Miller Road.

•Robert Jucha asked what about exposure to cracked panels. Steve Wilson stated that the system is monitored off site & they would come and repair anything broken. Chairman Mastin asked where their operation is that they could get there so quickly. Bennett Ramsey stated that someone will be out within a few hours, they would use a local contractor.

•Robert Jucha asked if the access road would be maintained by them. Bennett Ramsey stated that it would be.

•Kurt Bergmann asked where is the closest one that's been built. Bennett Ramsey stated Massachusetts. But there are several in the area that have been approved, just not built yet.

Joe Slater asked if they've talked to any neighbors who will be most affected with the project. Bennett Ramsey stated that he hasn't yet but plans to.

Chairman Mastin asked them to talk about the lot line adjustment & to point it out on the site plan. Steve Wilson stated that the line runs right down the middle. Bennett Ramsey stated that there is a small piece that they will own in Schodack but there is nothing planned for that piece.

Chairman Mastin stated that the process is a major site plan, lot line adjustment and a special use permit which requires a public hearing.

•Kurt Bergmann asked if there would be any back up generators. Steve Wilson stated that there wouldn't be.

NEW ZBA REPORTS:

NONE

NEW ZBA REFERRALS:

ZBA Appeal #2023-07-Vitale-41 Rose Lane-Area Variance-Shed-assigned to Bob Jucha

ZBA Appeal #2023-08-580 Columbia Turnpike LLC.-578 Columbia Turnpike (Bldg. F)-Area Variance-Sign-Assigned to Ralph Viola

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Motion by Chairman Mastin to approve the June 28, 2023 meeting minutes. Seconded by Bob Jucha.

Motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

Josh Giller stated that they are hoping to receive the draft Zoning Update next week and then it will go to the Town Board for public comments and come before the Planning Board for a recommendation back to the Town Board.

CLOSING:

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was closed by Chairman Mastin.

Seconded by Kurt Bergmann. Motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted

Alison Lovely

Alison Lovely, Planning Secretary