

Planning Board Minutes
May 5, 2016

Planning Board Members Present: Brad Bennett, Julie Pellett, Karl W. Smith, Daniel Compton, Matt Rogers & Fred Fink.

Others Present: Andy Hall (Code Enforcement Officer), Kim Rayburn (Secretary)

Absent: Fran Overmoyer

Bennett opened the meeting at 7:30 pm.

I. Review of Solar regulations

Bennett asked the Board if they had a chance to review the solar information that he asked Rayburn to collect and send to them, most had reviewed it, a few needed to review it in more depth. Bennett stated that the Town of Seneca has allowed a solar farm on agricultural land of 118.5 acres with the project area of 12 acres for the installation of a 2 MW system that will include 9,500 ground mounted solar modules, they have adopted regulations to allow solar in any district when measures are taken to minimize the adverse impacts on neighboring properties, and to protect the public health safety and welfare. They have definitions for a minor or accessory solar collection system and for a major solar collection system or solar farm.

The County reviewed the proposal and they stated that since the project was in the agricultural district, an agricultural data statement should be obtained as part of the local review, they also discussed the need to confirm any surface or subsurface agricultural drainage infrastructure on the site that could be disrupted by the installation of the support post, and the need for storm water management measures associated with construction and after the system is operational.

Hall discussed the maximum building coverage in the AR-2 district for an accessory building/structure which is fifteen (15) percent. A Special Use Permit could also determine its own percentage for a large scale solar farm if the Town felt it was necessary to adjust the percentage. Fencing was discussed around the mechanicals and possibly the project site area, a Special use permit with a site plan review would be required. The Board discussed the need to have something in place for cleanup of the panels and project site when the lease is up and the panels are no longer any good. A Bond of a certain percentage was discussed.

The Board would like to get the zoning updates (Local Law) completed with the Attorney so we have something in place requiring a permit for Solar arrays, as well as Regulate large scale solar farms with a minor not to exceed 4,000 sq ft among other regulations that would need to be put in place. A major would need a different set of regulations as well.

Bennett asked the Board what they thought of the Town of Seneca's Local Laws regarding Solar, a discussion was held and it was decided that the Town Board should be involved in deciding if the Town would like the Planning Board to pursue creating regulations for large scale solar farms, then the Board will start creating regulations that the Town Board can adopt.

Planning Board Decision:

Bennett made a motion and Smith seconded the motion to recommend that the Town Board review the Town of Seneca’s solar regulations and local laws allowing solar farms and inform them if they want the Planning Board to pursue regulations for Solar farms.

Whereas:

1. There has been interest in the Town of East Bloomfield for solar installations, a Special Use Permit can be established for these farms as there are currently no regulations now.
2. The Planning Board has proposed regulations requiring a building permit for Residential solar.

Record of Vote:

Brad Bennett	Aye
Julie Pellett	Aye
Dan Compton	Aye
Karl W Smith	Aye
Matthew Rogers	Aye
Fred Fink	Aye

All Board members present voted aye, Vote was carried unanimously.

III. Discussion: A brief discussion was held on having a backup list of action items when there are no other items on the agenda. Some Board members feel that the Board could be doing more to foresee issues or concerns with the code or to get a jump on what might be coming next, some feel that the Board has been very diligent and cannot foresee all upcoming concerns, when items arise they address them, such as when the Board felt the need for regulations for wind, they were put in place and have even been updated, now the Board is looking into solar. In the past few years the Board reviewed the Zoning codes and made many changes and additions, and have reviewed the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive plan will have more actions items for the Board to look into once it gets adopted.

The Town Board has invited the Planning board to come to a workshop on the Comprehensive Plan after the regularly scheduled meeting of the Town Board on Monday May 9th, 2016.

Rayburn informed the Board that a waiver of subdivision has been applied for by Effie Rogers and Robin Fitzgerald for the subdivision of more than five (5) acres of Agricultural land located on Rice Rd. There may also be a commercial site plan for a sign coming in for the Antique store located in the Village as the owner of that business has agreed to lease property in the Town from the AWA to erect a sign on their vacant parcel located on 5 & 20.

II. Minutes of April 21, 2016

Pellett made a motion and Bennett seconded the motion to approve the minutes of April 21, 2016 All board members present voted Aye, Vote was carried unanimously.

IV. Meeting Adjourned

Pellett made a motion and Smith seconded the motion to close the meeting @ 8:45 pm. All Board members present voted Aye, Vote was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Rayburn
 Kimberly Rayburn
 Planning & Zoning Board Secretary