



Town of Carrabassett Valley
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Carrabassett Valley Planning Board

Thursday, October 29, 2020 at **7:00 P.M.**

Meeting ONLINE - **Zoom ID 946 701 9181 with Passcode of 04947**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9467019181?pwd=Y3N2cmhUZ3Y5MGxrOHZkdW5PblIzUT09>

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+1 929 205 6099; +1 301 715 8592; +1 253 215 8782

then follow prompts for Meeting ID and Access Code listed above.

Agenda

1. Review the Minutes of the September 17, 2020 Planning Board Meeting.
2. Brief Review of Meeting Protocols
3. Selection of Vice Chairperson
4. Application renewal of Forest Harvesting Permit in the VC/R2/R1 zones by the Penobscot Nation – Tax Map 1D – Lot 14 – specifically area shown on Forester’s map on area being land west of Route 27 from ‘Julie’s Pond Road to Carriage Road
5. Adjourn

Please email cvceo@roadrunner.com to request meeting materials ahead of the meeting.

will generate any noise, the applicants states that there is a noise (hum), but the Areas that might be negatively impacted onsite will not hear the hum beyond the property line. Alan Sleight asked what the view would be of the panels from the top of Sugarloaf. Sean Murphy did not bring that information, but he explained that it's likely that they would be visible, but it will be just next to the CMP substation and the CVSD pools. Alan Sleight asked about visual impact from Appalachian Trail, Snowmobile Trails, Stratton Brook Hut; Sean said it will only be in the higher elevations that you could look down and see it. He said there will be a fence around the project, as well. There will be a forested buffer from Route 27. The only visual impact would likely be the transmission line where it will meet the substation. Alan Sleight expressed concern about the visual blight that the pole on top of Bigelow Hill is, and he is concerned that this will create more of a visual concern that would take away from the visual beauty of the area. Dave Corrow asked why this site is attractive to this group. Ron Kelly said that, what makes it unique is the buffer and the access to the substation. Other projects around the state are trying to get access to nearby substations. This local substation also has the wind farm that uses it, which is primarily at night, and this would be primarily during the day. Dave asked about low light in the winter months. Ron Kelly brought calculations to show the amount of daily energy expected over the year, based on 20 year averages. In winter, there's likely a 60% reduction from a summer day. Overall, the calculations over 8 million KW over a year, which will be spread out over the year, with the best during spring through fall months. Sean Murphy reviewed site maps with the Planning Board members. He assured them that this project will not be visible from Route 27, other than possibly at the substation.

Sugarloaf had been contacted about potentially being a customer of this project. They were in talks up until the time that the Covid-19 pandemic started. Sugarloaf could become a customer and get the dollar credit. Ron said that Sugarloaf had also suggested that they might build their own solar farm.

John Beaupre asked if a commercial customer would have to sign on in order to get the benefit of the project. The customer would become a power purchase agreement, which allows them to become an "off-taker" for a number of years. John said he assumes that there's an arrangement with CVSD, and he asked what benefit will the town residents or the municipality see. Ron said the agreements are still in negotiation with CVSD. Dave Cota asked if the project is taxable. Ron Kelly said he believes the State is implementing regulations that will make the project non-taxable for property taxes.

Tim Flight asked about the expected lifespan of the panels and the overall project, and is there money that would provide for a decommissioning plan. Ron said they are working out those details with the DEP right now. Ron said that they work to ensure that the project is still viable in the 25-30 years when the anticipated life expectancy would end. Dave Keith said that, in the land lease, there would be a bond taken to clean the site at that time. He said that it's a northly facing slope, so it's likely that it would need to be a high location from which the visual impact would be seen. They've worked hard to try to minimize visual impact. He would like to benefit the users of the CVSD services, and the net gain to the district would result in lower rates for 1400 residential and 30

commercial customers. Lloyd Cuttler said that, when he flies, he can see windmills from 100 miles away. He said the footprint of solar panels at other solar farms are much less noticeable. He said the Madison tomato farm shows up more than the Madison solar farm.

Larry Warren asked to speak. He said he's involved with CVSD and was involved with Sugarloaf in the past. He reached out to Advanced Solar Projects when they were considering building this project. They felt it is a desirable location for this project. CVSD's 1500 acres is not a conservation project, and it is located where it is so that it's out of the watershed of the Carrabassett River (Class A), and it is in the Stratton Brook Pond watershed (Class B). This particular site, from Sugarloaf, for the most part will only be visible from the summit of Sugarloaf. He suspects it may be more visible from Burnt Mountain. The other opportunity is to see if Sugarloaf's needs for power can be served. Larry spoke with representatives of Sugarloaf, and up until the Covid-19 shut-down, they were very engaged. Sugarloaf could take up to half the power, and they looked at selling the other half to Sunday River. They continue to look for sources where they might sell the power, but also could provide an option for the community. Larry is looking at forming a CEP (Competitive Electricity Provider). He feels this project helps the Governor's goals of addressing climate change, and he hopes this will help to protect skiing in the future. This initiative was intended to be socially and corporately responsible. Advanced Solar Products was asked to come here by Larry Warren and David Keith for these reasons.

Roddie Ehrlenbach asked if there would be long-term jobs for the maintenance and running of the site. Ron Kelly said there will be minimal opportunities, since the beauty of the solar project is that there are no moving parts and very little maintenance required. A couple of times yearly, they have to mow. They monitor remotely, and if there's a maintenance need, they send someone to the site.

Tom Bird asked about the disposal of the panel units, at such time that they are decommissioned. Ron Kelly said they are recyclable. He does not feel the project will be decommissioned, but would likely be re-powered. He said the power and efficiency of these panels has improved dramatically over the years, and the costs of installing these projects has come down, as well. Sean Murphy added that everything would be taken off the site at any time that they are decommissioned, and the land could go back to forestry. The project would take roughly 4-5 months, after the site is prepared. Alan Sleight asked if any other towns have been approached in this area. Ron said they have bid on a number of projects in Maine over the last two years. David Keith said that CVSD requested references about Advanced Solar Products when they first started discussing this project, and they received excellent references. Chris Parks asked about a cleared zone (about 50') outside the fence and how will they be mowed; Sean said there will be periodic vegetation maintenance, but not necessarily mowing, but it will not be herbicidal spray. They will re-seed with native plants for erosion control.

With no other questions, Brian Demshar noted that everything was complete for the application and commenced the Findings of Facts. Preserve and Enhance the Landscape: no concerns. Erosion Control: Chris Parks asked that erosion control mulch be used, versus silt fence. Vehicular Access, Parking and Circulation: no concerns. Surface Water Drainage: no concerns. Utilities: in favor of northerly access. Special Features of Development: no concerns Exterior Lighting: no concerns, Emergency Vehicle Access: no concerns. Chris Parks did check with the Fire Chief, and he has no concerns about emergency access.

Brian Demshar read the conditions of granting a Conditional Use permit:
Section #1 no concerns ,
Section #2 no concerns,
Section #3 The Town would like to review the permitting approvals from other entities reviewing, such as DEP to ensure no substantive changes,
Section #4 Chris Parks noted that there is some shoreland but no concerns about this.
Section #5 (conditions of approval): There will be a sign on the gate, but nothing directing traffic to the facility. No concerns.

With the completion of the Findings of Fact completed, Tim Flight made a motion to approve the conditional permit based on DEP approval and the preference for the connection on the northerly end of the project. Dave Corrow seconded the motion. Motion approved by a majority of the Board (4) with 1 against and one alternate not voting and the chairman not voting.

The Chair and Vice-Chair positions were discussed. With Deirdre Frey's (Vice Chair) resignation, it was decided to wait until a fuller board could be present to discuss the positions. Chris Parks will reach out to several people who have expressed interest, as he wants to confirm their availability as full-time residents. Dave Corrow made a motion for Brian Demshar to remain on as Chair. Tim Flight seconded the motion. Motion approved. The decision on a Vice Chair will be tabled until the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn M. Schnorr