



BELLINGHAM PLANNING BOARD

10 MECHANIC STREET BELLINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02019

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 28, 2023, at 7:00 pm

Bellingham Municipal Center

Arcand Meeting Room and Via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT:

William F. O'Connell, Jr.	Chairman
Brian T. Salisbury	Vice Chairman
Dennis J. Trebino	Member
Philip M. Devine	Member
Nick Mobilia	Member
Robert Lussier	Alternate Member

ADDITIONAL OFFICIALS PRESENT:

James Kupfer, Town Planner
Amy Sutherland, Assistant Town Planner
Tina Griffin, Recording Secretary – via Zoom

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING

455 Hartford Avenue:

The applicant and owner, Moshe Attais, Darn Properties, LLC, seeks a §240-16, Development Plan Approval and §240-54, Stormwater Management from Section propose to construct a 15,200 square foot, 9 bay, auto repair shop with associated improvements at 455 Hartford Avenue in Bellingham, approximately 4.4+/- acres of land, shown on Assessor's Map 04-72, zoned Business 1 and Suburban. The plans were prepared by Allen Engineering and Associates, Inc, 1 Charlesview Road, Suite 2, Hopedale, MA 01747.

The Board has received a request from the applicant to withdraw without prejudice.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to withdraw the application for 455 Hartford Avenue, without prejudice. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mobilia and passes unanimously.

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING

Zero Maple Street:

The applicant, Nick Tiernan, NERT LLC, and owner, 239 Maple LLC, propose to construct a 12,250 square foot industrial style building consisting of 7 for lease units at "0" Maple Street in Bellingham, approximately 7.2 acres of land, shown on Assessor's Map 37, Lots 3 and 3A zoned Industrial.

The Board has received a request from the applicant to withdraw without prejudice.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to withdraw the application for "Zero" Mape Street, without prejudice. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mobilia and passes unanimously.

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING

WS Development:

The applicant, W/S Bellingham IV Associates LLC, and owner, Bellingham N Main Street II LLC, Hartford Av. Associates LTD, W/S Bellingham IV Associates LLC, & Varney Bros Sand & Gravel propose to construct a 700,000-sf industrial building for warehouse and distribution use with associated improvements on approximately 175.6 +/- acres of land in Bellingham, shown on Assessor's Map 24 Lot 12 and 10, Map 30 Lot 73-1, and Map 31 Lot 3, zoned Industrial. This application falls under the Zoning By- Laws §240-16, Development Plan Approval, §240-54, Stormwater Management, §240-138, Water Resource District Special Permit, §240-60, Flexible Parking Options Special Permit and §240-119, Major Business Complex Special Permit. The plans were prepared by Bohler Engineering.

WS Development has requested a meeting continuance.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to continue this Public Hearing until Thursday, October 26, 2023. Motion was seconded by Mr. Devine and passes unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING:

NextGrid Mescalbean, LLC:

The applicant, NextGrid Mescalbean, LLC, and owner, Maplegate Realty Trust, propose a solar array which consists of 74+- acres of land to be redeveloped for a proposed solar array of which only 9.8 acres is in Bellingham. The current access road is located through the Town of Bellingham at parcel 26-0009 and is proposed to remain and function as the primary access road for the Solar Array Project. The Solar Array project is in the Town of Franklin and will be for the construction of a new 15,000=- KW solar field along the new gravel access drives, associated utilities, and stormwater management components located in the northern portion of the existing Maplegate Country Club property at 160 Maple Street Bellingham, shown on Assessor's Map 26-0009, zoned suburban. The plans were prepared by Bohler Engineering.

The Chairman let everyone know that they are in receipt of a document from the Town's Attorney that states the Dover Amendment does not apply to Parcel 1.

The applicant's attorney, Peter Brown was present and stated that he disagrees with the written opinion the town has received regarding the Dover Amendment, and he will be looking forward to reviewing the document once it's provided to him. At that time, he will conference it with council, and file an appeal if needed.

Ms. Stein, town council, let Mr. Brown and Board members know that if further discussion is needed for clarification of this matter, it can be done so, after tonight's meeting.

Board members and the applicant's representatives discussed the next steps that would need to be taken for this project, outside of the Dover Amendment.

Regarding peer review, Mr. Salisbury stated that he doesn't have an issue with the applicant using the same peer review that was used with the town of Franklin, if that would help expedite anything for the applicant, since the current deadline is December 15, 2023.

The applicant's representatives let the Board know that there is nothing new proposed on the Bellingham side, as far as paving, building, panels, etc. The existing access road will be maintained by the project. At the last meeting, the Board had mentioned improvements to the landscaping for the view of the solar project. As far as stormwater goes, there are not any changes, and it will remain grass and won't have any new impervious area. The full peer review process was done with the town of Franklin, but there isn't any parking, lighting, building, etc. being proposed for Parcel 1.

The meeting was opened to the public that had concerns about the property taxes and if the town will have to increase taxes due to no longer having the golf course. There was additional concern about the excessive amount of traffic that will occur on Maple Street for the development of the project if it progresses forward. At the previous meeting there was question about where the power would be going once it leaves the solar farm. The applicant's representatives did provide information this evening, letting the public know that this would be part of the Massachusetts Smart Program, which is a State initiative to provide more renewable energy produced in the community. That is put back into the local grid, which on Maple Street is the existing three-phase lines, and then feeds the local community. What is not used on the lines itself would go back into the sub-station and make its way on the transmission grid and sold back to Eversource via the State. The local community is anyone that is on the line that's fed by the three-phase wires that are already on Maple Street. It would be consumed by those community members on Maple Street and whoever branches off that area. This is a solar initiative as well, and residents can request to buy into the community solar farm through the State, to get a discount on their bill. This is an opt-in program, and not automatic, so if you don't opt-in the only benefit you would see is increased tax dollars, in which most will be going to Franklin because that's where the vast majority of land being assessed is.

Additional discussion regarding this project, in addition to answers for questions raised by the public in attendance are needed.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to continue this Hearing until Thursday, October 12th. Motion was seconded by Mr. Mobilia and passes unanimously.

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING

SNETT Trail:

The applicant and owner, Michael Burr, proposes a 6-lot residential subdivision on approximately 26.4+/- acres of land on the west side of Lake Street in Bellingham, shown on Assessor's Map 80-09-01 zoned Agriculture.

There was a draft decision to discuss for the SNETT Trail project that the Board has reviewed. However, Mr. Devine first asked for clarification from the applicant about the sidewalk situation on the drawings and where that stands. The applicant's representative told Board members that the sidewalk has been added to the drawings and the revisions from August 30th were shared with the Board. Subsequent to the last meeting, a couple changes have been made. The most prominent being the addition of sidewalks. Also, on the legal sheets there was a note added that requires the applicant to offer part of Parcels "C and D" to the abutting property owners, prior to the release of covenant. The sidewalk was added on one side, as required in the Regulation, and was shown on the updated drawings.

Fire Chief Miller was present and discussed the number of hydrants in this development, which was in accordance with the number required for that area. There was also concern for the turning radius in the cul-de-sac for the fire trucks to be able to access the entire area in the development. The applicant's representatives stated that it was designed to meet the cul-de-sac requirements of a subdivision.

Mr. Miller also asked what the plan is if there's an emergency in the cul-de-sac area that the Fire Department can't get to the end of the road for. There's only one way in and out in this neighborhood and no other way for the Department to get in for an emergency event. These are items that need to be looked into from the Fire Department emergency standard perspective where if something were to happen in the middle of the road, is there another way to still get to the end of the road in an emergency event.

The Chairman stated that the most updated turning radius needs to be provided to the applicant and in the interim, the applicant and Fire Department can look into options that may be available.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to extend the decision deadline to October 31, 2023, and to continue this Hearing until October 12, 2023. Motion was seconded by Mr. Trebino and the motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 pm. Motion was seconded by Mr. Devine and passes unanimously.

The next Planning Board meeting will be held on Thursday, October 12, 2023.

Thank you,

Tina M. Griffin

Tina M. Griffin

Recording Secretary