

TOWN OF WEBSTER
SELECT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES MONDAY DECEMBER 8, 2020

1 The Select Board held a virtual Public Hearing on Monday December 8, 2020 in Webster, New
2 Hampshire.

3
4 **Select Board Members present:** Christine Schadler (Chairwoman), David Hemenway, Normandie
5 Blake.

6
7 **Also, present:** Dana Hadley (Town Administrator), Russell Tatro (Land Use Coordinator), Dominic
8 Lebel, Michael Chaplan, Susan Rauth, Craig Fournier, Roy Fanjoy, Bruce Johnson, Isabel Brintnall,
9 Elizabeth Janeway, Vicky Myer, Bruce Lampman, Daniel & Maxine Coulter, Barbara Corliss, Katie
10 King, Mike Arpino, Michael & Laurie Wiltshire, Charles Petrucci.

11
12 **MOTION:** Chairwoman Schadler

13 *Moved to open the meeting at 7:00 p.m.*

14 **SECOND:** Selectman Hemenway

15 **CHRISTINE SCHADLER - YES**

16 **DAVID HEMENWAY – YES**

17 **NORMANDIE BLAKE – Abstain**

18 **The motion passed 2 to 0 with one abstain due to non-attendance**

19
20 Chairwoman Schadler opened the hearing and thanked Olivewood Energy for making themselves
21 available to present the project to the public.

22
23 Chairwoman Schadler handed the floor over to Dominic Lebel the representative from Olivewood Energy
24 LLC. Mr. Lebel thanked the Board letting him present. He commended the Board on forming the Solar
25 Project Subcommittee to assist with the creation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). He stated
26 that Olivewood Energy would be happy to supply sample MOUs and help in writing the MOU. He went
27 over the topics that would be covered in the MOU. He then proceeded to make a similar presentation
28 done at the previous Select Board meeting about the proposed project. Once the presentation concluded
29 Chairwoman Schadler opened the floor to questions from the public.

30
31 Isabel Brintnall asked if it was possible to get a map that included all the wetlands in the proposed project
32 area? Mr. Lebel responded that they are currently in the process of a wetlands study and once the results
33 came in, they would make a detailed map available.

34
35 Elizabeth Janeway stated she was in favor of solar energy but was concerned about the loss of habitat.
36 She asked if the Olivewood Energy would purchase land equal to the project size to be placed in
37 conservation? Michael Chaplin, representative from Olivewood Energy, responded that most of the land
38 purchased or leased had already been clear-cut for various reasons well before Olivewood had expressed
39 interest in purchasing. Any cutting that still needed to happen would be done in such a way to minimize
40 impact. Mr. Lebel commented that the area the project would cut to be around 170 to 180 acres. Ms.
41 Janeway was not in favor of the use of herbicides and pesticides such as Round-Up. Mr. Chaplin
42 responded that these topics will be addressed in the MOU. Ms. Janeway had one final question about
43 lighting. Mr. Lebel responded that lighting would only be needed at the substation and the light would be
44 on a motion sensor.

45
46 Mike Arpino asked what the benefit to the Town would be? Mr. Lebel stated that the pilot agreement
47 signed in November of 2019 provided many benefits to the Town. Some of the benefits included
48 \$204,000.00 in year one of the project going up by 2.5% per year. The total proposed revenue to the
49 Town in the pilot agreement would be 13.75 million dollars over 40 years. The project would also be

1 leasing land from the Town and that total would come to around 8.6 million dollars over the 40 years. Mr.
2 Arpino expressed concern about setting of precedent commercial use of Town land. Mr. Arpino asked
3 about the visual impacts from the solar panels. Mr. Lebel responded that they had done an impact study
4 and it had determined that based on the topography and location of the project that the impact would be
5 negligible.

6
7 Vicky Myer asked, will the entire area be fenced in and access blocked to the public? Selectmen
8 Hemenway added, how would the fencing impact the snowmobile trails? Mr. Lebel responded that the
9 solar panel area would be fenced in to protect their assets. 214 acres would be fenced and with the rest of
10 the 600 acres of land being left open. Redirection of impacted trails would be addressed further in the
11 MOU.

12
13 Ms. Brintnall asked if the project size set in stone and can if the size could be changed? Mr. Lebel
14 responded that the project size increase was needed to make the project fiscally possible. Olivewood
15 Energy did not anticipate any further increase in project size. Ms. Brintnall wanted an answer to the
16 question asked by Ms. Janeway regarding purchasing equal amounts of land to be placed in conservation.
17 Mr. Chaplain stated that Olivewood energy was not against the idea and it would have to be addressed in
18 the MOU process. Selectman Hemenway asked Olivewood Energy directly if they would be willing to
19 offset the wetland impacts. Mr. Chaplain responded that Olivewood Energy would be willing to offset the
20 impacts to wetlands.

21
22 Kimberlie Coulter asked how will the project impact property values and the tax base? Mr. Lebel stated
23 that no property values would not be impacted and that is considered in the NH Site Evaluation
24 Committee (SEC) process. Mr. Chaplain stated that it would be a significant increase to the Town's tax
25 base.

26
27 Selectman Hemenway asked for clarification on what the pilot agreement would cover. Mr. Chaplain
28 explained that the pilot would cover payments in lieu of property taxes, and it would not cover utility
29 assessments.

30
31 Bruce Lampman asked about the location of the substation. Mr. Lebel responded it would be on the
32 Webster/Boscawen line. Selectman Hemenway commented it would be across the street from Copart.

33
34 Bruce Jonson asked about the land use change tax. Mr. Lebel responded that the pilot agreement had a
35 payment in lieu of the land use change tax and he could get the updated amount. Bruce Johnson
36 commented that that payment should also go to the Conservation Commission.

37
38 Charles Petruccelli asked will screening be added to reduce the visual impact to properties near the
39 project. Mr. Caplan explained that they would be using evergreens for year-round screening and they
40 would be willing to talk with abutters make sure the panels are screened.

41
42 Vicky Myer asked if the energy would be staying in NH? Mr. Lebel stated that was one of the projects
43 goals and they would be working with the State to accomplish it. Selectman Hemenway commented that
44 the Energy Committee was looking into creating community power agreement, but nothing was set in
45 stone yet.

46
47 Daniel Coulter asked about the access location for the substation? Mr. Caplan stated that access would be
48 gained from the furthest north east parcel on the map. The access would be on Olivewood Energy land.
49 Any other access points would be discussed and decided in the MOU.

1 Katie King asked if new power lines would cross Deer Meadow Road? Mr. Caplan responded that any
2 addition power lines would be buried unless it would impact wetlands or an existing right of way.

3
4 Selectman Hemenway asked when would the Town see the final design layout? Mr. Caplan stated that
5 Olivewood Energy would begin the process after they received the results of the wetland study. Mr. Lebel
6 commented that they were still in the preliminary stage of project design and they needed to take local
7 feedback into account.

8
9 Kimberlie Coulter asked whom they should contact questions. Selectman Hemenway responded that
10 residents could either contact Administrator Hadley or use the contact information provided by Mr. Lebel.
11 He also stated that the Boards were also happy to receive input and concerns from residents.

12
13 Susan Rauth the Chairperson of the Planning Board wanted to provide clarification on a comment made
14 earlier regarding Town site review. She commented because of the size of the project site review would
15 be handled by the State. However, the Planning Board and other Town Boards would be actively involved
16 in creating the MOU agreement with Olivewood Energy. Planning Board Chairperson Rauth commented
17 that Olivewood Energy should provide a better map for the project. Planning Board Chairperson Rauth
18 also asked who would be maintaining the projects land. Mr. Lebel stated that Olivewood Energy would be
19 maintaining the site.

20
21 Laurie Wiltshire asked what would be the direct benefit to abutters? Mr. Caplan stated there is no direct
22 benefit now. He would be willing the discuss the possibility further with abutters.

23
24 Maxine Coulter asked when the wetlands study would be complete? Mr. Lebel answered approximately
25 in two weeks.

26
27 Katie King asked how long the construction would take? Mr. Lebel stated that depended on when the
28 project was approved. Once approved they expected completion in one construction season.

29
30 Roy Fanjoy asked for information regarding construction equipment access and what roads would be
31 used? Mr. Lebel stated that was something that would be addressed in the MOU. Mr. Fanjoy also asked
32 what was going to happen to the land when the project was complete? Mr. Lebel responded
33 decommissioning would be addressed during the MOU process and had not been determined yet.
34 Selectman Hemenway asked for clarification if the project would continue after the 40-year life of the
35 project. Mr. Caplan responded that it was a possibility, but it would require additional permitting,
36 equipment, and new lease agreements.

37
38 Vicky Myer asked when was the next meeting and can the public participate? Selectman Hemenway
39 responded that members of the community are always encouraged to attend board/commissions meetings.
40 The next Solar Project Subcommittee meeting would be on December 22, 2020.

41
42 Katie King asked if any fences would cross wetlands? Mr. Caplan stated they would try to avoid it, but it
43 could happen. Ms. King also asked if the walking trails would remain open? Mr. Lebel stated it was
44 Olivewoods intent to have those activities to continue. Mr. Caplan requested that anyone with information
45 on trial locations should feel free to provide it. Barbara Corliss stated that once they had a better map it
46 would be easier to provide that information.

47
48 Michael Wiltshire commented that Olivewood Energy and the Town should make efforts to better address
49 abutter impacts. The proposed project would change the landscape drastically and he wanted a better idea
50 on the impacts would eventually be. Mr. Lebel stated that he would reach out to the abutters further.

1 Charwoman Schadler commented that the Boards would welcome any input from abutters. Selectman
2 Hemenway also commented that these issues once identified could be addressed in the MOU.

3
4 Bruce Lampman asked if Olivewood had reached out to the city of Concord regarding the restrictions put
5 on the road due to Copart? Mr. Lebel stated that it would be a good idea.

6
7 Ms. Corliss's commented that the Solar Project Subcommittee would benefit from having more Deer
8 Meadow residents. The Board agreed and welcomed any Deer Meadow Road residents to join the
9 upcoming meeting.

10
11 Selectman Hemenway had a question about when a more detailed map would be received. Mr. Caplan
12 explained that would depend on when the reports are finished. Mr. Lebel clarified that the details of the
13 project would be refined over the next few months.

14
15 Chairwoman Schadler announced that the next Solar Subcommittee would be on Tuesday December 22,
16 2020 at 7:00pm and stated that anyone was welcome to attend. She thanked Olivewood Energy and the
17 public for coming. Mr. Lebel stated that he had appreciated the opportunity and he looked forward to
18 working with the Town.

19
20
21
22 **MOTION:** Chairwoman Schadler
23 ***To adjourn the meeting at 8:40pm***

24 **SECOND:** Selectman Hemenway

25 **CHRISTINE SCHADLER - YES**

26 **DAVID HEMENWAY - YES**

27 **NORMANDIE BLAKE - YES**

28 **The motion passed 3 to 0**

29
30 The meeting adjourned at 10:32pm

31 *Minutes taken by Russell Tatro*

32
33 *Minutes approved 1/25/21 as amended*