

Village of Caledonia Planning Board • Meeting Minutes for September 17, 2024

Members Present: Rhett Clark, Charles Martelle, James Kemnitz, Christopher Frank, Jay Barefoot

Member Absent: Marge Landowski

Also Present: Adam Schneider, Upstate Breaker
Sean Mullen, GreenSpark Solar
Mike Burnside, Code Enforcement Officer

Guy Marble, Village Resident (arrived at 7:00 pm)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

August Minutes

Motion by James Kemnitz, seconded by Charles Martelle, to approve the August minutes as written.

Aye: Rhett Clark, Charles Martelle, James Kemnitz, Christopher Frank, Jay Barefoot

Nay: None

Abstention: None

Rhett Clark provided a follow-up to Mrs. Shultz' inquiry regarding subdivision at the August meeting: he emailed Village Attorney Ed Russell, who said that based on the limited information available, the existing easement needs clearing up before moving forward. Rhett sent this information to Cenna Clements and Mrs. Shultz.

Public Hearing Minutes, September 11

Motion by James Kemnitz, seconded by Charles Martelle, to approve the Public Hearing minutes as written.

Aye: Rhett Clark, Charles Martelle, James Kemnitz, Christopher Frank, Jay Barefoot

Nay: None

Abstention: None

Upstate Breaker Solar (1 Technology Place)

Sean Mullen, from GreenSpark Energy, provided an update:

- He sent updated imagery with the solar array and labeled streets
- There is a stake in the ground to show where the fence would run for the east side of the fencing around the array

The Board discussed possibilities for screening the project:

- Soil berm with fencing on top
- Vegetation, but the trees may either not do well or there is the risk of the trees growing into the fence
- Privacy slats on the chain link fence

Next steps:

- GreenSpark needs to submit the most up-to-date information to Rhett; he will submit it to Livingston County.

- GreenSpark needs to provide decommissioning plan and insurance requirements; Adam will contact Ed Russell
- Site plan needs to be stamped by a licensed NYS engineer
- Sean will address requirements in the re-submission and send to Rhett by Wednesday, 9/25.
- Board needs confirmation that the visual impact of this project is minimal, and that the panels will not be significantly higher than the fence.
- Board members are asked to make a site visit to familiarize themselves

Timeframe for this project:

- 10/1: Submit to Livingston County
- 10/10: Livingston County Planning Board meeting
- 10/15: Village of Caledonia Planning Board meeting
- 11/19: Village of Caledonia Planning Board meeting

Best case for approval is 10/15, depending on County's input.

The Board discussed setback for this project:

- Because this is a major solar installation, there is a 250' required setback from non-participating properties. The Planning Board is able to give relief of this requirement, but needs to specifically outline why and how much relief is being given to this specific project.

Guy Marble, 3238 State Street, came to the meeting at 7:00 to address residents' concerns about this project:

- Will the Board inform a wider portion of Village residents?
 - o The PB already informed residents and businesses within a 500' radius. Minutes, once approved, will be on the Village website.
- Many people are concerned that there will be more solar installed.
- People are concerned that they have not been notified
 - o PB replied that at some point, there needs to be an end to mailing notifications. Mailing something to every Village resident is neither required nor feasible.
- This is a great little town, and many would hate to see it ruined by solar
 - o Rhett Clark: the Village adopted a new solar code; we can't have a solar moratorium
- Can the residents sign a petition to slow down the project?
- With a 30-acre parcel, why are the panels not being located somewhere else on the property?
 - o James Kemnitz: this is all being done within code. We are following the code that has been established by the Village.
 - o Mike Burnside: the panels are placed such that their location is a fair compromise – need to take into account water lines and other utilities, plus employee parking and material storage
- PB: Anyone is welcome to attend the County Planning Board meeting on October 10th, but look online at the agenda first to make sure this is being discussed.

- PB: Livingston County has a letter requested from DEC to state that it is ok to drill posts into the ground at this location.

Motion by Jay Barefoot, seconded by Charles Martelle, to adjourn the meeting at 7:25.
Aye: Rhett Clark, Charles Martelle, James Kemnitz, Christopher Frank, Jay Barefoot
Nay: None
Abstention: None

Elizabeth Dietrich
Secretary, Village of Caledonia Planning Board