

TOWN OF STAMFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
October 30 , 2023
(UNAPPROVED)

Planning Commission:

Present: Sheila Lawrence, Debra Burchard, Carolyn Brooks and David Saldo.

Not Present: Daniel Potvin, Aaron Malachuk, Maura Hawkins

Non voting members not present: Jenifer Hughes, Kurt Gamari

Visitors: Lisa Gramlin, Jedidiah Gramlin, Jim Righi, Debra Righi, Tammy Elias, Dave Fiero
Vaughn Tower (Readsboro), Jennifer Lefevre, Amanda Kurek, William Ridard, Rich Cristofolini,
Barbara Malinowski, Duncan Honig, Bonnie Lamore

Sheila called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

STAMFORD MAIN RENEWABLES WIND TURBINE PROJECT:

William Ridard referred to the postcard sent to all residents of Stamford by homeowners in close proximity to planned turbine project and asked why we are even having this discussion if the proposed turbine is not on land designated in our Town Plan for placement of wind turbines.

Dave Saldo reminded everyone that Public Utility Commission (PUC) has the final say.

Barb Malinowska asks if the State can overrule the Town Plan. Dave Saldo says 'yes'

Deb Burchard says that we are allowed as the Town to have a seat at the table when discussions are held. State has ultimate decision. BCRC explanation about our status (See email from BCRC to Deb Burchard) We are still in advance notice stage - Until a final filing the BCRC will not be involved. Then asks the question 'What's the point of having an energy plan if it is not going to be followed?'

Jed Gramlin - we are waiting for National Grid to agree to the site. From here to Dutch Mountain belong to Nat Grid.

Sheila shows map with new entrance to the site. Still goes through Dunn's - Green Mtn National Forest and Rondeau.

Lisa Gramlin has sent letters to every rep in the state and received no response

Dave Saldo says Green Mtn National Forest people will support if Town is in favor but not if the Town opposed

Jenn Lefevre - Is there a plan for if disaster strikes?

Bonnie - Residents need to have a say

Vaughn Tower - (Readsboro)- Have we reached out to Feds? Public Utilities is regulated. Ask reps to support us. This will impact property values. There are already 3 families waiting to build upon this decision. You - This body has to get ahead of this. Suggests that this body draft a letter to State reps, Congressman and Senators to put pressure on Federal Government

Dave Saldo -I have sent letters to state reps and received no response
This town voted for windmills - green energy - and later on the Planning Commission designated an area for them .

Deb Burchard says that Act 250 is not involved.

Dave Saldo- There will need to be town permits for the road. We should be getting together with Selectboard and Conservation Committee - to present a united front.

Carolyn - I think we should have a town vote. Citizens can petition for a special town meeting leading to a vote.

Deb Burchard -It was a property owner who invited Norwich to use the private site

Jenn - we go to the Selectboard and get different information from that board than from this board. We have been told by Selectboard not to petition for a town vote because people might not understand the issues well enough to vote.

Bonnie - Because of one land owner, the town is standing behind the wind turbine?

Dave Saldo- You have the right to petition but you don't know what you are going to get if you call for a vote

Deb Burchard says that no one has spoken in favor of the project. The Planning Board will support a citizen's vote

Lisa Gramlin - what is the petition for?

It was explained that the petition is to call for a vote on the issue. That way there will be a majority to put forward to the PUC and State when it comes to approvals.

NEW TOPIC:

Lisa Gramlin

The ATV trail goes through the Green Mtn Forest. Someone should ask Nat Forest if ATV can go on this trail. Deb Burchard has agreed to contact Nat Forest about whether this is a legal ATV trail.

Jed - Norwich has to get National Grid's approval to attach to their wire for the wind turbine. Nat Grid is dragging their feet in answering.

Deb Burchard- Information is not being shared between Selectboard and Planning Board in order to move forward.

Dave Fierro Windmill MUST be outside 1 kilometer from residences (check the town plan)
Annette Smith VCE ,Vermonters for Clean Energy, is advising citizens

Vaughn Tower - You need to see a plan for decommissioning the tower and secure funding in advance.

Deb Burchard- Norwich has said they will agree to that and it will be part of the application proposal

Minutes were approved.

Zoning By-laws discussion

Deb Burchard was tasked with investigating mobile homes, campers.
Section 7.11 by law about mobile homes/campers was discussed.

Currently people are living in trailers on private property - This is not in compliance with current by-laws. Deb says there is a tiny home on wheels that has showed up at the Lion House on Main Road, which would fall under category of Trailer Coach. It was not determined if a permit is necessary.

We need to write a more comprehensive by-law concerning temporary dwellings.

The Board should focus on Petition for Met Tower - to gather info November 10th.
Then wind turbine deadline is mid December.

Lisa Gramlin -Green credits is where the money is in the enterprise. They are more valuable than the energy that the turbine will generate.

Dave Saldo cites the Town ordinances and policies book on page 27 under Town Charter has the ordinances that are being violated by the Norwich proposal.

Carolyn Brooks
Planning Commission Clerk