

ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

7:00 p.m., Thursday, May 13, 2021

Via Zoom

I. Call to Order

a. **Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum:**

Chair Murray called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. Casserly did a roll call for attendance. A quorum was present.

Members Present: E. Alan, K. Bellor, K. Bisonette, G. Blatchley, J. Cameron, D. Chambers, P. Darling, D. Duff, M. Gazin, A. Gilbert, B. Murray, K. O'Neil, and C. Shatraw.

Members Absent: J. Rose and D. Fay.

Staff Present: J. Pfothauer and D. Casserly.

Others Present: None.

b. **Adoption of the Agenda:**

The agenda was unanimously adopted (Shatraw/Gilbert).

c. **Approval of the April 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes:**

The minutes were unanimously adopted (Shatraw/O'Neil).

II. Public Forum: None.

III. Training Session: Ethics Training from County Attorney (video). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iqa1-WVtCfw&t=12>

IV. Project Reviews

a. Referrals Returned Pursuant to MOU - RFLA (Return for Local Action)

Pfothauer presented the list of ten projects.

- i. Lawrence (T): Subdivision
- ii. Louisville (T): Area Variance
- iii. Massena (V): Site Plan Approval (x3), Subdivision, Area Variance (x2), and Use Variance.
- iv. Potsdam (V): Special Use Permit

- Duff talked about the Board being more proactive about pedestrian resources/infrastructure in large/mall parking lots. This was in reference to one of the site plans in Massena that proposed a new urgent care facility in Harte Haven Shopping Center. There is a large parking lot here, with minimal pedestrian focused infrastructure.

b. Full Reviews:

- i. Town of Canton, Battery Storage Local Law.

Pfotenhauer presented the project review and reviewed the staff recommendations.

- Chambers asked about building placard/signs and emergency notification for first responders.
 - a. Pfotenhauer responded that there are sign regulations.
- Duff asked if the law has language addressing the cost of trainings for first responders being covered by the developer.
 - a. Staff will find. It is noted in the law under 10. Safety.
- Duff asked about noise standards.
 - a. It is addressed in Special Use Permit Standards.
- Murray asked about fire suppression systems and related emergency response measures. Will there be auto dialers (alarms that auto dial emergency services). He is concerned with larger battery storage units, because lithium batteries and water don't mix. What kind of containment plan is necessary for emergency situations. There are other fire suppressions systems to consider, CO2.
 - a. Alan said that fire suppression related language should be a recommendation.
- Duff talked about emergency training and setting a high bar for developers. Also, fire suppression should be included with these systems.
 - a. Alan said to be cautious with requiring training, because of staff and costs. He referenced how Brookfield and the Parishville Fire Department do annual site visits to talk emergency plans for dams.
 - b. Bisonette agrees and thinks training requirement may be too much.
 - c. O'Neil asked about battery storage emergency training and if it is safety focused with this type of emergency.
 - i. Alan says that fire training does include training for electrical emergencies.
- Murray talked about lithium fires and that they are more focused on containment because they are a challenge to fight; the heat can increase the emergency level. He said that emergency responders need to know about a site's emergency response plan.
- Pfotenhauer asked about clarification to Murray's fire suppression requirements, recommendation or condition.
 - a. Murray responded that they are recommendations for Tier 1 and 2 Systems in dedicated use buildings.
 - i. A majority of the Board agreed.
- Gilbert asked about the larger solar projects; do they have similar regulations for battery storage.
 - a. Pfotenhauer replied that he is not sure how Article 10 and/or 94c will address. However, local laws will regulate the smaller projects.

- A majority of the Board voted to approve the project with conditions (Bisonette/O’Neil). Abstentions: Duff. Opposed: None.
- ii. Town of Colton, Wind Energy Facility Law
Pfothner presented the project review and reviewed the staff recommendations.
- Chambers asked about lighting, could there be issues with dark sky requirements, and aviation concerns.
 - a. Pfothner replied that dark sky requirements apply to lights around the base of towers. Towers above 200’ has to have lights, per FAA regs.
 - Duff asked about large WECS setbacks and noise levels.
 - a. Pfothner responded that these regs are similar to other wind laws in the County. Fifty (50) dbs at the property line.
 - The Board voted unanimously to approve the project with conditions (Alan/Shatraw).
- iii. Town of Colton, Code Amendment
Casserly presented the project review and reviewed the staff recommendations.
- Alan asked about the religious institutions use and RLUPA (Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act).
 - a. Pfothner responded that the Town can regulate the use, however they should be cautious due to RLUPA.
 - i. Staff will add RLUPA reference to the project review.
 - The Board voted unanimously to approve the project with conditions (Shatraw, O’Neil).
- iv. Town of Pierrepoint, Solar Energy Law
Casserly presented the project review and reviewed the staff recommendations.
- Gilbert supported Staff edits to the organization of this law.
 - The Board voted unanimously to approve the project with conditions (Gilbert/Shatraw).

V. Reports

- a. **Executive Committee:**
 - i. Murray said they talked about RFLAs and the Benson Mines Solar Project.
- b. **Board of Legislators:**
 - i. Chambers said that the multi-use trail is opening May 15.

- c. **Highway Department:**
 - i. Chamber talked about the following:
 - Bids are open for two outposts: Russell and a new site in the Town of Lisbon (CR28A);
 - Bridges (9-10) and culvert projects are under way;
 - Paving: 20-30 miles.
 - ii. Shatraw asked about the Tupper Reservoir Bridge, Chambers unsure on this particular bridge. She also asked about the bid for the bridge in Morristown.
 - Chambers responded that the bid will open on May 19.
- d. **State of the County Roundtable:**
 - i. Pfothenauer talked about the Benson Mines Solar Project, ~20 MW, and it's the first build ready site in the State.
 - O'Neil asked about siting.
 - a. Pfothenauer replied that the mine site of tailings piles is ideal, it's not active ag, and located south of SR 3.
- e. **Staff Report:**
 - i. Pfothenauer talked about the following:
 - Rich Road Solar Project, in Canton, is moving to 94c.
 - Northside Energy Center is in Article 10, but may be moving to 94c. A deficiency report was issued for this project that the applicant needs to address.
 - Intervenor funds have been issued to 3 stakeholder attorneys; Barton and Loguidice will review the Northside project with attorney input.
 - Hammond land use revisions, the committee continues to make progress, and the first public meeting is scheduled for 7/13.
 - Census, county level data is expected mid- to late August. Redistricting (reapportionment) will soon follow.
 - Septic Grant, \$340k was awarded for septic repair, however, on less water bodies than in the past: SLR (Hammond to Oswegatchie), Raquette River and tributaries, and the Little River in Clifton/Fine. For those who are eligible, the funding will cover half of the costs, up to \$10k.

VI. Other Items

- a. **Correspondence:** Returned letters from municipalities.
- b. **Announcements:**
 - i. [Tug Hill Commission Trainings](#)
 - The New Cannabis Law: Considerations for Towns and Villages
 - a. Tuesday June 1, 2021 from Noon to 1:00 pm Eastern Time
 - Regulating Short-term Rentals
 - a. Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at 7:00 pm Eastern Time
- c. **Next meeting dates:**
 - i. Executive Committee: Thursday, May 27th at 4:15 pm
 - ii. Planning Board: Thursday, June 10th at 7:00 pm

VII. Adjourn

- a. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm (Shatraw/O'Neil).

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric Alan", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Eric Alan, Secretary

Minutes prepared by Dakota Casserly

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