

1 **TOWN OF SUNAPEE**

2 **PLANNING BOARD**

3 **SEPTEMBER 10, 2020**

4 Chairman White called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

5 Chairman White read the Governor's Emergency Order #12 that authorizes the Planning Board to meet
6 electronically: "As Chair of the Planning Board, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the
7 Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency
8 Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.
9 Please note that there is a physical location at 23 Edgemont Rd in the Meeting Room to observe and
10 listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governors Emergency
11 Order. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote. Let's
12 start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also
13 state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the
14 Right-to-Know law."

15 A roll call was taken:

16 **MEMBERS PRESENT BY VIDEO:** Joe Butler; Jeffrey Claus; Richard Osborne; Sue Gottling, Ex-Officio
17 Member

18 **MEMBERS PRESENT IN THE MEETING ROOM:** Michael Marquise, Planner

19 **ALSO PRESENT BY IN THE MEETING ROOM:** June Fichter

20 **MEMBERS ABSENT:** Michael Jewczyn, Vice Chair; Randy Clark; Donna Davis Larrow, Alternate

21 **PARCEL ID: 0133-0025-0000: SITE PLAN REVIEW: ADDING SOLAR POWER PANEL; 63 MAIN STREET;**
22 **LAKE SUNAPEE PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION**

23 Chairman White asked and Mr. Marquise confirmed that the application is an amendment to an existing
24 Site Plan. Mr. Marquise said that the application was filed in advance, fees were paid, notices were
25 posted, and abutters were notified. He believes that the application is complete as an amendment to a
26 Site Plan.

27 Mr. Claus made a motion to accept the application as compete. Mr. Butler seconded the motion. A roll
28 call vote was taken: Mr. Osborne voted yes, Mr. Claus voted yes, Mr. Butler voted yes, Mrs. Gottling
29 voted yes, and Chairman White voted yes. The motion passed unanimously.

30 June Fichter, Executive Director of the Lake Sunapee Protective Association (LSPA), and Geoff Lizotte,
31 LSPA, presented the merits of the case.

32 Mrs. Fichter said that with their renovation project they are trying to be more green so they are using
33 electric heat pumps and are trying to get away from using fossil fuel. They currently do have one solar
34 array on site and to be more economical with their electrical usage they would like to increase their solar

array. They would like to do the arrays in two phases, the first array would be a 24 panel pole array, the second phase would be a smaller array but she is not sure they will ever do phase 2.

Mrs. Fichter said that the first phase solar array will be a tracker panel on a pole that will articulate. The proposed location is against the ledge and the background is trees so it will not be very visually intrusive as it will be tucked in the corner.

Mr. Lizotte explained their current solar array will not come close to producing enough energy to run the heat pumps as the existing solar array is about a 20 kW per hour system. The benefit of a solar tracker that moves is that you can get more solar gain than from a stationary one. They are more expensive but have the ability to collect more of the sun's energy.

Mr. Lizotte said that the phase 2 array would bring them close to generating enough power to fully supply all of the power they need for the building. That array would not be on a tracker because there is not enough room and it is on a slope. The benefit of a pole mounted system like that is that you can turn them to face due south, unlike the stationary array that is currently on site. The second system, which is a 16 panel system, will be a little higher than the current array, however, it will not be as high as the tracker but that one will be set lower. Mr. Lizotte continued that the LSPA had a company do an evaluation as to where to place the solar arrays and those were the two options.

Mrs. Fichter said that the Board should have pictures of what the arrays will look like and they will have a background of trees.

Mr. Butler asked and Mr. Lizotte said that the sizes of the arrays should have been included in the Board's packets. Mr. Claus said that on the 24 series panel it says that the maximum height is 20 ft. Mrs. Fichter said that is when it is straight up but most of the time it will not be. Mr. Lizotte said that it will go straight up and down if there is a snowstorm so that the snow does not accumulate on it but most of the time it will articulate based on where the sun is in the sky. Mr. Butler asked and Mr. Lizotte said that the array will retract if there are damaging wind speeds and he believes at that point the pole will be 12 ft high. Mrs. Fichter said that it is 11 ft high; the width of the array is 21.5 ft. Mr. Claus said that he did not know that solar arrays were so sophisticated that they could sense heavy winds and snow. Mr. Lizotte said that the trackers do those things, which is why they are expensive. However, they also get 30% - 40% more gain; if there was more land space they would want to have more panels but this is best for what they have.

Mr. Butler asked and Mr. Lizotte said that the solar arrays will be placed on small concrete pads and the company did not see any issues with the ledge.

Mr. Butler asked and Mr. Lizotte said that they are requesting permission to put both solar arrays on the site. Mr. Lizotte asked and Mr. Marquise said that the length of approval is up to the Board. Mr. Lizotte said that he thinks that the idea was that if they are able to generate the money or get a donor for the second system in the future then they would be able to install the smaller array in order to try to go as close to 100% as possible. Mrs. Fichter said that it would be ideal to get permission to do both but they are not doing the smaller one right away; it is most important for them to get the tracking ones down below.

Mr. Butler said that he is asking because he would like the smaller one to be described as well. Mr. Lizotte said that the smaller one is a stationary array; he has seen them often on poles, sometimes on the sides of highways. The reason that this would be on a pole is because there is a slope and there is no way to have the array face due south without a pole or there would not be as much gain. There would be a small concrete pad and then the pole would be 9 ft high and the array is set at an angle. Mr. Butler asked and Mr. Lizotte confirmed that the smaller array is stationary and that one will be a little higher than the existing array.

Chairman White said that he did not know that there was an existing array. He asked and Mr. Lizotte confirmed that when they are stationary, they are set at about a 45 degree angle as they try to gain the most in that angle. Chairman White asked and Mr. Lizotte confirmed that the tracking array will be flatter in the summer and at more of an angle in the winter. Chairman White asked if there are any concerns about glare or anything like that in the surrounding area. Mr. Lizotte said that it only goes perfectly perpendicular if there is a snowstorm and it is trying to prevent snow buildup. In the winter it will be at more of an angle, however, they are designed to absorb sun rays so he is not sure that there is a lot of glare. He does not have the full answer on that, however, and would have to ask the company that they are looking at hiring. Chairman White asked and Mr. Lizotte said that there are systems that collect with mirrors but this is not one of them, those are typically set in desert areas. Vice Chair Claus said that he looked it up and found that these types of panels create less glare than window glass. There was further discussion regarding this matter.

Steve Wojcik, an abutter to the property, said that the LSPA members, employees, and visitors use his driveway to access their parking lot. In 2015, when the first array was installed, it was pointed out that the better location would be where this pedestal is going as it is less intrusive and a more ideal location for solar as it faces south and has a more open area for tracking the sun. The array that they are looking to put in is 14 kW, which is more than the two other arrays will generate. If the LSPA were to put two of these pedestals in, it would make the overall installation more efficient and less conspicuous. His overall concern is the smaller array and its height. The current pedestal is not too conspicuous, it is noticeable from the harbor and his property. He is concerned about adding a third solar array there and would like the LSPA to consider for their future use doing two of the tracking pedestals. The 8 kW array frame is no longer being built so it cannot be expanded and it was built with old technology. If those panels were updated now they could get 10 kW using that same space.

Mrs. Fichter said that the LSPA has a deeded right to use the driveway. Also, the current panels are 350 watts and the new panels are 400 watts so the new panels are more efficient. Changing the panels on the fixed array would not be as efficient as creating a fixed post as the current array is not ideally situated it was just the best that they could do at the time. The existing panels still work and will continue to work for the next 5 to 10 years. Mr. Lizotte said that they do not want to throw panels away that are still producing. Mr. Wojcik said that there is a good resale market for the old panels. The harbor area is a vibrant area and the visibility and character of it is important. The LSPA is doing a great job with the property and how they are managing the space. He thinks that with the solar panels there are some considerations that could help with the aesthetics and to help the property not become cluttered with a number of different solar arrays. With the expansion of the building they will be having more people visit the property and will need more room for parking and space on the property is already at a premium. He thinks that if something could be done to consolidate the two smaller arrays with one array at the north

115 end of the property it would be more desirable from an aesthetic standpoint and it would give them
116 more power. These panels and the equipment would not be thrown away as there is a strong resale
117 market. Mr. Lizotte said that 24 panels is the maximum number done on a tracking array. He
118 understands Mr. Wojcik's concerns but the tracking array was not available 5 years ago.

119 Mr. Claus asked if there is a reason that the smaller array is located at that end of the existing panels and
120 not at the end where the other array will be situated. Mr. Lizotte said that there is no room to put it
121 there and the proposed location was the only other place that was identified to have solar gain.
122 Chairman White asked and Mr. Lizotte said that there is a sizable parcel behind them that is wooded and
123 they wanted to ensure that when the array is angled it does not enter the 10 ft setback.

124 Chairman White said that the lower these arrays will be on the hillside, the less visible they will be. Mr.
125 Lizotte said that if they installed an array on the hillside it would be very visible. When they installed the
126 array 5 years ago, they were trying to fit it in the contours of the land, however, that made it not as
127 efficient.

128 Chairman White asked and Mr. Lizotte said that they brought up upgrading the existing panels to the
129 company doing the arrays and it was not recommended. They are only 5 years old and even if there is a
130 good resale market for them, they would be throwing money away.

131 Mr. Butler asked and Chairman White said that both arrays are part of the application so the Board would
132 be voting on them both.

133 Chairman White said that it sounds as though the Board should put a timeframe on the approval as it is
134 always good to have a deadline date as things change over time. Mr. Butler said that the Board should
135 ask the applicant what they feel comfortable with. Mrs. Fichter said that they will probably do the
136 articulating array within a year. She does not see the second array happening anytime soon, maybe
137 within five years. Mr. Lizotte said that he is not sure they want to have it open for five years because
138 something could change and they may need to return before the Board. He thinks that they should ask
139 for a year because they may not get the array built before the spring.

140 Mr. Wojcik said that there are several solar farms in the area that allow people to put solar panels on
141 their property and they receive the credit for the electricity generated. This is a potential for a win / win
142 as the LSPA would get the energy credits for the property and it leaves their space open. Mr. Lizotte said
143 that those spaces are good if people are very limited in space as there are other ways to support solar
144 energy. Mrs. Fichter said that she would not totally go that way because then people still have a rather
145 large bill from Eversource. Mr. Lizotte said that he was pointing out that if people are not able to do
146 anything, it does give them an option, similarly, to purchasing carbon credits.

147 Mr. Osborne said that he thinks that the Site Plan approval should be for the articulating array and
148 leaving it open for two years. Mrs. Fichter and Mr. Lizotte both agreed that this is reasonable. Chairamn
149 White asked and Mr. Marquise said that he thinks that two years is the most amount of time the Board
150 would want to give for an approval. Chairman White said that the Board has granted extensions for some
151 approvals if there have been unexpected delays.

152 Chairman White asked and there were no further questions for the applicant and the applicants were
153 done with their presentation so he closed the hearing to public input.

Chairman White asked what the Board thinks about only approving the tracking array, not the stationary array. Mr. Osborne said that he thinks that in today's construction climate it is possible that the construction take over a year and he would hate to make LSPA return before the Board for something that has been approved due to a delay. Mr. Marquise asked if there is any harm in approving the stationary array as well considering it is on the plan and they could just give two years for the approval. Mr. Osborne said that they are not planning on doing the stationary array for at least five years so it does not make sense. Mr. Marquise said that there could be a possibility that someone could agree to finance the second array and he does not see the harm in approving it because it is on the plan. If they do not do it in two years they just have to come back before the Board. Mr. Butler asked if the technology changes if the LSPA will need to come back before the Board to change the array. Mr. Marquise said that he suspects that they would do what is normally done and he would ask them to complete a Statement of Property Usage and see what kind of changes are made; minor changes may not require them to come back but major changes would require them to. Mr. Butler said that he thinks that two years is reasonable. Chairman White agreed that he thinks that two years, as presented, is reasonable. If they do not get the second array then they will need to return before the Board but if they get funding for it within the two years then it is not a problem.

Mr. Osborne made a motion to approve the Site Plan Review of adding solar panels to 63 Main St, Lake Sunapee Protective Association, Parcel ID: 0133-0025-0000 for the construction of two solar panels with a two-year limitation on the Site Plan approval. Mr. Claus seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Mr. Osborne voted yes, Mr. Claus voted yes, Mr. Butler voted yes, Mrs. Gottling voted yes, and Chairman White voted yes. The motion passed unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS

Vice Chair Jewczyn joined the meeting and apologized for being so late.

MINUTES

Changes to the Planning Board minutes from February 13, 2020: The minutes were continued until the next meeting.

Changes to the Planning Board minutes from March 12, 2020: The minutes were continued until the next meeting.

Changes to the Planning Board minutes from June 11, 2020: The minutes were continued until the next meeting.

Changes to the Planning Board minutes from July 9, 2020: The minutes were continued until the next meeting.

Changes to the Planning Board minutes from August 13, 2020: The minutes were continued until the next meeting.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Marquise said that he would like to have a public meeting for the Site Plan and Subdivision amendments and he thinks it can be done without any issues in the meeting room.

191 Chairman White asked about the Master Plan. Mr. Marquise said that he had a meeting about the Route
192 11 corridor improvements. This project is now being put on as a long-range plan with the Upper Valley
193 Planning Commission and what was discussed is doing some survey questions about it. He suggested the
194 survey run in parallel with Master Plan because it has already been in the Master Plan. The discussions
195 about the Route 11 corridor can also be done with the Master Plan discussions. He hopes that the Board
196 can get into the Master Plan more fully in the beginning of next year.

197 Mr. Marquise was asked and said that he spoke to the Zoning Administrator and she has not sent him any
198 Zoning Amendments. It may be best not to have any so they do not have to hold a public hearing,
199 however, he will let the Board know if he gets any. Mr. Claus said that he does have some suggestions
200 but if the Board thinks that it is best to wait until next year he can. Mr. Marquise said that Mr. Claus is
201 welcome to bring them up and the Board can discuss them and if they are pressing as they have been an
202 issue the Board can do it. If they are not pressing, it would be better to let them go for a year. Chairman
203 White said that it might be worth discussing to see if it is something that can be amended to make things
204 easier for the Zoning Board. Mr. Claus said that there does seem to be one issue that seems pressing but
205 he would like to do his homework because it has to do with building height and he does not understand
206 it. This is something that keeps being brought up and he wants to look into it more as it is confusing and
207 the interpretations are not clear. There was further discussion regarding this matter and having a
208 diagram regarding height.

209 Mr. Butler asked what the Zoning Administrator runs into for issues most often. Mr. Marquise said that
210 she asks him about tree cutting and shoreline issues the most. These are the things in the Ordinance that
211 do not just have numbers associated with them; though they have cleaned up most of them and it has
212 been a better year.

213 Mr. Claus made a motion to adjourn at 8:00 pm. Mrs. Gottling seconded the motion seconded the
214 motion. The motion passed unanimously.

215 Respectfully submitted,

216 Melissa Pollari

217 Planning Board

218 _____

219 Peter White, Chairman

Michael Jewczyn

220 _____

221 Joseph Butler

Randy Clark

222 _____

223 Jeffrey Claus

Richard Osborne

224 _____

225 Donna Davis Larrow, Alternate

Suzanne Gottling, ex-officio member