

# Town of Carlisle

MASSACHUSETTS 01741

Office of

## PLANNING BOARD

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### Minutes April 27, 2020

Minutes 4/9/20 and 4/27/20

Bills

FY21 Budget

Town Caucus

Liaison Reports

**Public Hearing for an Amendment to Site Plan Approval under Sec. 7.6 of the Carlisle Zoning Bylaws for installation of a Large Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Facility within the parking lot of the Carlisle Public School located at 83 School Street, with frontage on Church Street (Map 14, Parcels 28, 29, 30 and 31) [petition of Ameresco, inc.]**

Chair **Madeleine Blake** called this virtual meeting to order at 7:33 pm in the Clark Room of Town Hall. Members **Peter Yelle, Ed Rolfe, Rob Misek, Jason Walsh, Adelaide Grady, Jonathan DeKock** and Planning Administrator **George Mansfield** were present. Rolfe hosted the meeting on a Zoom platform.

Assistant to Planner Gretchen Caywood, Ryan Fahey and Shanthini Sivarhan (both of Ameresco) were also in attendance.

**Public hearing for an Amendment to Site Plan Approval under Sec. 7.6 of the Carlisle Zoning Bylaws for installation of a Large Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Facility within the parking lot of the Carlisle Public School located at 83 School Street, with frontage on Church Street (Map 14, Parcels 28, 29, 30 and 31) [petition of Ameresco, Inc.]**

Chair Blake opened this public hearing and reminded the Board that the original site plan for this project was approved on 9/30/19. Since that approval, Ameresco has made some minor changes to the proposed project, and has therefore filed this application for amendment to the site plan approval. Blake asked Ameresco engineer Ryan Fahey to present the application.

Fahey explained that three overall changes are proposed:

- change to the proposed location of the equipment pad,
- slight relocation of solar array #5, and
- addition of electric vehicle (EV) charging units.

Fahey explained that the equipment pad is now proposed to be located on the island adjacent the carpool parking area within the site, as opposed to within the 40-ft. setback of Church St as previously planned. He explained that the proposed equipment pad has been modified to include a separate metering pad for Eversource's equipment along with a separate pad for the EV distribution enclosure equipment. Fahey added that while the footprint will be about the same, three separate concrete pads are now proposed. The new proposed location will also be more efficient for running conduit.

The second proposed change involves shifting solar array #5 about 2.5 ft. to the south on the site, so that the northernmost footings of this array will be farther from an existing underground drain line.

The third proposed change involves the proposed addition of three dual EV charging units to the western-most parking spaces in the lot. Fahey explained that Eversource will provide the necessary infrastructure, and Ameresco is purchasing and donating the EV charging units.

The application materials included a revised site plan depicting these changes.

Planning Administrator Mansfield confirmed that this hearing was advertised twice and that the applicant had sent the hearing notice to abutters. Mansfield added that he had circulated the application to the pertinent department heads, receiving a reply from the Building Commissioner that he has no issues with the application.

Fahey asked for questions on the application. DeKock informed the Board that all three of the proposed changes were reviewed and approved by the School Committee. Grady asked how the equipment pad would be protected, expressing concerns about the land grade in that area. Ameresco engineer Shanthani Sivarhan said that the area will be regraded and a retaining wall installed. Grady expressed safety concerns and suggested installation of a rail so that the retaining wall would not be a hazard, particularly for children. Sivarhan agreed to address this concern.

With no questions or concerns from the remaining Board members, the Board agreed that the final documentation should include a condition requiring appropriate safety measures in the area of the equipment pad that are acceptable to the Building Commissioner.

No members of the public were present for this hearing.

Rolfe moved that the PB approve this application for amendment to the site plan approval for installation of a large scale ground-mounted solar canopy facility in the Carlisle Public School parking lot subject to all conditions of the original Site Plan Approval dated 9/30/19 with the exception of Condition #3 and adding a condition that the design and installation of the retaining wall adjacent the equipment pad must be approved by the Building Commissioner, to meet all public safety concerns. Grady seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously (7-0) by roll call vote. Misek moved to close this public hearing, Rolfe seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously (7-0) by roll call vote.

All documents associated with this application are available at the Planning Board office.

### **Minutes**

The Planning Board reviewed the draft Minutes from the 3/9/20 meeting, and a few amendments were proposed. Rolfe moved that the PB approve the Minutes as amended, Grady seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously (7-0) by roll call vote.

### **Town Caucus**

Planning Administrator Mansfield updated the Board on plans for the Town Caucus which had been postponed due to Covid 19 restrictions. He explained that the current plan is to hold an outdoor caucus (due to Covid 19 restrictions) on Monday, May 18 with the time to be determined. Mansfield suggested that the three candidates should be in attendance, as acceptance of nomination papers will likely need to be signed that night. Yelle and Misek had offered to attend to nominate the candidates, if needed. Mansfield will email the Board members additional information on this as it becomes known.

### **FY21 Budget**

Chair Blake explained to the Board that FinCom is revisiting the FY21 budget and has asked all departments to determine how a 5% budget cut would affect their department. Blake added that currently this is just an exercise, as the Town would like to avoid doing this.

Planning Administrator Mansfield explained that trimming non-salary items in the PB budget will get us about a 2% budget cut, and that it would be necessary to additionally cut 1 hour of staff time for both staff members to achieve a 5% budget cut.

Misek asked if other department budgets are as lean as that of the PB in terms of non- salary items, and he was told that they are not. Planning Administrator Mansfield pointed out that 100% of PB staff salaries is funded by the Town's general budget. It was noted that several departments have other funding sources for staff salaries derived from fees - sources that PBs are not allowed to use, per State statute.

Chair Blake said that one non-salary item she is recommending be cut is the GIS subscription renewals, and that while the licenses are being renewed for one year under the current FY20 budget, she envisions a different way of handling GIS going forward.

**Town Hall reopening protocol**

The Board discussed approaches to handling virtual meetings continued into the future, if necessary, including the possibility of some board members participating remotely to help accommodate ongoing social distancing requirements.

Grady said that she has heard from several sources that often the remote meetings are seeing more participation than they have seen in the past, perhaps offering the opportunity for more of a balance of opinions. DeKock said that with many Town boards in this situation, he would like to see a general decision from the Town concerning remote meetings and licensing of the necessary software applications.

**Liaison Reports**

Rolfe reported that the Historical Commission (CHC) was approached by the Carlisle Conservation Foundation (CCF) about a farm for sale in Carlisle, and that the Department of Conservation and Recreation wants to put a conservation restriction (CR) on the property, with the State willing to contribute financially. Rolfe said that the property owner is interested in this proposal, and that the "ask" is for some CPA historic funds to put an historic restriction on the buildings, also making them part of the Historic District. He said the process is in the works, and the property owners have a potential buyer interested in this approach.

At 8:36 pm, Rolfe moved and Misek seconded the adjournment of the PB meeting, and the motion was approved unanimously (7-0) by role call vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gretchen Caywood  
Assistant to Planner  
Carlisle Planning Board