

2 **TOWN OF HOPKINTON**
4 **PLANNING BOARD**

6 **Wednesday, June 7, 2017**

7 **7:00 P.M.**

8 **Hopkinton Town Hall**

9 **One Town House Road, Hopkinton, Rhode Island 02833**

10 **CALL TO ORDER:**

11 The June 7, 2017 meeting of the Hopkinton Planning Board was called to order at 7:03 P.M.
12 by Al DiOrio.

14 **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

15 Al DiOrio, Amy Williams, Frank Sardone, and Tom Holberton were present.

16 Also present were: John Pennypacker, Conservation Commission, James Lamphere, Town
18 Planner; Kevin McAllister, Town Solicitor; and Sean Henry, Planning Board Clerk.

20 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

21 Ms. WILLIAMS MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL 12, 2017 MEETING MINUTES.

22 MR. SARDONE SECONDED THE MOTION

23 MR. DIORIO, MS. WILLIAMS, MR. SARDONE, AND MR. HOLBERTON APPROVED.

24 Ms. WILLIAMS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 3, 2017 MEETING MINUTES.

25 MR. SARDONE SECONDED THE MOTION.

26 MR. DIORIO, MS. WILLIAMS, MR. SARDONE, AND MR. HOLBERTON APPROVED

28 **OLD BUSINESS:**

29 Development Plan Review – Photovoltaic Solar Energy System – AP 11 Lot 26 –
30 722 Main Street – Econox Renewables, applicant.

31 Scott Milnes and Andrew Vardakis were present for the applicant. They explained that the
32 Planning Board’s concerns from the previous month, fencing and screening for the solar
33 array, had been addressed. Additional vegetative plantings were extended along the sides
34 of the array to address the screening concerns. The fencing for the project was changed to a
35 farm fence that was approved by the company’s insurance provider.

36 Questions from the Planning Board:

37 Ms. Williams: Thank you for bringing the pictures of the other solar sites. Can you detail
38 where the vegetation was added?

39 Mr. Milnes: It was extended along the southern side of fenced area.

40 Ms. Williams: I have a concern that deer like the arborvitae.

2 Mr. Milnes: We haven't encountered any issues with that yet.

Mr. Sardone: Is there any noise from the array?

4 Mr. Milnes: There are seven inverters spread throughout the array that would produce 50 decibels at three meters distance. There are seven inverters spread throughout the site.

6 Mr. Sardone: If there were a compliant of noise from the project after it was installed, what would you do?

8 Mr. Milnes: We haven't had any noise issues come up yet. You

Mr. DiOrio: For my benefit and for the audience, tell me what 50 decibels is like.

10 Mr. Milnes: I don't think I can answer that, I'm not sure.

12 Mr. DiOrio: [To Mr. Lamphere] Are obtaining all of the certificates and licenses part of the application process? Do I have to ask this of every applicant?

Mr. Lamphere: No, they've been screened as part of the application.

14 Mr. DiOrio: I won't make an issue of it, but I don't see the landscaping engineer's stamp on the plans. I just want to be clear that the Town does not endorse anything on these plans that your design professional designed that shouldn't be there.

16 Mr. Lamphere: What is the height of the new fence?

18 Mr. Vardakis: Six feet.

20 Mr. Bedoya joined the Planning Board.

22 Questions from the public:

24 Andrea Panciera: I'd like to ask the Planning Board that the applicant start with a brief description of their project for the audience. I haven't seen this before tonight, and I only know what is on the agenda.

26 Mr. DiOrio: I apologize for that, that was an omission on my part. This application was before the Board last month.

30 Mr. Milnes described the size and acreage of the property, being a 250kW project with a fenced in area of approximately one acre.

32 Ms. Panciera: Is the power generated on the site for the benefit of the farm or for the grid?

34 Mr. Milnes: The project feeds into the grid and the site owner is compensated at 22.75 cents per kilowatt hour from National Grid, at a term length of 20 years.

36 Ms. Panciera: Is this type of development allowed on any farmland, or only on those farms that have not sold their development rights?

Mr. Milnes: Only on those that have not sold their rights.

38 How many panels are there in total?

40 Mr. Milnes: There are 714 modules on site. The typical physical footprint for the project is about 30,000 square feet.

Ms. Panciera: What is the average revenue stream per year?

42 Mr. Milnes: The farm owner profits from the lease agreement, and the company profits from the power generation. The commercial solar tax rate is defined by the State of Rhode Island.

44 Ms Panciera: Who pays the taxes on the property?

2 Mr. Milnes: The property owner doesn't pay any additional taxes. The tangible tax defined
by the state is paid by the owner of the system.

4 Mr. Reynolds: My wife and I have lived in Hopkinton our whole lives. The solar projects are
near my home, so we're trying to familiarize ourselves with it. I have a few concerns, one
6 being a lack of maintenance with ground fall issue that have started fires.

8 Mr. Milnes: The systems are monitored online continuously and we will deploy to the site if
necessary if there were any ground fall issues. We haven't had any ground fall issues yet,
but with seven inverters that shouldn't be a problem. The systems are maintained annually
10 and as needed.

Mr. Reynolds: Are there any contaminants from the system that get into the air or soil?

12 Mr. Milnes: The panels are made from glass and silica, I haven't heard of that being an issue
before. We plan to do a low maintenance grass field.

14 Mr. Reynolds: Can this site be expanded at a later date?

Mr. Milnes: No

16 Mr. Holberton: That's not true. Depending on the farm size they can come back to the Board
and expand it.

18 Mr. Reynolds: Will the Town benefit from this project?

Mr. Milnes: The town will get a tangible tax on the system.

20 Mr. Reynolds: Are the emergency responders ok with this site? Are there complications
with them needing to shut down the system?

22 Mr. Milnes: There will be a load break pole on site. Each one of these systems is able to
come off the grid, and the switch to shut off the entire array is labeled for the fire
24 department. We'll go to the site and go over everything with them, and we have to submit
plans to the fire marshal.

26 Mr. Reynolds: I was concerned when I saw the panels at the project on Bank Street are
mounted directly to the ground.

28 Mr. Milnes: These panels are as low as three feet off the ground.

30 Mr. Lamphere: I saw that the state has a fire code requirement of a 50 foot hammerhead
outside of the fence for the trucks to turn around.

32 Mr. Milnes: We've already spoken to the fire marshal, Ray Bader. The jurisdiction can
override the state law. All of our plans have to go to the fire marshal first.

34 Board members discussed being consistent across all applications with regards to fencing.
They agreed that chain link fence would be fine, and that vinyl inserts would not be
36 encouraged. Mr. Sardone suggested the use of deer-resistant arborvitae, and the applicants
agreed.

38 Mr. Pennypacker: Does the maintenance plan include the maintenance of the screening and
40 vegetation, as well as the solar system itself?

Mr. Milnes: We can add maintaining the screening buffer to the maintenance plan.

42

44 MS. WILLIAMS MOVED THAT THE PLANNING BOARD, MAKING POSITIVE FINDINGS OF FACT WITH
REGARD TO CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE
OF THE TOWN, THAT THE PROJECT WILL NOT INJURE THE USE OF THE PROPERTY OR THE

2 SURROUNDING AREA, THERE ARE NO SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS FOR THE
4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AS SHOWN, THE DEVELOPMENT WILL HAVE ADEQUATE AND
6 PERMANENT LEGAL ACCESS TO A PUBLIC STREET, APPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW
8 APPLICATION, CONDITIONAL TO THE APPLICANT UTILIZING A 6' CHAIN LINK FENCE, AND
INCLUDING MAINTENANCE OF THE SCREENING BUFFER AS PART OF THE OVERALL SYSTEM
MAINTENANCE PLAN, AND ADHERENCE TO ALL STATE AND LOCAL ZONING ORDINANCES.

8 MR. SARDONE SECONDED THE MOTION.

10 MR. DIORIO, MS. WILLIAMS, MR. SARDONE, AND MR. BEDOYA APPROVED.

MR. HOLBERTON OPPOSED THE MOTION.

12

14 Mr. Holberton explained that, after doing extensive research on the subject after the last
16 meeting, he opposed the motion because the amendments to the Farm Viability Ordinance
18 created the unintended consequences of allowing manufacturing uses in residentially-zoned
20 land. He believes that the Farm Viability Ordinance needs to be revisited by the Town
Council to prevent too many very small solar projects from inundating the town's
residential land.

20

22 Development Plan Review – Photovoltaic Solar Energy System – AP 7, Lot 48 –
24 34 Kenyon Lane – Econox Renewables, applicant.

24

26 Mr. Milnes and Mr. Vardakis presented for this project as well. They provided brief
28 overview of the project. It is a 250kW ground-mounted solar array, with a fenced area of
30 approximately one acre. The project is located on a farm, and is allowed via the Farm
Viability Ordinance. The concern the Planning Board had for this site was fencing, which
they've addressed in a similar manner to the other project, with a chain link fence.

32 Questions from the Planning Board:

34 Mr. DiOrio: I had a question on your plans. You should a wooded area between the
36 interstate highway and the property, but also that you didn't verify that it actually exists.
Does that wooded area actually exist?

Mr. Marsh: I'm the owner of the property. Yes, that area is vegetated and has trees.

38 Mr. Holberton: If I'm reading the Farm Viability Ordinance correctly, you could have made
the project up to three acres. Is there any reason you didn't make it bigger?

40 Mr. Milnes: The program we're in right now is medium-scale commercial. If that changes in
the future we could come back to the Board.

42

Questions from the public:

44

Ms. Panciera: Could you explain the commercial structure to me?

2 Mr. Milnes: Basically, as the project gets bigger, the rate tariffs get lower. A medium-scale project was the fastest way for us to get into the program.

4 Ms. Capalbo: Is there a decommissioning bond required for this project?

Mr. Milnes: We have a decommissioning plan.

6 Mr. Lamphere: The ordinance says that the applicant shall be required to have a financial surety. It has to cover the complete removal of the system, but can't exceed 125% of the
8 estimated cost of removal. Something like that has to be done, and somebody has to monitor it over time. The Board can make that conditional to being worked out between my office
10 and the applicant.

Ms. Williams: We did the last project requiring it adhere to all local ordinances, so that
12 would be covered.

14

MS. WILLIAMS MOVED THAT THE PLANNING BOARD, MAKING POSITIVE FINDINGS OF FACT WITH
16 REGARD TO CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE OF THE TOWN, THAT THE PROJECT WILL NOT INJURE THE USE OF THE PROPERTY OR THE
18 SURROUNDING AREA, THERE ARE NO SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AS SHOWN, THE DEVELOPMENT WILL HAVE ADEQUATE AND
20 PERMANENT LEGAL ACCESS TO A PUBLIC STREET, APPROVE THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW APPLICATION, CONDITIONAL TO THE APPLICANT REVIEWING THE FARM VIABILITY ORDINANCE
22 WITH THE TOWN PLANNER, AND ADHERENCE TO ALL STATE AND LOCAL ZONING ORDINANCES.

24 MR. SARDONE SECONDED THE MOTION.

MR. DIORIO, MS. WILLIAMS, MR. SARDONE, AND MR. BEDOYA APPROVED.

26 MR. HOLBERTON OPPOSED THE MOTION.

28

NEW BUSINESS:

30 Development Plan Review – **Pre-Application** – Photovoltaic Solar Energy System –
32 AP 15 Lot 5 – 916 Main Street– Econox Renewables, applicant.

34 Mr. Milnes and Mr. Vardakis presented for this development. They described the project as a
36 250kW project occupying approximately one acre of fenced area. The parcel is large and has wetlands that would need to be avoided, but also has an existing access point. The area where
38 the project would be slopes north to south. Approximately three acres of trees would need to be cleared to prevent shading over the panels, which requires a DEM permit. The trees inside
40 the fenced would need to be stumped, but not the trees cleared outside of the fence. The parcel is zoned Commercial, and solar projects are allowed by right in that zone.

42

Questions from the Planning Board:

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Ms. Williams: You would have to follow the Commercial zone setbacks, correct?

2 Mr. Milnes: That is correct.

Ms. Williams: You have a leasing agreement with the owner of the property?

4 Mr. Milnes: Yes.

6 Mr. DiOrio: You haven't attested to any of the data in these plans, so that would have to be clarified as you go through this process. What about the part of the zoning ordinance that doesn't allow things within 100 feet of a residential zone line?

8 Mr. Lamphere: After a discussion with the zoning officer and our solicitors, Chapter 246 would supersede the zoning ordinance requirement because it was dedicated specifically to solar projects. Within that ordinance, it stated setbacks for solar projects, which are 60 feet in the front, 40 feet in the back, and 25 feet on the side. The applicant is giving more than the minimum required on the side, which is where the panels are closest. We talked about this issue at length because we knew it would be important going forward for these projects.

12 Mr. McAllister: I absolutely concur with that assessment of the setbacks for this project.

14 Mr. Pennypacker: The plan proposes a customer-owned transformer. Who supplies the equipment?

16 Mr. Milnes: National Grid puts a pole on the property, and anything beyond that is customer-owned.

18 Mr. Pennypacker: Was there a reason you decided to place the project on this area of the property?

20 Mr. Milnes: I believe the owner wants to do something else with the other side of the property.

22

24 There were no questions from the public:

26

Ms. Capalbo: Is the hammerhead for the fire trucks required for this project as well?

28 Mr. Milnes: We're still reviewing the plans with the fire marshal. He may require it, and we'll do whatever he requires.

30 Mr. Husband: The project requires three acres to be cut?

32 Mr. Milnes: The higher the tree, the further back we have to cut. We can do less on the south side because of the slope.

Mr. Husband: How close are you to the closest residence?

34 Mr. Vardakis: Based on the plans, over 100 feet away.

36 Mr. Husband: Have you spoken with a biologist about any effects this project will have on the wetlands?

38 Mr. Vardakis: We're basing these plans on previous work that's been done out there. As we go forward, we'll have our scientists out to determine what's going on out there. The most common thing we've seen is bats, which means the state requires we can't cut during from July to August.

Mr. Reynolds: Are there any plans to develop further back on the property?

42 Mr. Milnes: We don't have any plans to do that, but that's up to the property owners. They have the right to develop their property according to the zoning ordinance.

44 Mr. DiOrio: With regards to the closest residence, I don't see it on the plan. The Board can't discuss screening without knowing what's there.

2 Mr. Milnes: We're going to leave a buffer of trees for screening.

Mr. DiOrio: That issue is going to come up again.

4 Ms. Panciera: Why do we have the same kind of project on Commercial zones as on farms that have different sets of standards for setbacks?

6 Mr. DiOrio: These projects are a little different. The previous projects you've seen tonight the Board has already seen before and are in a more final form. This is a pre-application meeting, 8 so many of these things would be ironed out by the next time they appear here. As for the differing standards, I think the Town Council should be made aware of that. The Planning Board isn't the place to work that out.

10 Ms. Capalbo: One of the things I keep hearing about is that the projects will not be seen through the buffer. They will be seen in the winter when the leaves fall off the trees.

12 Mr. Sardone: If there were a noise compliant after it's built, what will you do?

14 Mr. Milnes: The micro-inverters are only producing 50 decibels. I don't think there's anything in the ordinance that covers noise.

16 Mr. Lamphere: Are you aware of any devices that can attenuate the noise?

18 Mr. Milnes: I'm not aware of that. I would recommend the Town look at other towns' ordinances and see how noise is being evaluated elsewhere.

20 The Planning Board members agreed that the project should re-appear before the Board under Development Plan Review to work out the remaining details, which include adding the structures to the plans, and other concerns raised throughout the three projects presented by Econox.

24

26 THE PLANNING BOARD DOES NOT VOTE ON A PRE-APPLICATION.

28

30 Development Plan Review – **Pre-Application** – Photovoltaic Solar Energy System – AP 3 Lot 5 – 16 Tomaquag Road– Southern Sky Renewable Energy RI, LLC, applicant.

32 Mr. Milnes presented on behalf of Southern Sky Renewables. Also presenting was Audie Osgood, of Diprete Engineering in Cranston, RI. He described the project as a 19 acre RFR-80 34 zoned parcel, primarily wooded, with a home and several out buildings on the property. Wetlands onsite have also been shown on the plans. There is an existing access point on the property that is suitable for the project, and which will be reviewed with the fire marshal. 36 Tree clearing is limited to approximately 2500 square feet. Vegetative screening has been proposed in the form of juniper and red cedars. 38

40

Questions from the Planning Board:

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Mr. Sardone: How many transformers are on the site?

44

Mr. Osgood: There will be one 300kW transformer.

Mr. Sardone: How much noise does it generate?

2 Mr. Milnes: We'll need to get an answer for that.
Mr. Osgood: Anecdotal evidence is that its around 60 decibels, which is like a quiet superb.
4 We can find out more information about the transformer.
Mr. Sardone: There is a kennel up the road that I can hear from my house three miles away.
6 Mr. DiOrio: As a point of clarification of the plan, is the owner of Lot 44 different from this parcel?
8 Mr. Osgood: Yes, that's a different owner.
Mr. DiOrio: What's going on with the screening on the property line there?
10 Mr. Osgood: The array is 45' away and the screening is 35' away.
Mr. DiOrio: Topographically, there might be 8-10' of vertical relief. The neighboring property
12 owner could be looking out onto the arrays.
Mr. Sardone: Has he been notified of this?
14 Mr. Osgood: All the abutters were provided notice as part of Development Plan Review.
Mr. Pennypacker: I have two questions on the operations and maintenance plan. I would feel
16 comfortable if the plan said it followed town ordinances. It seems like the way it's written,
some things can be ignored as part of the maintenance plan, and I'm thinking about the
18 screening. The Town has a different interest than how much power it generates.

20 Questions from the Public:

22 Mr. Husband: I can hear people from across Wyoming Pond where I live. My feeling is that
the sound will carry across a field in the same way. And they'll be visible from the road on
24 this project.
Mr. DiOrio: This plan differs from the others due to its visibility from the road. I like that it
26 takes advantage of the open field, and doesn't require excessive clear cutting. Do we try to
screen these from public view?
28 Mr. Milnes: The array can be screened to 8' and over time it will fill in. Softening the visibility
with screening is beneficial.
30 Mr. DiOrio: I don't think one row of screening will completely screen anything. It's not that I
personally find solar systems offensive, but I have to weigh the concerns of the residents as
32 well.
Ms. Panciera: I am an abutting property owner and was notified of this, but I haven't actually
34 seen the plans.

36 Mr. DiOrio invited the audience to view the plans the applicants had on display at the
meeting.
38

Ms. Panciera: I'm still not clear on where our property line. We have an issue that unresolved
40 with a previous survey that had been done.
Mr. DiOrio: I'm happy to direct the applicant to expand the radius map to show the
42 neighboring property lines, but the Planning Board is not going to adjudicate a boundary line
dispute.
44 Ms. Panciera: I support alternative energy sources, and I support farms and farmers that have
been hit hard. We have already had projects on our boundary lines that have impacted our

2 quality of life, the RV campground and the kennel up the road. I would like to ask the
3 Planning Board to ensure this project is not a burden to neighboring property owners.

4 Mr. Bedoya: I like that these projects can show what Hopkinton has to offer. I understand that
5 we want to preserve our rural identity, but I think the benefits of this project outweigh any
6 potential drawbacks due to sight or sound.

7 Mr. Milnes: It might benefit the Planning Board to visit one of our other solar projects and
8 take a look for themselves.

9 Mr. DiOrio: Are you seeking permits for this project?

10 Mr. Osgood: We don't require any permits from DEM for this project.

12 The Planning Board discussed the possibility of a site visit to determine how much noise these
13 facilities generate. They agreed that it was a good idea, but the application could not
14 reasonably be held back based on a potential future visit. They reached a consensus that the
15 project did not need any further review from the Board and could be approved conditionally
16 by the administrative officer.

18 MS. WILLIAMS MOVED THAT THE PLANNING BOARD, MAKING POSITIVE FINDINGS OF FACT WITH
19 REGARD TO CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE
20 OF THE TOWN, THAT THE PROJECT WILL NOT INJURE THE USE OF THE PROPERTY OR THE
21 SURROUNDING AREA, THERE ARE NO SIGNIFICANT NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS FOR THE
22 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AS SHOWN, THE DEVELOPMENT WILL HAVE ADEQUATE AND
23 PERMANENT LEGAL ACCESS TO A PUBLIC STREET, REMAND FINAL APPROVAL TO THE
24 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, SUBJECT TO THE APPLICANT FOLLOWING ALL FEDERAL, STATE, AND
25 LOCAL REGULATIONS, INCLUDING THE FARM VIABILITY ORDINANCE CHAPTER 247.

26 MR. SARDONE SECONDED THE MOTION.

28 MR. DIORIO, MS. WILLIAMS, MR. SARDONE, AND MR. BEDOYA APPROVED.

29 MR. HOLBERTON OPPOSED THE MOTION.

30

32 Development Plan Review – **Pre-Application** – Photovoltaic Solar Energy System –
33 AP 29 Lot 10 – Arcadia Road – Southern Sky Renewable Energy RI, LLC, applicant.

34

36 Mr. Milnes and Mr. Osgood presented the Arcadia Road project to the Planning Board. The
37 project is 250kW and occupies about one acre of fenced area. The applicant has been in contact
38 with the fire marshal. Clearing of trees will be limited, they'll be thinned but not clear cut. The
39 stumps will remain. We propose that the west side of the property be screened, which was
40 prepared by a licensed landscape architect. There will be a driveway constructed for access,
41 which will add very little traffic.

42

43 Questions from the Planning Board:

44

46 Mr. Holberton: The Farm Viability Ordinance says that it requires 15 acres of land. This
application is for only 10.7. Is it a multiple-parcel farm?

2 Mr. Milnes: There are two parcels to the north with the same owner, it's part of a larger farm that has certification.

4 Ms. Williams: That is a lot of trees being removed.

6 Mr. Osgood: We're only removing the taller trees, the area is being thinned, not clear cut. We will also add screening to it as well.

8 Mr. DiOrio: I think there is an issue with the screening. Arcadia Road is heavily travelled, and 17 bushes will not adequately replace the third of an acre being cleared.

10 Mr. Milnes: We're going to be the lower vegetation in place. The vegetation can be left up to 12' high.

Mr. Sardone: What is the setback to the array?

12 Mr. Osgood: It is 60' from the array to the property line.

14 Mr. Sardone: Could the project be shifted 10-20 feet back from the road? A thicker buffer will better screen the project.

Mr. Milnes: It could be. There are no wetlands over there.

16 Mr. Osgood: We need 100' on the west side, so if we slide over we still need to thin everything over there.

18 Mr. DiOrio: I suggest staggering a double line of plantings.

Mr. Milnes: We can do that.

20 Mr. Pennypacker: I have the same concern I had with the previous projects, with regards to the maintenance plan covering the screening and fencing as well as the system.

22

There were no questions from the public.

24

The Planning Board discussed the travel of the application as required by Development Plan Review.

26

28 MS. WILLIAMS MOVED THAT THE PLANNING BOARD, MAKING POSITIVE FINDINGS OF FACT WITH
30 REGARD TO CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE
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LOCAL REGULATIONS, INCLUDING THE FARM VIABILITY ORDINANCE CHAPTER 247.

36

MR. SARDONE SECONDED THE MOTION.

38

MR. DIORIO, MS. WILLIAMS, MR. SARDONE, AND MR. BEDOYA APPROVED.

MR. HOLBERTON OPPOSED THE MOTION.

40

42 At this time, Mr. DiOrio recused himself from the meeting.

44

2 Development Plan Review – **Pre-Application** – Photovoltaic Solar Energy System –
4 AP 4 Lot 13 – Gray Lane – Hopkinton Industrial Park, LLC, applicant

6 Attorney George Comolli presented for the applicant, Hopkinton Industrial Park, LLC. The
8 property is zoned Commercial, spanning 27 acres of land across the street from Hopkinton
10 Industrial Park. The property is an existing field, therefore leveling is needed, but no
clearing will be required. The size of the array proposed to occupy one third of the property,
and is not visible from Route 3 or Interstate 95.

12 Also presenting was the project engineer, Charles Cravassik. He explained that the project is
14 a planned 1.57 MW array, which will be screened to the north and east by existing
vegetation. The project would not be screened from the south, on Gray Lane. A fire lane has
16 been proposed and would need to be approved by the fire marshal.

18 Questions from the Planning Board:

20 Ms. Williams: This is considered a large-scale project, unlike the others here tonight.

22 Mr. Comolli: That is correct. This will go through the full review process and doesn't involve
the use of residential land. The power from this system will primarily power the industrial
park across the street.

24 Mr. Holberton: On this project, the property owner will be owning the system. Your clients
intend to maintain and operate this themselves?

26 Mr. Comolli: We brought in the professionals to design and construct it, we have the resources
to bond, maintain, and operate it from there.

28 Mr. Cravassik: We will present the owners with a maintenance agreement to maintain their
system for the next 20 years.

30 Mr. Holberton: If there is excess power, will it go to the grid?

Mr. Cravassik: Yes.

32 Mr. Bedoya: Who would be responsible for decommissioning the site?

Mr. Comolli: Hopkinton Industrial Park would be responsible for the decommissioning, and
we would have a bond in place.

34 Ms. Williams: As part of the commercial photovoltaic ordinance, it says the topsoil needs to
be maintained as much as possible.

36 Mr. Lamphere: It says that the proposed system shall be designed so that the soil removal is
limited and the ground contour is preserved as much as possible.

38 Mr. Comolli: There will be topsoil removed as part of the leveling of the property, but we
believe it is consistent with the ordinance.

40 Mr. Pennypacker: The application says that it would produce no noise, and that you can hear
the transformer humming. It seems to be inconsistent.

42 Mr. Cravassik: If you were inside the system, you would be able to hear it. At the street, you
wouldn't be able to hear it.

44

2 Questions from the public:

4 Ms. Capalbo: Are the cables and wires going to be underground?

6 Mr. Cravassik: National Grid might require up to two poles, other than that it will be underground.

8 Ms. Panciera: It sounds like the site visit will be imperative to make a decision on the noise.

10 Mr. Quinlan: Over a year ago, we made a conscious decision to create a solar system that will accommodate Hopkinton Industrial Park. This property is located over the largest source of water in Rhode Island. The only noise problem for that area is Route 95. The corn that has been grown there is more intrusive than solar will be, and the basin can be protected by putting solar power there. The tenants want this array, so we won't be screening the front of array. We intend for the project to be a showpiece, and we intend to build it out in the future.

14 The Planning Board discussed the travel of the application through the Development Plan Review process. Ms. Williams believed that the application lacked a decommissioning and maintenance plan, and that it should come back before the Board with those details filled in. Mr. Comolli offered to submit a narrative to the Planning Department that would include the missing information.

20 THE PLANNING BOARD DOES NOT VOTE FOR A PRE-APPLICATION.

22 SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

24 None

26 PLANNER'S REPORT:

28 None

30 CORRESPONDENCE AND UPDATES:

32 None

34 PUBLIC COMMENT:

36 DATE OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING: July 5, 2017

38 ADJOURNMENT:

MR. SARDONE MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING

40 MR. BEDOYA SECONDED THE MOTION

ALL MEMBERS APPROVE. MOTION PASSES.

42 The meeting adjourned at 10:15.

44 Attest: _____

Sean Henry, Planning Board Clerk