

**Walpole Planning Board Minutes**  
**March 12, 2024**  
**Town Hall**  
**7 pm**

**Roll Call:** Present Board Members Chair Jeff Miller, Vice-Chair Dennis Marcom, Clerk Jason Perron, Jeff Harrington, Joanna Andros, Select Board Representative Steve Dalessio. Alternates Travis Adams and Bill Carmody. Absent Board Member Trevor MacLachlan.

**Call to order:** Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. He asked Mr. Adams if he would sit in for Mr. MacLachlan. He agreed.

**Minutes** of February 2024 and Minutes of Joint Workshop meeting with Zoning Board of Adjustment: Mr. Perron made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes and the workshop minutes as printed. Mr. Harrington seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**New Business:**

**Solar Array on 20 acres at 239 Old Keene Road and mostly 240 Wentworth Road, Tax Map 5 in rural/agricultural district. Property owned by Sheldon Sawyer. Samantha Valone, representing Lodestar Energy based in Avon, CT and Manhattan, NY, will present a basic concepts description of the project.**

A map of the surrounding area with a blue lake-like feature that was where the solar array was to go was distributed prior to the start of the meeting.

Ms. Valone said this was just a preliminary meeting to an eventual final request for a 5 mega watt solar installation at peak times. She is a solar development associate for Lodestar Energy. She said Lodestar has installed similar solar arrays in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York State and a few in New Hampshire communities. She mentioned Chichester as one town in New Hampshire. Currently the company is filling out the applications it needs for the project and doing surveys of storm water and the property. The surveys will provide information on what kinds of equipment Lodestar will need for this project and how to go about building this installation. Equipment will be ordered and delivered to the site. Ms. Valone said it usually takes four (4) to five (5) months to build an installation of this size. A seven-foot chain link fence would surround the installation. She thinks the company should be ready to submit a site-plan application by July.

Work on the project will start on property on Old Keene Road where six poles will be installed. These will be for overhead interconnection lines that would eventually go underground from the poles on Old Keene Road to the solar installation. Mill Road is a connector road that goes west to east from Old Keene Road to Wentworth Road and somewhere on that road is entrance to a 15-foot wide gravel vehicle maintenance road that goes to the installation site. After the installation is up and running the only maintenance needed is mowing under the panels. Some one asked about snow on the panels and the answer was it just slides off like it would on a metal roof. Mr. Miller said you will not be able to see the installation from Old Keene Road.

Installations usually last for 20 years or more and then are decommissioned. Lodestar will follow the requirements for decommissioning it, Ms. Valone said. The installation and decommissioning requirements are all spelled out in Section VIII of the Walpole Site Plan Regulations

Walpole has its own Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire organization through which townspeople can get electric power at a community rate. Its chair, Paul Looney, was at Tuesday's meeting and said that folks in Walpole get their power from Liberty Utilities and Liberty buys from a broker. He asked Ms. Valone if she had contacted Liberty yet. She said "no" but it was one of her things on the list of things she had to do. Ms. Valone said that this project can offer the Town energy credit of any town-owned Liberty electric accounts.

This was the first meeting about the process of building the solar array on Wentworth Road. For more information on the project, look for notices of upcoming meetings beginning in the June.

## **Old Business**

**Public Hearing for site plan continued from February. Alyson's Orchard: Adam Naeck site-plan application for a post-and-beam addition to the farm store. Tax Map 4, Lot 44, 57 Alyson's Lane, Commercial/Industrial District.**

Mr. Naeck had a picture of the exterior of the current 400 square-foot farm store. It is attached to a roughly 1,400 square-foot apartment. The store is the main operation for Alyson's farming retail space. Regularly there is one register inside and about a half dozen shelves display homemade products such as jellies, jams and chutneys and a couple of coolers have frozen chicken pot pies and dessert pies for sale. Currently there is no space inside the store for any of the fruits and vegetables the farm grows on a yearly basis. All are displayed outside. This is not ideal, Mr. Naeck said, because it make them subject to the weather, pests and potential theft. During its peak season, two outdoor registers are used outdoors.

The proposed farm store addition is 40 feet wide and 56 feet long. It is a two-story timber frame building and will be assembled by Ward Timber in Alstead. The addition will directly abut the current farm store. The 2250 square foot layout will be mainly used for indoor sales of our crops and farm retail space. There is also a 1000 foot loft which will be used for storage, more retail space if needed and customer seating. The timeline for constructing this building will be either this summer or next summer.

There will be two main entrances, one directly from the current store into the new store and an outdoor main entrance facing east towards the main event center. Parking will remain as it is. There will be an emergency exit only door on the west wall as well as an emergency exit from the loft upstairs to a staircase leading out, which is already found on the current store building. Current lighting will also be used as well as entry way lights found at each entrance.

In the future the old store may be used as a bakery where items like their popular cinnamon donuts will be made as well as other baked good.

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Mr. Marcom made a motion to approve the site plan. Mr. Harrington seconded the motion and the motion carried.

### **Workshop**

Mr. Miller said he called Southwest Region Planning Commission and talked to senior planner Todd Horner who agreed to meet with the joint boards in the next couple of months. However, since the initial telephone conversation was made, Mr. Horner is now going to become the executive director of the organization so he pushed the workshop meeting until June.

Mr. Miller was also optimistic that the Conservation Commission was almost finished going over a list of conservation property in the Natural Features section of the Master Plan. So that project could be wrapped up soon.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Perron made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Harrington seconded the motion and the motion carried. It was 7:45 pm.

**These minutes are unapproved and will be reviewed at the March 12, 2024 regular meeting for corrections, omission and additions.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Marilou Blaine  
WPB Recording Secretary

cc: WPB, ZBA, Town Offices, The Walpolean.  
Posted: Inside the Town Offices, on the bulletin board outside the Post Office,  
[www.walpolenh.us](http://www.walpolenh.us)

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