

Planning Board Meeting Minutes
January 3, 2024

Present: John Smith, Don Clay

Zoom: Bill Fontaine, and Planning Board Alternate Patricia Rydlak

Staff Members: Planning Director Randy Benson, Adm. Asst. Jayne Garney

Not Present: Chair Ross Lemansky and Member Jean Vincent

Member Don Clay made a motion for Vice-Chair John Smith to act as Chair for the meeting because Chair Ross Lemansky is absent. Member Bill Fontaine seconded the motion.

Roll call: Don Clay-aye, Bill Fontaine-aye, John Smith-aye. Motion approved.

7:00 p.m. Public Hearing- Edwards Services, Inc. Sign Special Permit-16
Sturbridge Road (Route 20)

John Smith read the public hearing notice.

Engineer Calisto Bertin stated the sign special permit proposed is for a 36 square foot illuminated free-standing sign. He stated up to a 32 square foot free-standing sign is permitted.

The sign is proposed to be used for the store name and gas price advertising.

Planning Director Randy Benson stated two Board Members are absent, therefore Patsy Rydlak is allowed to review and vote on all the Special Permit applications as the Alternate.

Member Don Clay made a motion to close the public hearing. Member Bill Fontaine seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Don Clay-aye, Bill Fontaine-aye, Patsy Rydlak-aye, John Smith-aye. Motion approved.

Member Don Clay made a motion to approve the Edwards Services, Inc. Sign Special Permit. Member Patsy Rydlak seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Don Clay-aye, Patsy Rydlak-aye, Bill Fontaine-aye, John Smith-aye. Motion approved.

7:05 p.m. Public Hearing (Continued)-Edwards Services, Inc. Site Plan Application-16 Sturbridge Road (Route 20)

Engineer Calisto Bertin stated the proposed convenient store will be approximately 3300 square feet, with a 3200 square foot canopy.

There are 14 parking spaces proposed, with 2 electric vehicle stations.

The Board reviewed the 12/13/23 Graves Review. All items have been addressed.

Member Bill Fontaine asked about the traffic study.

The Board Members agreed that Graves Engineering, Inc. should review the Traffic Study because it is outdated.

Member Don Clay made a motion to close the public hearing. Member Bill Fontaine seconded the motion.

Roll call: Member Don Clay-aye, Bill Fontaine-aye, Patsy Rydlak-aye, John Smith-aye. Motion approved.

Member Don Clay made a motion to approve the Edwards Services, Inc. Site Plan with a condition that Graves Engineering, Inc. reviews the 9/2021 AK Associates Traffic Impact Study to determine if a new traffic study is recommended. Member Bill Fontaine seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Don Clay-aye, Bill Fontaine-aye, Patsy Rydlak-aye, John Smith-aye. Motion approved.

7:45 p.m. Public Hearing-ESA-Proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment to add a utility scale (over 5MW) Battery Energy Storage System Overlay District

John Smith read the public hearing notice.

ESA Planner Wess Shaeffer gave the Board a presentation on where he would like to propose two large scale battery storage systems. He stated the Overlay districts proposed would be between West Charlton & Carpenter Hill Road.

John Smith asked if anyone from the public had any comments.

Resident Laurie Degnan stated she wants to see a cap proposed on battery storage systems, and wants to see a decommissioning bond.

Member Don Clay made a motion to continue the public hearing to January 17, 2024. Member Bill Fontaine seconded the motion.

Roll call: Member Don Clay-aye, Member Bill Fontaine-aye, Member John Smith-aye. Motion approved.

9:10 p.m. Public Hearing-Stone Reduced Frontage Lot & Common Driveway
Special Permit-Gale Road

John Smith read the public hearing notice.

Applicant Mary Stone was present for the review process.

Applicant Mary Stone gave an over view of the special permit request. She stated she received ZBA variance approval. It was recorded at the Registry of Deeds in Worcester on 12/27/23.

Member Don Clay made a motion to continue the public hearing until 1/17/24. Member Bill Fontaine seconded the motion. Don Clay-aye, Bill Fontaine-aye, Patsy Rydlak-aye, John Smith-aye. Motion approved.

9:30 p.m. Request for Approval for Decommissioning Bond-Sturbridge Road Solar Farm, LLC-North Sturbridge Road Solar Facility

The applicant requested to be continued to 1/17/24.

Member Don Clay made a motion to continue the decommissioning bond for Solar Farm, LLC to January 17, 2024. Bill Fontaine seconded the motion.

Roll call: Member Don Clay-aye, Bill Fontaine-aye, John Smith-aye. Motion approved.

9:32 p.m. Approval-Not-Required:

Stevens Family Trust-Freeman Road

Planning Director Randy Benson stated the Board will not be reviewing the ANR for the Stevens Family Trust because there is a disagreement with the Trust with who owns the property.

John Smith stated that he would like the Towns Attorney's opinion on this. Planning Director Randy Benson stated he will ask the Town Administrator permission to contact the Town's Attorney.

Other Business-Unknown at time of posting

Planning Director Randy Benson stated there has been a Multi-Family Special Permit submitted off Trolley Crossing Road. There will be a second one submitted in the near future.

Member Don Clay made a motion to adjourn @ 9:45 p.m. Member Bill Fontaine seconded the motion.

Roll call: Don Clay-aye, Bill Fontaine-aye, Patsy Rydlak-aye, John Smith-aye.

Motion approved.
