

MINUTES
PLANNING BOARD--PUBLIC MEETING

Re: KINZER DRIVE SOLAR, LLC
KINZER DRIVE (Western end), GARDNER, MA

OCTOBER 9, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

115 Pleasant Street, Robert L. Hubbard Meeting Room, Gardner, Massachusetts 01440

Members present: Allen L. Gross/*Chairman*, Robert J. Bettez, Sr. /*Vice-Chairman*, Laura Casker and Mark Schafron/*Members*, and Trevor Beauregard/*Director-City Planner*.

Members absent: *Robert Swartz.*

Also present: City Council President Scott Graves, Chris Coughlin-Engineering, Christine Fucile-DCDP, Fred Unger and Chris Chamberland-Representatives for Kinzer Drive Solar, LLC.

ANNOUNCEMENT - Any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the Chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Any person intending to make such recording shall notify the Chair forthwith. All Documents referenced or used during the meeting must be submitted in duplicate to the Director of Community Development & Planning pursuant to the Open Meeting and Public Records Law. All documents shall become part of the official record of the meeting.

Mr. Gross, Chairman called the Public Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and stated the following:

In accordance with Article 10 of the City of Gardner Zoning Code, Chapter 675-1010 Site Plan Review, notice is hereby given that the Planning Board will conduct a public review meeting on **Tuesday, October 9, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.**

The purpose of this public review meeting is to consider a ***Definitive Site Plan*** submitted by ***Kinzer Drive Solar, LLC*** located at the western end of Kinzer Drive, Gardner, MA 01440, which depicts construction of a 3.6 MW solar array on a parcel at the western end of Kinzer Drive in Gardner, MA.

Mr. Unger noted he is the project manager for Kinzer Drive Solar, LLC, who is associated with Boston Common Capital. Mr. Unger explained the land is owned by the Greater Gardner Industrial Foundation and is the old Kinzer junk yard. Mr. Unger said the Greater Gardner Industrial Foundation had the site cleared about four (4) years ago, and the majority of the trees

are down to stumps. Mr. Unger commented environmental testing was completed on the site, as well as four truckloads of tires and scrap metal removed from the site. The testing was mostly clean, however there were some traces of lead and arsenic found.

Mr. Unger said the Conservation Commission requested less tree removal, so the project will be reduced a bit.

Mr. Unger introduced Chris Chamberland from Berkshire Design Group, the Civil Engineer for the project.

Mr. Chamberland said this project site is not in the solar overlay, but in the “Industrial 2 Zone”, therefore will require an allowed use with a special permit from the ZBA in addition to the Site Plan and Conservation approval.

Mr. Chamberland gave a brief explanation of the solar project.

Entrance to the site is on Kinzer Drive which is a public gravel road, in rough shape, but passable. The public road comes in an east/west direction and then curves down to an existing gravel access into the site. At one time, there was a paper subdivision believed to be in place prior to construction of route 2 but was never built. There is conservation land to the west and to the south. Mr. Chamberland pointed out properties that were privately owned, some wetlands and unbuildable.

The current site has mostly been cleared as noted earlier, as a result, there is some regrowth.

The existing access off Kinzer Drive will be maintained. Also, within the right of way, nearby is a depression area that floods out from heavy rains, and propose to dump a layer of large diameter crushed stone followed by a topping layer of gravel to make it passable including a turnaround for emergency vehicles.

Mr. Chamberland further explained the solar array is made up of 24 solar panels with 417 racks and is equal to 3.6 MW. The equipment, inverters, and transformers will be located at the entrance of the site. There are two main access roads going through the site for maintenance purposes, each with 50 foot diameter turnarounds. The perimeter fence will go around the entire site, and will be a standard chain link fence, six inches off the ground for wildlife to pass through.

Mr. Chamberland spoke of the western end of the site. The access road will be 12 feet wide. Stormwater management includes swales to collect the run off and a relatively large level spreader for sheet flow. Mr. Chamberland highlighted some of the features for the eastern side of the site, such as access roads and power lines running out, equipment pads and vehicle parking area up at the front with an access gate.

Mr. Chamberland addressed erosion control. There are some areas at the bottom of the site, outside of the fence, where trees have already been cleared, therefore, the intention is to keep most of the edge vegetated, as well as a silt fence and additional sediment basins to keep a 100 foot natural buffer. The main solar array will be seeded and mixed with wildflowers and natural grass and will be mowed once or twice per year. Also, some shrubs and native plantings.

Mr. Gross commented on the decommissioning estimate in the amount of \$124,364. T. Beauregard said himself and C. Coughlin went over the estimate and are comfortable with the

figure provided. T. Beauregard further said the salvage estimate for recycling is appreciated, however, feels at this point in time it is really hard to justify what the value will be in the future. Also, to keep in the mind, the Surety is there if the owner of the project walks away at the end and doesn't decommission it. Mr. Unger asked if the size of the system changes, could they come back and review the figure provided. Mr. Gross replied yes.

Question/Comments/Concerns:

L. Casker:

Asked how many acres the entire site is, and acres for the solar array.

Response: 25 acres for solar and slightly larger for entire site.

Does it follow Miller's River?

Response: No, Otter River to the west. Also, there is Pond Brook.

How much acreage of "new" cutting of trees.

Response: Three acres of additional clearing, and may be reduced.

Will there be any gravel removal or gravel grading on the property.

Response: No removal or digging.

Any activity such as ATV's, partying, etc....

Response: There was evidence of a small campfire, and zero evidence of ATV's.

L. Casker asked if this site is part of the Open Space Plan. T. Beauregard replied, no, it is industrial land and is owned by the Greater Gardner Industrial Foundation, a former junkyard.

M. Schafron asked what the plan is to mitigate the residual heavy metals that were found on the site.

Response: They were just barely over the reportable limits. There were three spots where the elevations were found, as a result, the soils will be removed in those areas and taken to a licensed disposal facility.

T. Beauregard recommended a proper gate be installed at the end of Kinzer Drive since there is an existing wire cable currently and can be dangerous. Also, reminded the Fire Chief requested there be a 12 foot gate at the end of each roadway along with a Knox box.

T. Beauregard asked if there was any more thought to improving the "right of way" on Kinzer Drive as noted in the Development Review meeting.

Response: Would like to see how the asphalt stands up through the construction, and if necessary, will spread gravel.

Mr. Gross, Chairman called thrice for persons wishing to testify in favor of, and in opposition of this project.

There was no one from the public in attendance at this meeting.

The public meeting closed at 7:30 p.m.

All documents referenced or used during the meeting are part of the official record and are available in the Department of Community Development and Planning pursuant to the Open Meeting and Public Records Law.
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