

TOWN OF HOLDERNESS
Planning Board Meeting Minutes: Feb 23, 2021

B. Snelling called the meeting held via Zoom to order at 6:30PM.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS:

Members Present:

Robert Snelling, Chairman	Angi Francesco, Vice Chairman	Donna Bunnell, Secretary
Carl Lehner, Member	Ronald Huntoon, Member	Louis Pare, Member
Peter Francesco, Ex-Officio	Janet Cocchiaro, Alternate	

Members Not Present:

Staff Present: N. Decoteau, Landuse Board Assistant

Others Present: D. Katz T. Vansant B. Maloney

B. Snelling stated the meeting was being held under Emergency Order 12 issued by the Governor of New Hampshire pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04 and RSA 91A that authorizes the Holderness Planning Board to hold the Public Hearing remotely via Zoom.

B. Snelling stated a quorum was present as seven members were logged in for the Zoom meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: "To approve the minutes of February 2, 2021 as amended."

Motion: C. Lehner

Second: D. Bunnell

Discussion: C. Lehner stated the word "insure" should be replaced with "ensure" throughout the document.

Motion Passed: 7 – Yes 0 - No

B. Snelling stated that B. Maloney, Chairman of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, requests the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment have a joint meeting to discuss the issue regarding detached accessory dwelling units.

B. Maloney stated the Zoning Board of Adjustment members would like a better understanding of the process/reasoning behind the fact that detached accessory dwelling units are not addressed in the Holderness Zoning Ordinance.

After a discussion it was determined that B. Snelling, Chairman of the Planning Board, would attend the next Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting.

B. Snelling opened discussion of the regulation of Non-Residential Solar Collection Systems.

B. Snelling referred to the text:

Ground Mounted Solar Collection Systems

Ground Mounted Solar Collection Systems are permitted through Site Plan Review with the following restrictions.

- *General Residential District – Systems that are less than 1 acre of solar land coverage.*
- *Rural Residential District – Systems that are less than 25 acres of solar land coverage.*
- *Commercial District excluding Village – Systems and that are less than 50 acres of solar land coverage.*
- *Municipal Systems – All solar collection systems for municipal use are exempt from land use regulations pursuant to NH RSA 674:54.*

Discussion points on the section included the following:

- removing the section on the Village District implies that there are no restrictions in that district.
- should any ground mounted solar collection systems be permitted in the Village District

- should only roof mounted solar collection systems be permitted
- should the square foot area of a ground mounted collection system be limited
- the systems should be screened from public view
- a statement regarding restrictions in the Village District should be added back to the section.

B. Snelling asked Board members to give it some thought so that the section could be updated at the next meeting. The board did not make changes to the text.

The Board reviewed the following text:

Equipment Specification

1. *All proposed equipment or specifications must be included with the application.*
2. *Such information can be supplied via manufacturer's specifications or through detailed description.*

Discussion on the section included the following:

- Are manufacturer specifications needed to be on file with the town
- Technology changes quickly and it will be hard to keep current records
- Maybe no more that what is already in the section is needed

The Board determined to remove the section on Equipment Specifications.

The Board reviewed the following text:

Emergency Response

1. *Access to the site for emergency response shall be provided and detailed on the plan.*
2. *A narrative or manual for municipal Fire Department detailing response guidance and disconnection locations necessary for fire response.*
3. *Additional industry guidance documents that provide information about safety procedures for specific equipment on site shall be provided as needed to ensure adequate public safety.*
4. *Contact information for the solar collection system owner/operator shall be posted on site at the access way and provided and updated to the municipality.*

Discussion on the section included the following:

- The Fire Chief should weigh in on this section
- Is requiring the information justified
- B. Snelling will meet with the Fire Chief

The Board did not make any changes to the section.

The Board reviewed the following text:

Stormwater

1. *Ground mounted systems that are required to secure a New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Alteration of Terrain (AoT) Permit in accordance with NH RSA 485:17 shall secure such permit accordingly. The final Permit issued by NH DES shall be incorporated by reference into the final Town approval and shall be enforceable by the Town in accordance with this zoning ordinance.*
2. *No further local review of stormwater and erosion control shall be required where a project is required to secure the NH DES AoT Permit.*
3. *Ground mounted systems not requiring NH DES AoT Permit. Where a ground mounted system does not require an AoT permit the following shall apply:*
 - a) *Ground mounted systems that require land clearing and grubbing of mature forested cover to accommodate more than 30% of the solar land coverage area, provided such area of clearing and grubbing is also larger than 1 acre; the proposed system shall include a management plan for stormwater that is directly related to the impact of the solar collection system.*
 - b) *Ground mounted systems where the solar land coverage area is larger than 1 acre and located on slopes of greater than 5% shall include a management plan for stormwater.*
4. *The stormwater management plan shall include the following.*

- a) *The stormwater study shall take into account the nature of the solar panel installation and how the spacing, slope and row separate can enhance infiltration of stormwater. Percolation tests or site-specific soil information may be provided to demonstrate recharge can be achieved without engineered solutions.*
- b) *Additional information, if required, shall calculate potential for concentrated flows of runoff due to the panels, slope, soil type and the impacts of other true impervious areas (such as equipment pads and roadways).*
5. *Required for all systems:*
 - a) *All ground mounted systems shall be constructed in accordance with Best Management Practices for erosion and sedimentation control during the pre-construction, construction and post-construction restoration period.*
 - b) *Post construction: For purposes of enhancing natural stormwater management, site conditions and plantings post-construction shall insure that areas of soil compaction have been restored to more natural conditions. Plantings shall be native species and are recommended to beneficial habitat to song birds, pollinators and/or foraging species in order to maintain a healthy surface and subsurface habitat while attenuating stormwater on the site.*

Discussion points on the section included the following:

- A distinction is made between ground mounted systems that require an Alteration of Terrain (AoT) Permit from the State and ground mounted systems that do not require an AoT Permit.
- Holderness Site Plan Review regulations include stormwater management requirements
- When a solar collection system requires an AoT Permit no additional stormwater management will be required as what the AoT Permit requires will be sufficient.
- When a solar collection system does not require an AoT Permit the stormwater management requirements in the Site Plan Regulations will be required.
- The Site Plan review regulations could also be modified to state no stormwater management plan is required for projects that require an AoT Permit from the state.

The Board agreed to make the following changes to the section on Stormwater:

Stormwater

1. ***Ground mounted systems that are required to secure a New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Alteration of Terrain (AoT) Permit in accordance with NH RSA 485:17 shall secure such permit accordingly. The final Permit issued by NH DES shall be incorporated by reference into the final Town approval and shall be enforceable by the Town in accordance with this zoning ordinance.***
2. ***No further local review of stormwater and erosion control shall be required where a project is required to secure the NH DES AoT Permit.***
3. ***Where a ground mounted system does not require a NH AoT Permit, a stormwater management plan shall be provided in accordance with Site Plan Review requirements.***

The Board reviewed the following text:

Fencing

1. Perimeter fencing shall be installed as a safety concern for abutting land uses.

Discussion on the section included the following:

- Greater than 1000 V must be enclosed with a 7 ft. high fence
- Perimeter fencing shall be installed in compliance with the National Electric Code.
- Additional security fencing may be required if the property is a safety concern for abutting properties.

- Community solar collections systems servicing 2 – 3 houses may be under the 1000 V but may require safety fencing if it is determined to be a safety hazard.
- The National Electric Code requires solar collections systems running at 1000 V or more to have 7ft. perimeter fencing and requires 6 ft. fencing around solar collections systems running at less than 1000 V.

The Board agreed to make the following changes to the section on Fencing:

Fencing

1. Perimeter fencing shall be installed in compliance with the National Electric Code.
2. Additional perimeter fencing may be required for solar collection projects that are considered to be a safety hazard.

The Board reviewed the following text:

Glare

1. *A statement detailing potential significant glare onto abutting structures and roadways estimating the interaction of sun to panel angle, time of year and visibility locations.*
2. *Based on the above information, the Planning Board may require mitigation.*
3. *Mitigation may include angle of panels, details on the anti-reflective nature of the panel coating or any additional specific screening to minimize resulting impacts.*
4. *Mitigation through anti-reflective coatings shall have an index of refraction equal to or less than 1.30.*

Discussion on the section included the following:

- Research still needs to be done with regard to the 1.30 in number 4.
- Glare may be a non-issue as there are very few high-rise buildings in Holderness
- It may be prudent to delete the section.

The Board did not make any changes to the section on Glare.

The Board reviewed the following text:

Noise

1. Estimates of any equipment noise on the site based on equipment specification materials (such as inverters).
2. Noise levels at the property line shall not exceed 5 dB above ambient level.

Discussion on the section included the following:

- Average decibels in a rural area run around 40 – 45.
- It is reasonable to restrict the solar collection system from operating at a level of noise that is more than 5dB of the existing ambient level.
- The measurement of the noise level should be taken from the property line

The Board did not make any changes to the section on Noise.

B. Snelling stated he would incorporate the changes made into a new draft document.

J. Cocchiaro asked if community or “group-net” solar collection systems fall under non-residential rather than residential.

B. Snelling stated that systems which serve more than one residence are considered non-residential.

T. Vansant suggested sharing the draft document with other towns that already have solar regulations and the LRPC for their input/collaboration.

B. Snelling stated the Holderness School will be submitting a Site Plan Review to add lighting at an outdoor field.

B. Snelling stated the next meeting will be March 16, 2021.

It was noted that documentation regarding meeting the conditions for approval regarding the Dearborn Subdivision will be emailed to Planning Board members.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 8:00pm the following motion was made:

MOTION: "To adjourn."

Motion: A. Francesco

Second: D. Bunnell

Discussion: None

Motion Passes: 7-yes 0-no 0-abstention 0-absent

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Decoteau, Land Use Boards Assistant