

HYDE PARK PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING POSTED 08-15-2013
August 19, 2013

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Members Present: Greg Paus, Chair (GP); Rebecca Dennis (RD); Vicki Emerson (VE) and Dan Young (DY)
Members Absent: (ONE VACANCY)
Staff: Ron Rodjenski; Town Administrator
Guests: Howard Manosh, Project Landowner; Jeff Emerson, Neighbor to the Project

GP opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

1. **Welcome and Public Comment** – No public comment
2. **Manosh Solar Array – Garfield Road** – The planning commission reviewed the Certificate of Public Good (or CPG) application submitted by HA Manosh for a 26 panel solar array to be installed along Garfield Road, just north of McFarlane Road. The Public Service Board requires a 30 day public comment period before they begin the review of a project under Section 248 of state law. GP read excerpts from the town zoning and town plan related to residential scale solar projects being acceptable. DY noted that industrial scale solar projects are not addressed in the town plan or defined in the zoning bylaw. Howard Manosh advised that this project was similar to Concept 2's project in Morrisville and GP noted that the Concept 2 project was located in an industrial park. VE asked why this location was chosen and Howard stated that this 2 acre area was not being used but the rest of the field would be used as a future organic seed crop, noting that no houses would be built on the parcel. VE asked why not locate the array on his adjacent gravel pit parcel. Howard advised that he was still extracting from the pit. Jeff Emerson advised that the pit location was the best since it would not be visible from homes and would then not lower his property value. Jeff noted that 19' tall structures near the road would be highly visible and are almost as tall as a telephone pole. Howard stated that the site was selected by All Earth Renewables, noting that everyone wants to go green but no ones wants to look at it. Howard stated that the town has not been supportive of his prior projects in this area of town. GP stated that the soil is prime ag and on the travel corridor to the state park and a pit location would be less visible. GP stated that the commission could be supportive if another location was found to address the visibility issue. VE asked why no screening and Howard advised that screening blocks the sun. DY stated that the project should be screened, similar to the nearby gravel pit operations. Howard advised that the pit location and screening with trees create the same problem of blocking the sun. Howard suggested that he might consider adding a low brush line along Garfield Road as long as it did not block the sun. Jeff Emerson stated that the westerly hill is going to block the evening sun before any screening along Garfield Road. GP stated that the commission could support the project if adequately screened. Howard stated that he is applying for approval based on their original application. DY suggested on long line of panels along a tree line would work better. GP stated that maximum sun is acquired for the panels when the sun is 30 degrees to the east and west of south. Howard stated that All Earth has looked at the entire parcel to prepare the current proposal. Rodjenski reviewed the four options before the commission. No action, support, object or support with conditions. Howard advised that

using the gravel pit location would require an Act 250 permit amendment, which he will not do. VE suggesting looking at the easterly property line with Applecheek Farm and then installing a screen along Garfield Road. Howard stated that he felt the commission did not want solar arrays. GP re-read the town zoning provisions and 2012 Town Plan statement regarding protection of scenic and aesthetic values in this area of town. Jeff Emerson suggested that when his property values are reduced the project should be required to address that loss in value. VE stated that the commission supports solar arrays in appropriate areas which are properly sited with screening. DY stated that this solar array, as proposed, would detract from the working landscape objectives and to him, working landscape means activities similar to the existing agricultural activities. Howard Manosh noted that solar arrays work every minute of the day, even on cloudy days. VE felt that denying the application and seeing if the project can be relocated to a more suitable area. Howard Manosh noted that small businesses are necessary for growth and stop growth doesn't work. GP advised that he could draft a letter to the PSB objecting to the project if commissioners send him their comments. Motion by RD to authorize GP to draft and sign a letter of comment to the PSB for submission by the deadline of August 28, 2013. Seconded by VE. Voting: 4 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

3. **Adjourn** - The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Ron Rodjenski