

**TIOGA COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
July 19th, 2017
Ronald E. Dougherty County Office Building
LEGISLATIVE Conference Room – Main Floor
56 Main Street, Owego, NY
7:00 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Chairman D. Chrzanowski called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

II. ATTENDANCE

A. Planning Board Members:

Present: Doug Chrzanowski, Grady Updyke, John Current, Pam Moore, Sarah Titus, Chris Curry, Tim Pollard, James Tornatore

Excused: Georgeanne Eckley , William Dimmick III

Absent: Jason Bellis

B. Ex Officio Members:

C. Local Officials:

D. 239m Reviews: Anne Waling, Cypress Creek/Graybark LLC

E. Guests:

F. Staff: Elaine Jardine

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- Approval of agenda as corrected.

J. Tornatore/J. Current/Carried
None Opposed
No Abstentions

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Approval of June 21, 2017 with two corrections on page 3.

P. Moore/J.Tornatore/Carried
None Opposed
No Abstentions

V. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

- None heard.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

- Folder passed around.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. 239 Reviews

1. County Case 2017-016: Village of Waverly, Adoption, Waverly Glen Park Master Plan

The Village of Waverly has had an active project team working on this Master Plan including the consultant, Haas Landscape Architects, Village of Waverly Mayor, Village of Waverly Parks & Recreation Director, Tioga County Tourism Director, Tioga County Planning Director, Tioga County Economic Development Specialist, as well as indirectly the Village of Waverly Water Treatment Plan Operator and Village of Waverly Clerk and Deputy Clerk.

The document is organized and clear regarding needed improvements and the proposed projects to implement those improvements. These improvements are proposed in three phases, as there are many significant improvement projects detailed. All phases include a substantial signage component. This wayfinding and interior signage is crucial as it is not visually apparent how to find the park using the village streets, and the signs will show how the trail system connects with the adjacent Two Rivers State Park. These improvements detailed in the Master Plan, when completed, will make the park significantly more enjoyable to residents not only in Waverly, but throughout the county.

Staff recommends approval of the Waverly Glen Park Master Plan adoption.

Motion to recommend approval of the Waverly Glen Park Master Plan adoption:

S. Titus/J. Current/Carried	
Yes	8
No	0
Abstention	0

2. County Case 2017-017: Town of Owego, Special Use Permit, Graybark LLC

The applicant is proposing to develop, construct and operate a 2MW solar photovoltaic system via lease agreement on an approximately 20-acre parcel near Route 434 in Apalachin. This project will contain several rows of PV ground-mounted cell panels that have an anti-reflective coating.

Electric power generation from the solar panels is estimated at 3.6 million kw-hours annually, enough to power approximately 500 single-family homes. This Community Distributed Generation (CDG) solar project will provide electric directly to the NYSEG grid and give their customers credits against their electric bills on a one-to-one kilowatt hour basis – known as net metering. They will also offer customers energy contracts to customers at or below prices below the current standard utility rate offered by NYSEG.

Graybark, LLC plans to invest over \$4,000,000 into this project that will generate construction and installation jobs as well as additional tax revenue over the lifetime of the project.

Once all local approvals and permits are obtained, construction is expected to take 12 to 16 weeks. The applicant has submitted a SEQR Full EAF Part 1 and a SWPPP for erosion and sediment control to the Town of Owego for their approval and certification. The applicant plans to utilize existing roads to access this site. The applicant has provided a Decommissioning Plan that guarantees Graybark, LLC will remove the solar infrastructure at the cost of the operator in the event that the system ceases power or the land lease is terminated. It is important to note that this project will not take prime agricultural land.

This solar PV power generation project complies with all applicable Town of Owego zoning regulations and will provide a direct benefit to the community by discounting electric rates for local residents. It is providing another contribution toward clean energy production, as well as the local community benefit.

Staff recommends approval of the Special Use Permit with the conditions of the company conducting wetlands and archeological investigations.

Q. PM – How high will the panels be above the ground? **A. AW** – 2 feet above the ground on poles.

Q. PM – How the property value increase? **A. AW** – The solar PV array will increase the value of the land.

Q. DC – Is the Decommissioning Agreement between the company and the lessee or the municipality? **A. AW** – With the municipality. We comply with whatever the municipality requires. There are companies in Upstate NY that bond these projects for long terms.

Q. PM – How will you conduct vegetation maintenance? **A. AW** – Typically these projects are mowed twice per summer to keep grass below the panel level, with herbicides applied at the poles. The herbicide application needs to be approved by the municipality.

Q. TP – What is the visual impact to the nearby residences? **A. AW** – We had prepared visualizations for the Town of Owego that show that this PV array will be situated lower than the residences due to the sloping hill, so the panels are not in view of the houses. E. Jardine stated that these were not in the packet submitted to the County.

Motion to recommend approval of the Special Use Permit with the conditions noted:

C. Curry/P. Moore/Carried	
Yes	8
No	0
Abstention	0

Board discussion ensued regarding the potential issue of decommissioning related to the rapid advancement of solar panel technology.

VIII. REPORTS

- A. Local Bits and Pieces
Deferred until next regular meeting.

- B. Staff Report: E. Jardine stated that she will review the draft comp plans from Town of Berkshire and Newark Valley and return comments in the beginning of August upon return to work.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

- None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

- A. Next Meeting August 16th, 2017 @ 7:00 PM in the Legislature Conference Room.
- B. Motion made to adjourn at 7:58 PM. S. Titus/J. Current/Carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Jardine, Tioga County Planning Director
Economic Development and Planning