

Shaftsbury Planning Commission

May 28, 2019

The meeting came to order at 6:05 pm. Present were commissioners Chris Williams (chair), Naomi Miller, Mike Foley, and Mike Cichanowski. Also present was zoning administrator Shelly Stiles.

Ms. Miller said she'd heard from Barbara Sarvis that she might be interested in serving on the Commission. Mr. Williams suggested she submit a letter of interest to the Select Board.

Preferred site status, two proposed solar arrays:

Notice of intent to file an application to place a 500 kw solar array on property owned by Jared Clawson, parcel #17 22 60, on Route 7A, and a 150 kw array on land owned by T. Paquin, parcel # 12 01 70, on State Line Road, was received by Town officials. The proposer, Power Guru, asked that the Select Board and the Planning Commission declare the two "preferred sites." The commission discussed the request, and agreed that it supports solar development anywhere in Town at present – that the entire town is a "preferred site." Mr. Cichanowski said he considered solar development a kind of agriculture, a "harvesting of the sun." Mr. Cichanowski moved to declare the Clawson property a preferred site. Ms. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0. Mr. Cichanowski moved to declare the Paquin site a preferred site. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

Town plan revisions

The Commission turned to a review of suggested text for Chapter 5, Natural Resources. Michael Batcher at the Regional Commission made substantial changes to the chapter since it was last looked at. The Commission went through the chapter, suggesting changes that were incorporated on the spot in the master draft managed by Mr. Cichanowski. Much back and forth about what kinds of regulations – e.g., river corridor, prime agricultural soils – were politically acceptable in Shaftsbury was shared. Whether to urge the community to adopt river corridor and prime agricultural soil protection language in revised bylaws was left undecided. Also left undecided was a question of whether to expand the VR zone into what is now R40 in order to encourage more affordable housing, and whether to adopt as a goal the preservation of at least 5000 of the town's existing 6000± acres of agricultural land as active farmland.

Next meetings

The commission will meet weekly through June.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm. Notes by ZA Stiles.