

Town of Catskill Planning Board

Planning Board Meeting

September 10, 2019 7:00 PM

Catskill Town Hall

Present: Chairman-Joe Izzo, Reid Mower, Charles Holtz, Vice Chair- Larry Federman, Teresa Golden, Bridgett Hernandez Secretary Patricia Case-Keel.

Absent: Tom Decker.

Also Present: Michel Smith (Town of Catskill Attorney) Elliot Fishman (Town of Catskill C.E.O.) Kevin Schwenzfeier (Delaware Engineering) Patrick McCulloch (Catskill Town Board Member- Chief of Catskill Fire Department) .

Chairman Joe Izzo opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Chairman Joe Izzo asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of 9/11/2001.

NEW BUSINESS:

Subdivision SUB-9-2019 William Monteverde Cairo Junction Rd., Catskill.

Mr. Izzo stated the applicants had attended a meeting with himself, Mr. Federman and the Mr. Fishman to discuss the issues regarding the private roadway for this proposed subdivision.

Mr. Fishman submitted a sketch plan reviewing the scenarios for the concerns regarding the private street, and how it could be developed in order to meet the Towns Code.

The Board reviewed the sketch plan.

Mr. Izzo stated the project will require three waiver request and they will require a Public Hearing. Also the Town Highway Superintendent will have to sign off on the private road.

Mr. Izzo stated the Board will schedule the project for the September 24, 2019 Planning Board meeting .

Special Use Permit SUP-10-2019 North Catskill Grid Support Center 7965 Rt. 9W, Catskill.

David Young is a project engineer from Chazen Companies and is representing this project along with Erin Hazen from GLIDEPATH who is the director for development.

Mr. Izzo stated the North Catskill Grid Support will be holding a community presentation regarding this proposed project on September 18, 2019.

Mr. Young stated he has received Delaware Engineering's recommendations and will be addressing most of the concerns at tonight's meeting. He has been in contacted DOT and because of NYSDOT and the taking of a strip of land leading onto Rt 9W the NYSDOT recommendation it has been determined that the access to the site will be on the north end and, the access will be 20' or however wide the Town Code requires. Also he has been in contact with the Catskill fire Department and there will be a trial run with the Catskill Fire Department. Also he went to the Olanna Castle and took a picture of the view. He was not able to go up to the third floor , but there is a rise to the north side of the Rip Van Winkle bridge blocking any visual effects the site could have on the view shed. He will also do a google search to see if there are any other visual

effects to be seen from the site. The construction of a moat is still being considered for the site as well as the use of berms and the use of shrubbery.

Ms. Hazen stated the use of privacy fencing is still being considered as well. The berm approach would be more esthetic, and the plans would be to work with natural habitat as well as local agencies in identify local species.

Ms. Golden stated there is also a concern for traffic from the Rt. 9W, accidentally veering onto to the site.

Mr. Young stated if the C blocks are left in place the concern with traffic coming onto the site would be addressed.

Ms. Golden asked how tall the curb will be.

Mr. Young answered six to eight inches.

Mr. Izzo ask what will be keeping the containers cool.

Ms. Hazen answered each container will have a dedicated HVAC system and typical they have six ton tillers.

Mr. Izzo asked what is in the units that could leak out and be considered a contaminate.

Ms. Hazen answered he electrolyte fluid is what could leak out.

Mr. Izzo asked how many gallons are in a unit. If there was a leak the amount of liquid leaking would help determine the height of the barrier required.

Ms. Hazen answered she would have to research the question.

Mr. Izzo asked if the barrier for spills will be above ground or below.

Mr. Young answered the concrete will be below and the berms will be above ground.

Mr. Holtz asked if the containers are sealed when they are closed.

Ms. Hazen answered the containers are sealed but she is not sure if they are water tight.

Mr. Schwenzfeier asked what material will be on the ground for the containers.

Mr. Young answered the containers will be on piers and will be on gravel.

Mr. Holtz asked what the purpose of the curb and the berm is when the ground around the containers is pervious.

Ms. Hazen stated she will present this concern to their engineers and come back with the best solution.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Federman stated the project in Ulster County had the same numbers of batteries but all in one building. Although this site has another party's property in between the project site, what is preventing the applicant from building tow building to contain all of the batteries?

Ms. Hazen answered the based on the layout of the site two building do not offer any advantage for the project.

Mr. Federman stated it may be advantageous to consider building two buildings then having to line the containers from underneath.

Ms. Hazen asked if there are existing businesses in the Town that have similar requirements that could be referred to as examples for the containment of fire suppression .

Mr. McCulloch answered not to his knowledge. Most all of the commercial buildings have water for fire suppression.

Ms. Hazen stated one of the reasons for considers a container system is based on a new fire code that has been released in July 1st 2019 which has provision in it that does steer these types of sites to individual containers based on setback requirements, she is not sure if this site would be appropriate for two buildings.

Mr. Izzo stated there is also a concern for fire breaking out and smoke coming from the site which will trigger an evacuation plan.

Ms. Hazen stated the evacuation plan will be triggered if the is smoke is within five hundred meters from the site, and the plan will be finalized once the project has gone through engineering and also it will be based on each manufacturers recommendations.

Mr. Izzo stated as part of the review the Board will require a list of toxic materials that could be in the smoke if there was a fire on the site.

Ms. Hazen answered the smoke could contain Lithium ion, but all smoke is considered toxic . Studies have shown large scale battery fire, has no more or less toxicity then a class A house hold fire. The exact components she does not have but it is not something exotic or unusual that the fire department would unprepared to deal with it. Any fire from a Commercial building such as Home Depot or Lowes would require the same type of aggressive response .

Mr. Izzo asked if the site will have air monitoring within the five hundred meters.

Ms. Hazen answered "No". The containers themselves will have air monitoring though.

Mr. Fishman asked if there will be secondary containment for the container's.

Ms. Hazen answered "Yes". She cannot give out specifics at this time because the containers have not been purchased yet. Those types of specifics would be part of the building permit process.

Mr. Fishman asked if there is any information regarding the amount of noise that will be generated form the facility.

Mr. Young answered a noise study is being prepared. The amount of noise should be equivalent to the nearby phone company.

Ms. Hazen stated DEC requires no more noise than sixteen decibals, and the project can comply with that.

Mr. Schwenzfeier asked if the berms will be considered in the SWPPP.

Mr. Young answered "Yes".

Mr. Federman asked if there will be anyway to shut the bio retention pond off.

Mr. Young answered there can be valves.

Discussion ensued chemical leaking berms and the retention pond.

Mr. Young stated the soil types are declassified types and are clay, so the assumption is to have a bio retention pond.

Ms. Hernandez asked what material will be used to transport the energy and will it be under ground.

Ms. Hazen answered the lines coming from Central Hudson substation will be Central Hudson responsibility so she cannot answer that question.

Ms. Hernandez asked how much energy will be flowing through the lines.

Ms. Hazen answered she was not sure, she believes it thirteen distribution voltage, but she will confirm the exact number.

Ms. Hernandez asked if the lines are unground could there be any potential hazards to individuals.

Ms. Hazen answered typically anything underground is heavily insulated. The bottom line is the energy flowing will be the same as the powerlines.

Mr. Izzo asked if Central Hudson has any timeline for this project.

Ms. Hazen answered the decision will be based on the facility studies and the facility studies are still being conducted.

Ms. Golden asked in the description for project on the EAF, what is the meaning for "exempt whole sale generator"?

Ms. Hazen answered it is a definition within the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and is exempt from certain regulatory requirements within FERC.

Ms. Golden asked how the herbicide indicated on the EAF to be used on the site will be controlled from contaminating well water.

Ms. Hazen answered she does not have the answer to any herbicides that may be used . To greater extent the grounds will be layered with aggregate, minimizing the need for weed control.

Ms. Golden stated the herbicides as also it is with the chemicals for fire suppressing, somehow getting into the water is one of the concerns for the Planning Board. Weeds can grow through gravel, and it seems there will be an ongoing need for maintenance on the site. Herbicides should not be anywhere near water.

Ms. Hazen stated she will follow up on this concern and get back to the Board.

Ms. Golden asked for more details regarding the battery storage emergency action plan.

Ms. Hazen answered it is a generic plan and is typical, and they intended on refining the plan.

Ms Golden stated at the Town Board meeting it was mentioned that if there was an emergency someone from a remote site would be notified and the connection to Central Hudson will be turned off.

Ms. Hazen stated if there's an emergency the system is turning itself off.it will not involve a human manual decision .If the condition involves one cell then the whole system will not have to be shut down only the single fault, but If it involves cascading faults then the whole system will cut itself off from the grid.

Ms. Golden asked if the system is shut down does that mean the system is dead and one of the batteries cannot burn up.

Ms. Hazen answered the most important safety measure is to cut the system form the grid and that generally does solve the problem, however there are conditions called thermal runaway caused by a battery being damaged enough that it causes a chemical reaction and if this occurs stopping disconnecting the system will not stop it. Thermal run away would be considered a catastrophic condition. All of the systems are designed to prevent things from getting that hot. It is not something that happens easily or quickly.

Ms. Golden asked how long after the system disconnects from the power grid before the issue will be fixed.

Ms. Hazen answered there will be a operation and maintenance contractor that will have a certain response time, "That being said" they are not a fire fighting crew, if the system indicates remotely there is a fire, then the fire department will be responding too. Currently there have been conversations with the fire department and the conversations will continue up until the building permit is granted.

Ms. Hernandez asked if there has ever been a situation where the monitors have failed, or have there been any fires in any of the units.

Ms. Hazen answered she is not aware of any monitors failing and they have not had any fires .

Mr. Holtz asked how many facilities are there for energy storage.

Ms. Hazen answered she is not sure, around a thousand maybe more. The battery storage units have about a decade of experience.

Mr. Smith asked assuming the Planning Board grants a Special Use Permit for this project at that point what is the nature of the relationship that exists between Central Hudson and North Catskill Grid Support Center.

Ms. Hazen answered there would be an interconnection agreement. Upon approval and proceeding into the engineering phase, the facility study would be launched which would determine the specifics for the line to be installed and there would be s financial agreement regarding the cost to install the line. Beyond those measures financial arrangements have not been determined yet.

Mr. Smith asked if there are any cancellation clauses in the contracts for projects developed in other townships and if so do the facilities have an alternative source for obtaining energy in order to keep the project operating.

Ms. Hazen answered the termination would be very difficult.

Mr. Smith asked if in any of the contracts are there any terms regarding time.

Ms. Hazen answered in the interconnection agreement there are time lines established. She would have to check on when the time lines would end.

Mr. Smith asked if the applicant could submit copies of interconnection agreements from other facilities to be used as models.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Smith stated he does not want to see the financial agreements only the terms of the agreement, in order to establish if the terms could affect the nature of the relationship between the company and the municipality.

Mr. Holtz stated the Planning Board is a land use board.

Ms. Hazen stated there will be a decommissioning plan and there will also be a decommissioning bond.

Mr. Smith asked if he could review the interconnection agreement.

Ms. Hazen answered "Yes".

The Board reviewed the recommendations and questions submitted by Delaware Engineering dated September 6, 2019.

Mr. Young stated he will look into the question regarding the recalculation for the site. The Special Use Application has already been submitted.

Mr. Izzo asked if there will be any parking spaces on the site.

Mr. Young answered there will be a single parking space for Central Hudson.

Mr. Izzo asked in regards to the height of the facility.

Ms. Hazen answered the containers will be eight feet tall and between the berms or fencing, and the plantings, the site will be essentially concealed from the road .

Mr. Fishman asked if there is a problem with a container, where will the backup power be coming from.

Ms. Hazen answered the site is gridded supply. If a unit goes out that does not mean the whole system stops working. There is also a UPF backup system and each container has its own back up. The HVAC is an important system and is not powered by a UPF system but once the container is disconnected from the grid it will no longer continue to heat up.

Mr. Fishman asked could the heat be chemically caused.

Ms. Hazen answered with thermal run away which is very rare; the HVAC system will not be able to control it anyway.

Mr. Federman asked if there has been any on site floral study conducted.

Mr. Young answered the wetlands were delineated.

Mr. Federman stated he did not see anything in the study referencing plants only the birds and a species of bats.

Mr. Young stated a floral study is not typically conducted unless there is a concerned species.

Ms. Hazen stated the plans will be revised to address the points made at tonight's meeting and will be submitted for the informational meeting with the Town Board.

Mr. Izzo stated once the Board receives the revised plans, the Board will be forwarding the proposed project to New York State D.O.T., D.E.C., and also to the Greene County Planning Board for a 239 Review .Once the final plan is submitted the Board can schedule a Public Hearing and will be reviewing the SEQR at the Public Hearing.

Mr. Young stated he will provide the emails he has had with DEC as part of the submittals for this project.

The Board discussed extending the range of abutting neighbors to 750 meters.

OTHER BUSINESS:

The Board confirmed the date for SEQR training for October 16, 2019 at 6:00 PM.

Mr. Holtz made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 27 2019, seconded by Mr. Federman.

Mr. Holtz Made a motion to adjourn seconded by Ms. Golden.

Planning Board meeting ended at 8:25 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Case-Keel
Planning Board Secretary

Approved as Amended 9/24/2019

