

GROTON PLANNING BOARD
August 26, 2009

Meeting convened at 7:05 pm.

Present: Jenny Burnett, Chairman Steve (Slim) Spafford, Celine Richer, Russ Carruth, Kyle Andrews, Selectmen liaison, Steve Lindsey, Deb Johnson

Minutes of July 29th read and approved as written.

Deb moved and board accepted to pass over Old Business to New – Site Plan Review: Public Hearing Groton Wind LLC. Ed Cherian, New England Development Director for Iberdrola Renewables, introduced himself and explained that Groton Wind is a division of Iberdrola. Board Chair informed members and Mr. Cherian that North Country Council has advised that this project has regional impact. The Council's opinion is that any towns with residents who can see the proposed meteorological towers should have been notified of this hearing as abutters were, though none were present. North Country Council can be involved with our Board, sharing accumulated information about wind farms, only if Regional Impact is declared. Mr. Cherian told the board that his company is asking only for a permit to erect two 60 meter meteorological towers and he did not consider that to have Regional Impact. Deb said that she believes this request for permission to erect data-gathering towers should be considered one of Regional Impact and she also believes that we would benefit from information that No. Country Council has gathered. Kyle agreed with Deb. Chair informed present board members that five years ago the Groton Planning Board gave a building permit to Wind Works LLC of VT (bought out by Iberdrola) to erect one meteorological tower on Tenney Mt. Selectmen gave a building permit for two more at the same location, at a later date. Steve said he thought the board should allow two meteorological towers to be erected on Fletcher Mt. to gather data and then later when/if there was a request for a permit to erect a wind farm, the board could declare Regional Impact. Mr. Cherian added that no matter what, he would be working with the Regional Council (No. Country). Russ asked about the time frame. Mr. Cherian replied that if given permit, the towers would go up within 30 days – before snow flies.

Steve moved that the Planning Board give permission to Iberdrola to erect two meteorological towers on Fletcher Mt. Deb voted no, the Chair abstained and the other five members voted yes. So the hearing opened at 7:52 pm. The Chair described all material submitted by Iberdrola. A map of the proposed project was examined by the board. Deb asked what happens to data-collecting towers when done. Mr. Cherian said they'd be removed and used in another location. Many questions were asked of Mr. Cherian about wind farms but Deb reminded fellow board members that they were jumping ahead of what was before them to decide. Celine moved to accept application for two meteorological towers. Steve 2nd and all voted in favor. Hearing closed at 8:55 pm. Mr. Cherian announced that his company will be holding an Open House at the Town House on Oct 7th to give info about wind farms and allow residents to sign up for an Oct 24th bus trip to an existing wind farm in Lempster, NH.

Old Business

More research is needed on Road Classifications

Deb brought a collection of many definitions of home based business. She gave hard copy to Chair and will e-mail definitions to fellow board members.

Subdivision fees have been found to not be current. A motion was passed unanimously to amend them to be current.

In reviewing Subdivision Regulations Deb offered legal language for 7.9 to replace what appeared in July's minutes. Members will consider this for next meeting. Deb will also offer a definition of wetland.

Chair read a letter from Boyd Smith of NLRA asking for a letter from the board showing support for the Watershed Masterplan. Members said they would not give support to a plan they hadn't yet read.

Chair read an announcement of an Oct. 9th Annual Planning and Zoning Conference sponsored by the Office of Energy and Planning. A unanimous vote approved up to 3 board members to attend at \$50 each.

Adjournment was greeted favorably at 9:44pm.

Sharon Nelson
Clerk