

TOWN OF CASCO
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 12, 2022
6:30 PM
COMMUNITY CENTER MEETING ROOM

Present: Ryan Mcallister, Stan Buchanan, Pete Watkins, Marc Roque, John Wiesemann, and Mary Tremblay, Alternate: Michele Williams

Absent: Kendra Osborne and Tiffany Payton

Public Present: See Attached List

First Order of Business:

- Call Meeting to Order

The Chair call the meeting to order at 6:32 pm

- Determine a Quorum

A role call was done to determine that a quorum was present
Four regular members present and one alternate

- Approval of the August 22, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Stan moved to approve the August 22, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Pete seconded the motion

The Board voted 4-0 in favor

Old Business:

Revisit Workshop Discussions

- Solar Ordinance

Ryan discussed the handout that he sent to the members regarding some points that the Board had discussed at the last meeting, they felt were important.

Marc noted he felt the concern was the commercial solar farms not so much residential with installation on houses vs solar on ground. He noted the roof installation is straight forward, so the residential/commercial ground panels could be reviewed.

Ryan noted the board could come up with a residential distance or threshold for a personal structure for ground placement. He stated for anything over 1500 sq. Ft. would be commercial and the Planning Board could possibly waive anything over 1500 sq. ft. for “residential projects greater than 1500 sq. ft.

The Board went on to discuss the points of discussion drafted by the Chair (See attached)

Ryan asked if the Board wanted to have several ordinances or lump alternative energy into the Solar Ordinance.

The Board noted for Alternate Energy is could say, no commercial windmills/turbines, for residential one (1) turbine not to exceed 35 feet. No Hydropower.

Ryan asked the board if they would like to have the Selectboard consider a moratorium on solar projects until an ordinance can be created in time for a public hearing and the June Annual meeting

Stan moved to ask Selectboard to consider moratorium on solar projects until the Planning Board is able to present a proper solar ordinance to the Selectboard

Marc seconded the motion

The Board voted 4-0 in favor

- Road and Street Standards Ordinance

The Board was given a copy of the Street Construction Ordinance from the Selectboard and the Town Manager to review.

Peter noted there is a lot of animosity with the ordinance and roads taken away from being plowed. Some stated they did not get the letter to get the road up to standards and it would need a waiver signed to give them time, many cannot afford to keep the road plowed. Peter noted there should be some way to grandfather some of the roads. He noted it is a hot topic with many opinions.

Ryan asked John if he knew what brought this up

John stated many roads are in disrepair making it hard to plow, some cannot be plowed until it is frozen. The Town has threatened to do this for 3 to 4 years now and it has come down to people are now scrambling to get something done. John stated he believes the roads need 18 feet traveled way and a turn around, if the association makes an attempt they will continue plowing.

Ryan noted anything moving forward would have to follow this ordinance.

John yes.

Ryan asked if someone comes to the town after the ordinance is in place and someone comes to the town and says “I have brought my road up to standards” will the town honor that and then plow the road.

John stated yes, I believe so.

Stan noted some date and typo errors need correcting as well.

After a significant Board discussion

Marc stated that the Board should consider the ordinance and lay down some decent road standards to be plowed

Ryan noted this should also apply to anything moving forward as far as new construction, subdivisions etc.

Marc noted why not just say no more private roads from here out. He stated all roads are to be town roads meeting town standards per the ordinance.

Stan moved to table the Code of Ordinance of Street Construction until the next meeting

Marc seconded the motion

The Board voted 4-0 in favor

New Business:

No New Business

Additions:

Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting for Planning Board will be October 17, 2022 at 6:30 pm

Adjourn Meeting:

Stan moved to adjourn the meeting

Marc seconded the motion

The Board voted 4-0 in favor

The meeting was adjourn at 8:20 pm

Ryan Mcallister, Chairperson

Mary Tremblay, CEO/Admin Assistant

Casco Solar Ordinance points of discussion

Draft

- Commercial solar farm is any project totaling over 1500sqft (with possible Planning Board variance after reviewing of specifics of projects for a “residence” that are greater than 1500sqft?)
- Require supporting documentation outlining the reasons for location of project(especially when project would be located on “Prime” agricultural land or working forests)
- Require site soil analysis
- Prioritize “dual or multi use” operations i.e. “solar pasture” or blueberry/ orchards etc. submitted with operation and maintenance plans.
- Solar mitigation fee schedule (teared fee schedule with the purpose of incentivizing projects to be developed on properties, lots, or specific locations around town and not on working forestland, areas of recreation or agricultural importance.
- Strict penalties for “farming” or stripping sites of native soils.
- All permits to require site walks by Planning Board.
- Minimum of a 100’ wooded buffer with full visual break
- Solar projects located in fields must establish 100’ wooded buffer with mixed plantings and create visual break with a minimum of 12’ fence erected behind(solar side) of the planted wooded buffer
- Maximum of a 20 acre disturbed area per parcel
- 1 solar project per developer
- All solar arrays within the village or shore land zones must be roof top mounted (no ground arrays)
- No commercial solar project will be visible from any road, great pond or scenic viewing place i.e. Hackers Hill during any season.