

**Town of Granville**

**Planning Board**

**Public Hearing: October 15, 2018**

**Granville Town Hall, 707 Main Road, Granville MA 01034**

**RE: Granville Solar 1, LLC      0 Tom Sheets Rd      Granville**

**(Gale Head Development and Charles A Sheets)**

The hearing was called to order at 7:05 pm by Planning Board Chairman, Richard Pierce. Other Planning Board Members in attendance were: Laura Bauver, Scott Macomber, and Craig Phelon. ***A quorum of the Board was present.*** Also in attendance at the request of the Granville Planning Board was Michael Petrin, Professional Engineer from VHB. Representing the property owner and developer were representatives of Gale Head Development, their attorney, and representatives of an environmental consulting firm, SWCA. In addition, there were eighteen residents and a press representative.

Following introductions of Board Members and those who would be making presentations, Chairman Pierce read the Notice of Public Hearing.

Matt Renaud, of Gale Head, presented plans for "Granville 1", Sheets Road project. He stated that they are working with Eversource on this project. They will also be contacting the Granville Assessors to address 61A issues. He also indicated that they are preparing plans for an additional project within Granville.

A representative of SWCA presented information on an environmental survey that has been initiated on the subject property. She stated:

- Subject 44 acre parcel is currently completely forested. Use of 21 acres is proposed for the solar array
- Permit will be filed with the Conservation Commission
- Poles will be installed on Hayes Road
- Sequence of events would be:
  - Development of Storm Water Preservation Plan
  - Clear area: 5 acre patches at a time to minimize impact
  - Piles will be installed
  - Access road will be put in
  - Panels installed
  - Electricians do wiring
  - Site revegetation with low-growing plantings that will require mowing only about once per year
  - Active time on site is during installation
  - Once on-line, company representative will drive through site about once a month to inspect for damage or maintenance issues that need to be addressed
  - Perimeter fence will be 6" off ground to allow small animals free access, while securing the area from people and large animals that might cause damage or be injured
  - Granville Fire and Police Departments will have access and emergency shut off switches
  - Construction is estimated to occur over a 3-6 month period, depending primarily on weather
- Survey/Field Study:
  - Bordering vegetative wetlands have been marked off
  - Property is not in a 100 year flood plain
  - No unique or protected animals which need protection have been identified
  - Property is not located in a Watershed Protection Area

- Response to questions asked by Chairman Pierce:
  - To date there is no change in the proposal as submitted earlier
  - Footprint will not increase. If higher voltage panels are installed it could decrease
  - No issues foreseen in getting permit to clear cut the subject acreage – permit will be filed

Michael Petrin, PE had received and reviewed the Granville Bylaws, State Law, and application with related documentation prior to the hearing. Some issues that he felt needed additional attention were:

- Decommission verbiage
- The Planning Board will need to issue a Special Permit once all requirements and conditions are met
- Granville Zoning By-Law 4.4.3c.2 requires topographic mapping of the subject acreage. Map submitted with application was generated using Massachusetts QL2 LIDAR data. This provides estimation but is not highly accurate. It is recommended that a ground survey is completed and filed prior to issuance of permits
- Electrical wiring will be a combination of overhead and underground. Zoning By-Laws allow for placement to be at the discretion of the power company (Eversource) based on requirements of individual project
- Installer needs to be identified and approved prior to any work being done
- Additional comments are included in his written review, presented to the Planning Board on October 15, 2018. A copy of this review has been provided to Gale Head

Chairman Pierce invited those in attendance to ask any questions, and/or express concerns.

- Who works for whom?
  - SWCA representative responded that they are an independent environmental consulting firm.
  - VHB is a professional engineering firm contracted by the town to assist in overseeing this project/application process
  - Gale Head is the development company and has entered into a 30 year lease agreement with the property owner. Their legal counsel is from Bacon Wilson, PC.
  - The Town of Granville also has legal counsel under contract
- What will site look like?
  - Panels will be 8-10' off ground
  - Panels will cover 22 acres +/-
    - Area will be enclosed is security fencing
    - Panels will not be visible from the road, due to their placement within the site
  - Leased land is a 45 acre +/- site
    - Currently in "Chapter 61A"
    - 61A restriction will be removed and payment of taxes will be made to the Town
- Who determines if transmission lines are underground or on overhead poles?
  - Granville's "Solar Bylaw" allows Eversource to set need for poles
- How much vegetation will be cut down?
  - 22 acres will be clear cut for array
    - Low growing vegetation will be planted in this area for ease of maintenance
  - An additional 9 acres will be trimmed for shade management
    - Only taller trees will be removed, as necessary, to allow sun to reach panels

- Since this project is so far from the road, and will not be visible from the road, the Town does not plan to require vegetation to be planted at the perimeter of the fencing
- Who is responsible for upgrading and maintaining road?
  - Road will be upgraded and maintained to Eversource requirements
    - Maintenance and emergency vehicles will have access at all times
  - Project management will be responsible, by contract, for upgrades, oversight, and maintenance
- What is the voltage and who determines placement of poles?
  - 23.2 volts
  - Number and placement of poles will be determined by Eversource
- Can “they” close the road?
  - Sheets Road is a county road.
    - It cannot be closed or blocked at any time, by anyone
    - The Town is not responsible for maintenance of county roads
- What is the size of the proposed inverters and where will they be?
  - 6 mw
  - Will be within security fencing
- Who will benefit from the electricity generated?
  - Power flows directly to Eversource, so all will “benefit” from addition of “green energy” to the grid
  - Financially
    - The property owner will receive lease payment per their contract with the developer
    - The Town will receive payment of a portion of the “back taxes” that have been deferred due to the property being in Chapter 61A

- Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) will be agreed upon by the Town and Gale Head, by contract
    - Property owner will be subject to taxes
    - Utility owner will pay set amount to the Town
- How is decommissioning determined?
  - Town By-Law was written to require each project to obtain a surety bond, for an agreed upon amount
  - Utility owner bears first responsibility for decommissioning
  - If utility owner is not reachable, responsibility falls to property owner
  - If other parties have not taken care of the responsibility, the bond will be used by the Town to secure proper decommissioning
  - VHB has noted that LSGMSPIs of this size in similar communities have been required to carry a bond of \$80,000-\$120,000.
    - The applicant is proposing \$94,625, which falls within this range

The Board members stated they needed further information and documentation prior to issuing the Special Permit.

MOTION: To continue hearing until 7pm, November 5, 2018. (Bauver/Phelon)  
Motion carried.

Notice of the continuation will be posted.

The hearing recessed at 8:30 pm

Laura K Bauver, Planning Board Member