

Conservation and Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting

DRAFT Minutes 8/25/16 (taken by Bara)

present: Roxanne Marino, Bara Hotchkiss, Sue Poelvoorde, Brice Smith, Robert Oswald

excused: Andy Hillman

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm

Update on Zoning law revisions

Committee discussed the invitation from Nancy Zahler to have a non-voting liaison to Zoning Update Steering Committee (ZUSC); both Roxanne and Sue have been attending the meetings and are willing to serve, though both have travel scheduled during the key fall time period. Unanimous agreement to propose Sue as liaison and Roxanne as alternate. John Wertis from the Ag Committee suggested that they have a liaison from the Ag and Farmland Protection Committee on this committee; their common concerns are solar farms. Committee decided to table this idea for further consideration later.

Sue reported on July and early August ZUSC meetings. Discussions on the draft revision of the Ag zoning with the consultants continued, a first draft of proposed revisions is not yet ready for stakeholder groups invited to comment, such as ours, to receive. Possibly early September. Ag designation is supposed to protect agricultural areas with prime soils; hoping to de-intensify development, because the more houses, the more conflict with neighbors (farmers & non-farmers). Consultants suggested have to have a certain minimum size of 20 acres; Sue questioned how you'd subdivide a non-conforming (less than 20 acre) lot. They aren't yet dealing with the road frontage chunking; noted that Ag Protection Plan has example suggestions for zoning that could help mitigate this.

Review of current Ulysses local law for solar installations

Brice walked the committee through a powerpoint presentation on larger scale solar project issues (originally given to the Ulysses Planning Board), to give the committee background for advising on the current Town Solar law, as per the Town Board's request.

Major focus was interconnection, as the Board would like a map of the areas where it is most probable that large scale projects will be proposed. Would like to be able to overlap other maps like agricultural soils, slopes, etc.

Governed by NYS Standardized Interconnection, all are connected by remote metering; administratively

Size of a 2 mw facility is ~10 acres inside fence; most empty space b/w rows. Usually stacked north south so they won't shade each other.

Principal Barriers to Interconnection

Levels of cost in connecting: 1) interconnect quickly w/o much cost; most great sites gone; closest to grid, (2) medium, (3) most difficult to connect – depends on proximity to most robust transmission lines (3 phase, higher kV), electrical “stiffness” of the lines, location of substations

Substation upgrades cost the most.

5 circuits in the town, most of which feed loads both inside and outside of Ulysses.
Circuits are fed from four (4) substations: County Hospital, Cayuga Medical Center (hospital keeps high minimum loads), Trumansburg, and Burdett Meck (only single phase lines)

Estimated Distributed Generation Capacity:

if 35kV and 3 phase line (best in the town) + 4MW

if above 300 (kW?) have to go through full CISER process, study time of +4 mo

CMC Circuit #540 (34kV)

This circuit covers the majority of the Town's area

Much of this circuit's capacity is already under development: Renovus Solar Farms 1&2= 527 kW total (built on Jacksonville Rd)

Other development planned outside Ulysses = ?, total = 2931 kW

Near-term capacity of the line before high cost upgrades become more likely = 3,500kW

Remaining near-term capacity = 570kW, a more detailed estimate would require additional info from NYSEG and from other developers potentially looking at the circuits that cross Town lines.

5 kV 3 phase lines: County Hospital Circuit #736, Trumansburg #723, Trumansburg #747

Distribution system limits current growth of solar in NYS (including in our town)

Brice is willing to work with Town Planner or person who the Town contracts with for GIS / map making to overlay power lines with zoning maps; Roxanne will let Nancy and Darby know

Next meetings – goals and schedule:

Learn more about the glare issues and mitigation strategies (9/15 meeting, Brice will present)

Review Local Law 3 of 2015, look at sample laws (we have 3) for context (9/21 meeting)

September 15th, 3rd Thursday, 7:00 pm at Town hall

September 21, 7:00 at Town Hall

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm