

**VILLAGE OF RED HOOK
PUBLIC HEARING
COMMUNITY SOLAR FARM
JUNE 6, 2019
7:00 PM**

Present: Mayor Blundell, DM Kovahchik, Trustee Trapp, Trustee Norris, Clerk/Treasurer Chiarella, Charles Laing was absent. Brandee Nelson from Tighe and Bond and Jeff Irish of Sun Common.

Mayor Blundell opened the meeting at 7:00 with the Pledge of Allegiance. Residents were asked to sign in to speak.

Mayor Blundell stated this is a continued Public Hearing following the May 16 session and we have heard prior comments. The solar project is a shared service with the Town of Red Hook and Village of Tivoli. Project is centered around need for local, green energy and ties in with NYS tax policy incentives and is a tax write-off for the contractor. This is a \$4 million project.

Sun Common presented a brief slide show of the project to update folks from the last session and include comments made then.

Community Solar is new to NYS.

Bid process was done by the Town of Red Hook and is subject to final approval.

Will generate \$11 million of solar electricity.

In 6-7 years the Town has the option to purchase the system.

Participants will save 10% of their electric bill. If bill is \$ 100 / will pay \$ 90 from a clean energy source.

Project is close to the southeast neighbors - a new site plan has been submitted with a 150' setback, 8' wooden fence along the south side with shrubs.

SEQR continues - property survey is complete.

Enhanced screening design.

Will continue to receive comments from the Public Hearing.

Wetland survey - relocated panels to the north end

Moved transfer to panels.

Survey clarified two neighbors sheds that were over property lines.

Visual impact to the Doncheck home - property to the east - no screening on east - will replace a double row of trees.

Enhanced to 240 shrubs which are deer resistant - trees are from 40-50 feet, the line of trees will be staggered.

The fence will be raised 6" to allow a gap on the bottom to allow wildlife to move through.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Michael Patierno - builds solar projects and can do it for less and do better, asked if an RFP was done and stated he can help the process.

Tesa Husted - is with the Environmental Club at RHHS - feels solar is important for the community and should be educated and take action against climate change.

Yvonne Turchetti - in favor of solar but is frustrated with the lack of transparency and no notice being given to the adjoining neighbors. Still waiting for answers from a prior email and is happy with the changes made to the site plan. Mayor Blundell stated her written comments were reviewed and this project has been in the works for several years. Not obligated to respond to all questions, piece by piece.

Sarah Imboden - Member of the Town of Red Hook - personnel view is in support of solar project but concerned with Monroe process is key and the project should go through the planning process. Also, the Public Hearing Notice was not on the Village web-site.

Laurie Husted - A member of the Conservatory Advisory Council, that sets goals for the community and states solar should be available for everyone.

Dennis Collet - stated it's a historical moment for 3 municipalities to participate in such a powerful project. The project is in the light industry zone and was such when residents purchased their properties.

Jenn Cavanagh - is in support of ownership of solar panels but not all can place them so this project helps them.

Coleen Kurtz - Lives in Glen Ridge - stated residents should have been officially notified of the project and is in favor of solar.

Mark Donchek - stated he still has concerns but some have been abated. Should be a better way for financial and planning - concerned if at night there is an emergency and electric lines are down they will not be producing electric. A FOIL was submitted and stated more accurate minutes should be kept. A draft Article 78 has been submitted.

The Town of Red Hook has a written comment entered into the record.

Robert McKeon – States the Town supports the project. There has been public outreach in the newspaper, and on Panda, 9 meetings and Sun Common has made 3 presentations. Project is allowed in the district, location attributes are 3 phase wiring nearby, and municipality already owns the land. Project was listed on the Town web-site, 3 proposals were received, the Planning Board reviewed the project an official notice of RFP was received. Robert also stated there is a 5 page written response to a FOIL which is available for review at the Town and Village Hall.

Mark Donchek – Stated Jeff Irish of Sun Commons was part of the RFP process and kept other technologies excluded.

Michael Patierno – In favor of solar just not in favor of paying so much.

Dennis Collet – The Utility doesn't determine the time line. RFP was circulated 15 to firms and published. Five took a tour of the facility area, 3 filed RFP's. A review committee was composed with 2 different technologists.

Robert McKeon stated he met with Central Hudson and they helped guide him through the SEQR application.

Robert McKeon thanked the Village and the developer for all their help.

Mayor Blundell asked if there was any further public comments. (8:10 pm).

Mark Patierno stated check into all new programs with NYSERDA.

Mayor Blundell made a motion to close the public hearing. Trustee Trapp seconded this motion. All were in favor.

Mayor Blundell made a motion to accept additional written comments until June 12th.

DM Kovalchik seconded this motion. All were in favor.

Mayor Blundell states the Village and Town have been consistently in pursuit of sustainability with many projects over the years; with LED lighting and have participated in the 10% Challenge. Funds are the major hold-back to creative projects and we must outsource for grants for further advancement. This project has no land acquisition cost. The state and federal tax incentives find investors to put up the money at no bonding or costs to tax payers. The Monroe Process is underway but would have been needed no matter which muni took the project. We took lead on both (SEQR/Monroe). The Village is lead agency due to owning the land which gives Village residents clean drinking water and must be protected. We see a great synergy of protecting the aquifer and harvesting solar power and clean water, all from the same ground

SEQR Part 2- Lead Agency

Was voted on May 2 for circulation to involved parties/agencies– today is June 6th which is day 29

Brandee Nelson from Tighe and Bond reviewed the draft SEQR determination.

Part II

- Impact on Land – YES
- Impact on Geological Features – NO
- Impacts on Surface Water – NO
- Impact on groundwater – NO
- Impact on Flooding – NO
- Impacts on Air – NO
- Impact on Plants and Animals – NO
- Impact on Agricultural Resources – NO
- Impact on Aesthetic Resources – YES
- Impact on Historic and Archeological Resources – NO
- Impact on Open Space and Recreation – NO
- Impact on Critical Environmental Areas – NO
- Impact on Transportation – NO
- Impact on Energy – NO
- Impact on Noise, Odor and Light – NO

- Impact on Human Health – NO
- Consistency with Community Plans – NO
- Consistency with Community Character – NO

Mayor Blundell stated the regular month Board meeting is June 10th and there will be no action taken at this time.

Mayor Blundell made a motion to schedule a Special Meeting on June 17th at 7:00 pm to discuss and work on the Monroe process and SEQR. Counsel will draw up a notice for posting.

No further Board comments.

Mayor Blundell made a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing at 8:30. Trustee Trapp seconded this motion. All were in favor.

Submitted by,

Cynthia Chiarella
Clerk/Treasurer