

Public Hearing, Town Of Otto Zoning Board

A Public Hearing of the Zoning board of the Town of Otto, Cattaraugus County and the State of New York was held at the Otto Town Hall, 8842 Otto- East Otto Road, Cattaraugus, NY on the 27th day of October 2020.

Present: Karen McAndrew .. Zoning Board Chairperson
Terri Steinbar .. Zoning Board Member
Ron Hebner .. Zoning Board Member

Others Present:

Ron Wasmund .. Town Supervisor
Paul Stang .. Council Member
Trisha Priest .. Town Clerk
Robert Barber Jr. .. Highway Superintendent
Ron Solem
Gretchen Breidel
Kevin Walker
Dan Cseplar Representative of OMNI
Bryan Bayer
Dan Steinbar
James Bedrin Representative of Dimension
Kieran Siar
Corey Wiktor Industrial Development Agency
Ron Neal

Karen McAndrew opened the Public Hearing at 7pm.

Karen reviewed customary public hearing conduct and stated the purpose of the public hearing.

The purpose of the public hearing is to gather information from the public on the following issues.

1. The Zoning board has received applications for special use permits for two proposed solar farm projects. The first being located on Dake Hill Road and the second located on Dunkleman Hill Road, both situated in the agricultural district of the Town of Otto.
2. The Zoning Law on Solar Farms calls for a fifty foot setback from the front, side or rear lot lines. The interest is to reduce this set back to thirty five feet.

Karen McAndrew opened the floor to Dan Cseplar of OMNI to present their project located on Dake Hill Road.

Mr. Cseplar presented a site map and an over view of the property and the proposed projects. Omni is proposing three projects on the property. Each project consists of a five megawatt array situate on approximately 30 acres of land each. The land lease is for twenty five years. When the lease is up the property owner has the option to purchase the array, revoke the lease and dismantle the array or renew the project for an additional five years. Omni is offering monthly maintenance on the grounds to mow and make repairs as needed. The projects will be surrounded by a seven foot chain link fence and there will be a gravel access road put in from Dake Hill Road.

Corey Wiktor from the IDA spoke about the process of review for the issuance of permits. He asked if the Town Board would be doing a special meeting to review the applications. If the Town desired the IDA will act as a lead, as an uncoordinated review on behalf of the Town Board.

The floor was turned over to James Bedrin of Dimensions to present their project located on Dunkleman Hill Road.

Mr. Bedrin presented a sitemap and an overview of the property and the proposed projects. This project will be seven megawatt DC / five megawatt AC array utilizing approximately 50 acres of a 100 acre plot. Dimensions has conducted a full wetland topography of the property. They have made their first deposit to National Grid to upgrade their equipment at the power station. He is confident that the property location for the arrays cannot be seen from the main road or neighboring properties.

Dan Steinbar took the floor to ask how much capacity the electric grid had and can the grid take this volume of electric. Mr. Bedrin responded that connection studies were being done to let the development company know how much the grid can accept.

Paul Stang took the floor to ask what happens to the projects if the property is sold. The response was that the contract lease would continue as agreed with the new property owner. Mr. Steinbar then asked what would occur if the project was sold to another company in specific regarding the decommissioning plan. The response was that the new company would be bound to the same agreement and would have to comply with the plan. Dimensions had a copy of their decommissioning plan on site if anyone wished to review it.

Cory Wiktor took the floor to explain the IDA's possible role in the process and to give a short overview of what other Towns in Cattaraugus County have done or are in the process of doing. He stated that the IDA is happy to help the Town with the step by step processes knowing that small towns may not have the departments or personnel to conduct their own SEQR review.

With everyone having the opportunity to speak who wished to do so, Chairperson McAndrew closed the public hearing by declaration that the public hearing has concluded and is adjourned at 7:28pm

The next Zoning Board meeting will be held on November 10, 2020 6:30PM at the Otto Town Hall.

Respectfully Submitted on behalf of the Otto Zoning Board,

Trisha A. Priest, Town Clerk