

Minutes, Energy Advisory Committee/Design Review Committee

May 4, 2020, 7:00PM, by Zoom

- I. Call to Order. 7:04PM Attending. EAC: Valerie White, Lajos Kamocsay (chair), Silas Fyler, George Aronson. DRC: Ted Galeota, Sidd Jeevan, Colin Barbera, Ron Goodman, Paul Wen, Paul Driscoll, Julie Rowe. Sharon TV: Max Goodman. Observing: Subbu Devulpalli, Mike Sherman, Jyothi Ramsubramani, Rob Maidman, Cheryl Schnitzer (Sustainable Sharon Coalition), Kathy Farrell, Bri McAlevey
- II. Approval of minutes from April 27, 2020. Approved unanimously.
- III. Lajos mentioned receipt of a large number of emails in support of larger array at Landfill. Showed the two renderings. Discussion of reduction in size, and reasons. Concern about role of esthetics. George: Landfill project is on relatively isolated land, where people don't come and go routinely. Julie: seems to be a disdain about how the project looks. Lajos: DSD gave most capacity at all sites. To find out capacity we will have to wait for post closure permit and for Eversource interconnection study. There are more reasons for reduction in size than concerns for abutters. Ron: A lot of emails were written. Who arranged for this letter? George: Silas and I worked on it. Ron: You're aware of the way town meetings are supposed to work and how 2 members of a 4 person committee aren't supposed to be communicating about an issue? That would be in violation of the open meeting laws and you've warned the SDRC about things like that so I find it really hypocritical and surprising that you would pull a stunt like this and flout open meeting law. In response to what Silas has said at prior meetings about what was in fact voted on at Town Meeting, there's nothing in warrant about size, capacity or wattage. People are passing out false information. Asks for apology. Silas: two members are not a quorum and can talk without violating Open Meeting Law. Ron: people voted on the article. You are confusing people. Lajos: people with hands up can make statements: Sid: What DSD presented on the 27th was a first pass, it was a rush job, shouldn't have presented, lots of ifs and maybe. EAC shouldn't have engaged people based on poor information. Town of Weston worked with abutters to build a landfill array. We can too. Concerned about climate change, concerned about revenue. Slope is not necessarily prohibitive and custom ballast can be used to put solar panels. Bri: keeps hearing that this committee is trying to set up a playbook for different projects. Thinks this is impossible. Slowing process down for this purpose, a playbook, is wrong. She can't believe changes were made at Gavins project because of soccer balls. She would have purchased soccer balls, losing them would have happened once or twice per year. She thinks DSD has bent over backwards. Not every abutter is going to be happy. Ron: Did Valerie or Lajos know? Valerie: no, not really, knew a supportive letter might be drafted but had no idea there would be a barrage of emails. She spoke with Silas and she encouraged him to ask people to write a letter that would encourage progress on the decision making. Lajos, no. Julie: disgusted. There were inaccuracies in those letters. If George and Silas had substantial impact on this letter which it sounds like they did, then we need to discuss. We haven't been slowing the projects down. The contracts are currently being reviewed by a lawyer with experience with solar contracts. There are a lot of things that go into the process that people aren't aware of. Lot of inaccuracies in the letters that were sent out. We have not been slowing things down. Project wasn't good on several measures, the contracts are now being reviewed by Solar lawyers. Solar contracts that were signed were not the best for Sharon. Half information being given to people of Sharon behind people's back. Rob Maidman: organizing this letter barrage was a conflict of interest; don't advise other people to be antithetical to what you are trying to achieve. Respect the rules of engagement and stick to it. Sid: point has been made, would like to add though that DRC has been working with DSD, doing site visits and not slowing things down. The process is not efficient since key details were overlooked by DSD and EAC initially. If you go and look at other towns, we can see how to do this. Doing it right the first time is less effort. Making a playbook is hard, but necessary. The devil is in the details. George: we don't need to rehash all the way back to February more than a year ago. There is a difference with the landfill project because of the permitting necessary. Ron: Makes a distinction—what DRC has been trying to do in terms of mitigation is to get the developer to spend their money. A one fifth size site developer (1 megawatt which is 1/5 the size of our landfill) in a nearby town \$250,000 in mitigation. All we've gotten from our developer is some fencing.
- IV. Consider/vote on recommendations to Selectboard, for Gavins and Landfill. Gavins: Lajos: at last meeting we had recommendations written up. Question about size of panel change, Jenny said so far out they don't know which size panel they will be using. Can we now vote on recommendation? Paul Wen: was there a vote on increased size. Lajos: interconnection application is dependent on the output. Paul Wen: the new module is 8 percent larger. Should remove three strips of module along the west edge of the small canopy, to preserve as many trees as possible. Then it will be still three percent larger. There needs to be trees along Gavins Pond

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and along small canopy. Lajos: this is in the recommendation already. George: we have that. This isn't the level of detail we can do at this time in advance of the interconnection. Paul Wen: happy to make sketch. George: send it to Selectboard. Has no objection to informing Selectboard that sketch is forthcoming from abutter. Lajos: added language to grid recommendation. Paul Wen: still wants removal of panels. George: can't do this detail of design until we have interconnection study. Lajos: three years out. Paul Wen: what's the rush to vote on this? Lajos: waiting for interconnection is in the proposed recommendation. Ron: should stay with original size. Should care about size. Silas: it's the amount of AC power that matters. Ron: surely panels are going to get more productive. Lajos: interconnection study is based on capacity, can't change it. George: Capacities in interconnection studies are fixed. Ron: Won't the technology change in 30 years? George: there is protection. Ted: what are we agreeing to? Panel size, square footage. Silas: output, number of panels and size were presented at pre town meeting. At town meeting we never presented square footage. Ted: if these panels become less efficient . . . Silas: not more than five percent from technical response from the RFP. Ted: how can we agree to anything? George: We're looking at the capacity in the interconnection. Ted: we have to agree to square footage, plus or minus five percent. Lajos: We're agreeing to output. Ted: has to be some kind of limit for square footage. Ron: size changed eight percent. The physical size should not change from what was presented. Finds it hard to believe the technology 2 years from now will be less efficient than it is today. Should hold them to what was voted on at town meeting. Ted: is it capacity or square footage? Refers to Silas' email that we did vote on square footage at town meeting. Now, he says the size has to change. Ted is confused that things are changing. We need an endgoal. George: capacity. Paul Wen: Jenny's email was about square footage. Lajos: can we start with the square footage of option five? Paul Wen: no. Ron: We don't want to give them larger square footage. All along they've told us the size was not changing. If larger, what about compensation? George: it's a Selectboard issue. Ted: with option five, that's the maximum. Lajos: it's not the capacity that's changing. Let's have this be the maximum footprint. Silas: What if they go over by one percent because of a gutter. Ron: 8 percent is too generous. If people want to allow an overage, it should be 2%. Sid: Jenny said five. DSD doesn't oppose a tolerance. Lajos: we could say this is the max size. Sid: does five percent cut it or should we keep it lower? What exactly is the science behind it? If they get more revenue we should share in it. Lajos: not leasing land based on square footage, based on capacity. George: even an 8 percent difference in footprint is not prohibitive. The overall concept is what we should look at. They're limited by interconnection. Panel capacity is not going to fall. Okay to require a footprint. Julie: Why is the array bigger for this site and not for others? Silas: because the purchase will be later. G8's instead of G4's. Julie: what about landfill? Seems weird that a bigger array will be producing the same amount of energy. George: structural elements, angles, change from wavy to flat. Everybody would feel more comfortable with 8 percent increase if someone was looking out for abutters. Silas: they never promised particular panels. Lajos: we could cap the size of the footprint; Ron: supports Julie. Developer said several times in option five there was no change in size when asked why it looks larger. But there was. The only one who benefits from increasing size is DSD. Silas: developer isn't going to get more than is in the interconnection application. Ron: new panels would be giving a benefit to them. George: I'm okay with no change in capacity, okay with smaller footprint. Ron: how will we know? George: limited by interconnection, meter will show production, on website. Silas: RFP says they have to post it. George: panel size and capacity should be consistent with option 5. Lajos: makes amendment to grid. If we keep existing trees and add L-shape which is being drawn by Paul Wen. Ted: comment. We don't know the capacity of option 5. Lajos: drafted language for recommendation grid. Many calculations of square footage, using projection to ground. Paul Driscoll: if interconnection comes back as less, will there be a smaller footprint? George: Would have to revisit design. Valerie moved and Silas seconded that EAC send the displayed recommendation grid to the Selectboard. Three yes votes, Lajos abstained. (Recommendations reproduced below.) Design Review Committee survey: three opposed, one in favor, one abstention. (It's understood that Paul Wen will send sketch.)

- V. East: Lajos: has suggestion from abutters re: more trees. Sketch of trees/shrubs resulting from abutter meeting presented showing additional trees. Silas does not want to discuss it, not on the agenda. Doesn't know if developer or abutters have seen it or who prepared it. Abutter Subbu speaks about the East plan. Lajos gives brief history of discussions with facilities manager and SDRC. Julie and Ron add. Lajos will share the tracking document with Subbu. Bri asks if research has been done. Lajos, Julie, and Ron explain. George and Lajos discuss the sketch and presenting it as recommendation to Select Board. Ted questions what is holding up the construction. There is some landscaping to finalize but asks what is slowing them down at East. Lajos – DSD needs approval from Select Board on site plan. Silas: don't know where sketch came from, East is not on agenda. Silas does not want to add the sketch with the line of trees to come from the EAC because the EAC has made its recommendation. Abutter Subbu will see

the canopy from every facing window and the only thing he's asking is for some trees. George motion to pass the sketch on to the Select Board with the advice that it should be considered within the context of the existing first recommendation on line of site abutters. Lajos second. Ron: came out of abutters meeting. Subbu: abutter. Was surprised about progress. Kept in dark. Live next to door where kindergartners leave. They have to walk next to solar panels, school busses have to go by. Not sure if this plan has gone through safety review. Abutters not properly notified. Lajos: school bus clearance has been cleared with town engineer and school facilities manager. Subbu: what if bus or parent's car or teacher hits an upright? Does Sharon have to pay? Will eat up all profit. Lajos: liability insurance is being talked about with special counsel. Subbu: How much are we paying for insurance? One third of elementary kids in Sharon walk under this structure once a day. Julie: I'm on DRC, president of East PTO. Has children at East. Discussed these questions exhaustively, spent a great deal of time talking about most of these issues. Have tried to make the contract as good as it can be. Ron: talked to fire department, doesn't know who's responsible for snow. Hope Subbu will get involved. Lajos: have document mentioned, will share it if Subbu will give email. Subbu: happy to do that. Bri: just wanted to comment that these are all important issues, how many other towns has the EAC and DRC contacted? Lajos: has spoken with Connecticut universities where DSD has done the work. Julie: we visited a number of sites, had a trip on New Year's Eve to visit sites in Metro area, Wayland, Worcester, Archdiocese of Boston in Braintree. The canopy we are getting is different. Went to Newton South. No other school is immersed in a residential area as this one is. Hard to compare us to other schools. Spent a considerable amount of time. Bri: this is about structure. Julie: Selectboard has experienced lawyer. Swathi: hopes picture can be part of the plan. Ron: has spoken with someone who does these developments. Developers have ability to do mitigation. George: line of site abutter visual mitigation is part of recommendation. It would seem that the recommendation covers what is in the sketch. Considerations of the type in the sketch are covered by recommendation. Lajos: attach sketch to recommendations. Ted: what's slowing them down for East construction? Lajos: DSD needs approval of site plan from Selectboard. Ted: what am I agreeing to? Cost of tree? Lajos: Tree warden recommendations. Silas: We have made recommendation. Lajos: we have made recommendation, and said there was an abutters meeting and more would be forthcoming. George: would make motion that EAC forward sketch to Selectboard to be considered within the context of the recommendation for line of site abutters for visual mitigation. Ron: sense that you are opposed to making it as a recommendation. Why are you opposing. Subbu: would rather have discussion now. Jyothi: from other family. Wants recommendation. Lajos: seconds. Vote: George, yes, Silas, No, Valerie, Yes, Lajos, Yes. 3, 1, 0. Motion passes. Sid: don't need to discuss things over and over, DSD never says they can't do it.

- VI. Prepare for next Selectboard meeting. Included in previous items.
- VII. Group discussion and topics not reasonably anticipated within 48 hours of the meeting. East discussion above. Ted: why can't we get the cones placed on the corners of the solar array?
- VIII. Extensive discussion about mitigation at landfill. Sid: we need to set the record straight. How do we do this? Lajos - Emails received today had misinformation and George and Silas should have not helped write email with incorrect information. Reduction in size was not solely due to mitigation. During last meeting, DSD clarified that the draft was rushed and they will provide update. Silas, Ron, George and Ted. Lengthy discussion around George and Silas taking accountability of spreading poor information without seeking clarification from DSD. No conclusion. Silas - Can we vote on Landfill now in next 10-15 mins and be done with it? Silas, Ron, George: discussion, accusations of slander. Lengthy discussion. George: recommendation must account for uncertainty? Silas: What can we decide? Lajos: can we have a simple recommendation and vote on it now? Silas: we can spend 15 minutes drafting a motion. But too many DRC people have dropped out. Ted: We should ask DSD to respond before next meeting about landfill plans. I would really like to hear the reasons for change in size from DSD. Let us not blindside them with questions, but request them to bring information for next meeting.
- IX. Schedule next meeting. May 11, 2020, 7:00PM
- X. Adjourn. Unanimous vote to adjourn.

Issue Mitigation Status Recommendation Decision

Location of front canopy

Note: Items may not be discussed in the order listed. The meeting likely will be broadcast and videotaped for later broadcast by Sharon Community Television.

Four additional options were presented, Option 5 preferred.
Location of front canopy under revised Option 5 is acceptable.
Revised Option 5 is acceptable. Subject to design details.
Final detailed recommendations cannot be determined until the interconnection studies are complete.
Design details to be revisited after interconnection studies are complete.
If the footprint of the solar array can be reduced due to improvements in panel efficiency or lower interconnection capacity, the reduction should be made to the smaller canopy.

Canopy size and capacity

The footprint of the final design shall be capped at the footprint of what is presented as Option 5.
The capacity shall be capped at what DSD applied to Eversource for in its interconnection application.
Siting of electrical equipment (inverter/transformer, meters, switch, etc.) and location of utility easements
Select location of equipment to avoid noise impacts and pedestrian paths.
Protect with fencing. Provide landscaping to mitigate visual impacts
The location of the transformer is acceptable to Sharon Soccer Association as long as it is locked within a tall fenced area not readily accessible to children
Recommended location of electrical equipment is along Gavins Pond Rd, in the East corner of the front parking lot, as shown in Option 4 plan. Electrical equipment should be fenced in and not readily accessible to children. Slat type cedar fencing recommended to hide electrical equipment.
Soccer ball retrieval from canopy
Monoslope of canopies under revised Option 5
Revised Option 5 includes monosloped canopies allowing the noncapture of soccer balls. Revised Option 5 is acceptable.
Removal of mound
Option 5 requires removal of the mound. Mound should be removed.
Removal of trees
Minimize tree removal. Consult with abutter at 103 Gavins Pond Rd.
Visual impacts / line-of-sight abutter visual mitigation
Plant trees and vegetation along Gavins Pond Rd and towards 103 Gavins Pond Rd property in an L shape configuration.
Plant trees and vegetation along Gavins Pond Rd and towards 103 Gavins Pond Rd property in an L shape configuration subject to consultation with Sharon Tree Warden. Explore transplanting some of the trees from the removed mound.
Consultation with Town Engineer, Sharon Tree Warden and SDRS for final site plan submission, following the Ashland, MA landfill project mitigation process.
Consider sketches to be forthcoming by 103 Gavins Pond Rd abutter.
Darkness under canopies Lighting under panels
Recommend installing lighting under the canopies, making sure to minimize light pollution to abutters. Limit lighting to when needed, should not be on all night.
Glare impacts
No impact on passing traffic. Low and modest impacts on nearest residences
Reportedly there are minimal impacts on the soccer fields.
Glare, as described by the developer is acceptable.
Water management
Avoid water build-up (ponding) in the parking lots
Meet with Conservation Commission about discharging water onto adjacent parcel.

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Develop a water management plan to avoid water build-up in the parking lots. Developer required to further mitigate water management should the initial design prove to be inadequate.

Sharon Soccer Association sign on front of canopy structure

Requested permission from developer to place a sign on the supporting structure. Developer agreed to allow the soccer association to place a sign on the supporting structure.

Soccer association will explore the feasibility and possible location of sign placement in discussion with the developer.

Sharon Soccer Association to explore possibilities with the developer after the canopies are built. Consult with abutters about size and location of sign.

Note: the recommendations are not ranked in order.