Town of Sharon

Municipal Solar Oversight Committee

 Minutes for 4/11/22 held on Zoom

**Welcome**

Committee Attendees: George Aronson (Chair), Chris Pimentel, Xander Shapiro, Rob Maidman, Silas Fyler (Secretary), David Ruggiero

Guest Attendees: Abutters: Terry Greenstein Siddharth Jeevan, Glen Silverman. DSD (developer): Tim Magner, Josh Burdett. Landscape Architect: Jason Hellendrung, Tetra Tech. Other: Ralph Halpern, 23 Indian Lane

**Agenda**

Meet and review landscaping and visual mitigation for the Solar landfill project with Distributed Solar Design (DSD) landscape architect. Meeting would satisfy in part Condition 2 to the MSOC recommendations to the Select Board as approved at the Select Board meeting on March 23.

Meeting began at 4:35 pm

George introduced Josh of DSD, who introduced Jason, the landscape architect.

Jason shared the site plan. Screening is more effective when closer to houses. For the Silverman and Stern houses, there are two rows of trees close to the property border. For the Jeevan house, trees are restricted to the landfill site.

One substitution since the plan was made per preference of the Conservation Commission - stove pines, which are native, are preferred to Austrian pines. Looked at deer-resistant species, mix of evergreen species, narrow slivers of land for planting.

Specific locations will be staked in field when planted to account for local conditions (rock, etc.). Will minimize space taken up in back yards. DSD Will document everything as an “executable version” of the site plan consistent with approvals of MassDEP and Conservation Commission.

Glen: how will it look exactly?

Jason: Evergreens at edge of woods to fill space. First stake out locations, then fill gaps. Start at 8 feet, then grow 1 to 2 feet per year. White spruce grow to 40 to 60 feet, 15-foot radius, 4-foot diameter when planted. Bigger trees have more shock on transplant, take awhile to recover and grow.

Terry: concerned with ledge and boulders on property. Brought in soil, hit ledge when they try to plant

Jason: Sid’s house – mix of white cedar, holly, pitch pine, white pine, white spruce

Sid: What about gap mitigation? There is a conservation easement.

Jason: The view would miss panels. I know no amount of mitigation will make it disappear.

Have flexibility when flagging locations to spread out more to adjust to mitigate view.

Sid: Will there be total coverage?

Jason: pretty comprehensive, 10 feet high and wide, pitch pine is particularly dense

Generally, the plan is conceptual and locations will be confirmed with residents at time of staking and planting. Will optimize tree location and types per abutter preferences

Josh : The MassDEP and ConComm approvals are for planting on the landfill property. There is more flexibility with planting on private land.

Josh noted that trees are warrantied to live for one year and to be replaced if they do not survive.

George: suggested that be noted on the site plan

Sid: agreed it will help to see the stake positions.

The plans show approximate locations subject to final locations in the field.

Sid: asks for views of spacing over time.

Jason: replied that it would be eye-balling the view through a forest

Sid: asked if shrubs on the edge would be OK

Chris: noted that asking exactly which tree will go where is asking too much

It was noted that the Sterns chose not to attend the meeting.

Terry: stated her concern with the gap

Jason: noted there is limited space between and adjacent to the wetlands

6:00 pm Rob Maidman exited the meeting

Terry: said the landfill is totally visible and that she watches the animals

Xander: noted there is a limit to what can be planted due to topography and other features

Terry: said she is not 100 percent happy

Xander: asked if there are non-vegetation options to screen the view in the gap?

DSD was asked to consider two options -- higher alternative fencing (e.g., with wood slats) to screen the gap from Terry’s view, and decoration of the chain-link fence opposite Sid’s property – and to estimate the ballpark cost.

Next meeting will be held when amended site plan is ready for review and discussion.

Suggested date was May 9, 2022

Meeting was adjourned at [6:10]