

CITY OF LEWISTON
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
FINAL MINUTES for September 26, 2022

- I. **ROLL CALL:** The meeting was held in the City Council Chambers on the first floor of City Hall and was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Chairperson, Lucy Bisson chaired the meeting.

Members in Attendance: Lucy Bisson, Kristine Kittridge, Shanna Cox, Timothy Gallant, Roger Dupre, and Michael Marcotte

Members Absent: Joshua Nagine

Associate Members in Attendance: Amy Smith and Leigh Albert

Leigh Albert appointed full voting member for this meeting.

Staff Present: Shelley Norton, Deputy Director, and Shelly Godbout Administrative Assistant

- II. **ADJUSTMENT TO THE AGENDA:** None

- III. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None

- IV. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- a) Lewiston Solar II, LLC, on behalf of Edmund & Louise Buschmann c/o Fontaine Family Real Estate has submitted a development review application to construct a 1.975 megawatt solar project on 20.14 acres at 24 Ferry Road.

Shelley Norton read staff comments then welcomed and answered questions from the board. Timothy Gallant requested time line on state and federal approval. Shelley Norton responded stating she did not know, said applicant may be able to give an update. She stated usually within a few months when they receive it, they may already have it and it may be in route. Martha Staskus, Chief Development Officer of Norwich Solar Technologies introduced herself and staff, Kara Moody of Stantec Services and absent are Krebs & Lansing, Consulting Engineers.

Kara Moody who provided an over view of the project then welcomed questions and comments from the board. Pertaining to Timothy Gallants question regarding permits, none of the state permits have been filed as of yet. After receiving local approval they go on to submit state applications. All applications have been drafted and are ready to file provided no changes need to be made.

Lucy Bisson opened the public hearing.

Doug Lepage of 33 Ferry Road, voiced his concern regarding maintenance and height of vegetation as his driveway is directly across the street facing the proposed array. Martha Staskus responded by stating trees will be allowed to grow relatively tall – 20 ft. Doug Lepage inquired what will be done when arrays are no longer viable. Martha Staskus stated that solar panels are recyclable and even though they are warranted 25-30 years, they can be replaced. Doug Lepage asked if his property value had been taken into consideration and Lucy Bisson responded no. Doug Lepage asked if any board member would like to have that across the street from their home and Lucy Bisson stated they would respond at the end of public comment. Doug Lepage expressed displeasure hearing there have been two other meetings regarding this issue and this is the first he hears of it. Lucy Bisson stated this is the first planning board meeting regarding this project and Shanna Cox stated this is the fourth solar project within the city.

Ed Buschman, property owner of 24 Ferry Road where the project is proposed, spoke in favor of the project. Ed Buschmann stated that he has had other opportunities to sell and the idea of a solar array appealed to him.

Mr. Bonneau of 50 Ferry Road stated he and his sister (Malier of 46 Ferry Road) own two adjoining properties to the proposed array. Mr. Bonneau expressed his concerns regarding the array and inquired how this will affect his property value. He also wanted to know if trees would be cut or if there would be a buffer zone. Lucy Bisson responded by saying that there will be a buffer.

Lucien Lepage of 707 South Pleasant Street asked how much wetlands would be filled in. Kara Moody explained how the wetlands would be impacted and that it would be a minimum amount.

No other public spoke. Lucy Bisson closed the public hearing.

Lucy Bisson inquired about buffer zone guidelines. Shelley Norton responded by stating jurisdiction of Planning Board is to enforce the ordinance. Referring to Design Lewiston Site Plan Review and Design Guideline Standards, she stated the minimum planted height is 4 feet for evergreens. Applicant can choose to plant something higher, however growth varies depending on species and typically, planting larger trees takes longer for them to establish.

Timothy Gallant stated if 4 feet trees are going to be planted he would like to see a fast growing tree planted which will grow up to 2 feet per year. Martha Stukas added they would be happy to use the existing buffer and add to it to make it a more natural looking buffer. Shelley Norton stated that can be done. Lucy Bisson stated we would leave it to staff and the applicant to work out a plan using both existing and new plantings to satisfy the standards.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by Shanna Cox that the application submitted by Lewiston Solar II, LLC on behalf of Edmund & Louise Buschmann c/o Fontaine Family Real Estate at 24 Ferry Road, meets all of the necessary standards for a Conditional Use Permit contained in the Zoning and Land use Code, in Article X, Section 3, Standards for conditional use permits.

Second by **Roger Dupre**

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Shanna Cox** that the application submitted by Lewiston Solar II, LLC on behalf of Edmund & Louise Buschmann c/o Fontaine Family Real Estate at 24 Ferry Road, meets all of the necessary criteria contained in the Zoning and Land Use Code, including, but not limited to Article XIII, Section 4, Approval Criteria, and that approval be granted with the following conditions:

1. That any required state or federal wetland permits being acquired prior to the start of construction.
2. That approval by MDEP of the decommissioning plan and any conditions in their approval letter be met prior the issuance of a building permit.
3. That the decommissioning plan agreement shall be filed with the Registry of Deeds prior to the start of construction.

Second by **Roger Dupre**

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

Amy Smith recused herself from participating in the following project and sat in the audience. She is an abutter and the applicant is interested in an easement over her property.

- b) Choice Wedgewood LP, on behalf of Lewiston Auburn Area Housing Development Corporation, has submitted a development review application to construct 8 new apartment buildings and to remodel the existing Wedgewood House for housing at 91, 101 & 111 Pine Street, 69, 74, 75, 78, 79 & 82 Pierce Street, and 107, 111, 114, 115 & 119 Bartlett Street.

Shelley Norton reviewed staff comments. Lucy Bisson welcomed questions from the board for the staff. Shanna Cox mentioned the nonbinding comment regarding the size and functionality of the windows. She wanted it noted for the record she is aware that a developer could put in three times the amount of windows to get to the overall 25% required.

Catherine Elliott, Development Officer from Avesta introduced herself and the design team. Kaplan Thomson Architects, landscape architects Pat Carroll Associates, and civil engineers, Achorn Engineering. Catherine Elliott provided a quick overview of the project and turned the microphone over to Pat Carroll who went over the site plan. Phil Kaplan described each building design then welcomed and answered questions from the board.

Leigh Albert inquired about apartment size, occupancy minimum and maximum as well as parking spots on and off site. Shanna Cox commented on wheelchair accessibility and how every building has a ground floor accessible unit.

Lucy Bisson opened the public hearing. There was no comment. The public hearing was closed.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Kristine Kittridge** that the waiver request by Choice Wedgewood LP, on behalf of Lewiston Auburn Area Housing Development Corporation,, to reduce the required windows on the façade from 25% to 19% and to allow street trees on Pierce street within the right-of-way meets the five waiver criteria (a-e) of Article XI, District Regulations, Section 24, Additional Overlay District Regulations, Sub-section 5, Design District Standards, h, Waivers and that approval be granted.

Second by **Tim Gallant**

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Shanna Cox** that the application submitted by Choice Wedgewood LP, on behalf of Lewiston Auburn Area Housing Development Corporation, for an apartment complex on 14 consolidated parcels bounded by Pine, Pierce, Walnut and Bartlett Streets, meets all of the necessary criteria contained in the Zoning and Land Use Code, including, but not limited to Article XIII, Section 4, Approval Criteria, and that approval be granted with the following conditions:

1. That the street tree design be adjusted to meet code requirements as part of the final drawing set before the issuance of a building permit.
2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a storm water maintenance guarantee letter shall be filed with the Registry of Deeds.

3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, coordinate the water and sewer extensions with the Deputy Director of Public Works, Kevin Gagne.
4. Prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy, the applicant's engineer shall certify that all improvements have been completed in accordance with the approved plans including but not limited to utilities, pavements and plantings, and building exterior materials.

Second by **Roger Dupre**

VOTED: 6-1 (Passed) Michael Marcotte voted against.

V. OTHER BUSINESS:

a) None

VI. READING OF MINUTES:

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Shanna Cox** to accept the September 12, 2022 draft minutes as presented. Second by **Kristine Kittridge**.

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

VII. ADJOURNMENT: The following motion was made to adjourn.

MOTION: by **Kristine Kittridge** that this meeting adjourns at 7:30 p.m.
Second by **Tim Gallant**.

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

The next regularly scheduled meeting is for Monday, October 3, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Kristine Kittridge, Secretary