



**Town of Troy
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday August 7, 2024**

Members Present:

Kyle Smith (Chairman), Henry Underwood (Vice Chairman), Jack Gettens (Secretary), Matthew Meacham, Michael Leclerc, Richard H. Thackston III (Selectmen's Representative)

Planning Board Consultant:

Carol Ogilvie (Via Zoom).

Planning board Clerk:

Elizabeth Watson.

Public Present:

Katherine Sandman, Joyce Moore, Charles Moore, Amanda Norcross (Town File Consultant), Zachary Farkes (ReWild Renewables, Inc.), Unidentified Zoom Caller.

1 **Call to Order**

2 Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

3 **New Business**

4 **MOTION** to amend and approve the Planning Board Meeting Minutes from Wednesday, July
5 17, 2024, Mr. Gettens; by changing 'will receive' to 'could receive' on line 125; and replacing
6 the last sentence with the following 'for when the Planning Board makes the decision on the
7 project.' **SECOND**, Mr. Meacham. Motion passed, Mr. Thackston was not present, all other
8 members voted Yes.

9 **MOTION** to amend and approve the Site Walk Planning Board Meeting Minutes from Friday,
10 August 2, 2024, Mr. Underwood; by removing 'Bill Russell' and inserting 'a resident of West
11 Hill.' **SECOND**, Mr. Meacham. Motion passed, Mr. Gettens abstained, Mr. Thackston was not
12 present, all other members voted Yes.

13 **New Business**

14 Ms. Norcross informed the Planning Board that she will be reviewing the Planning Board files as
15 part of a town-wide filing system review. The Planning Board answered Ms. Norcross's
16 questions about the Planning Board's files. Once the review is complete, Ms. Norcross will
17 present her recommendations to the Planning Board.

18 **Correspondence**

19 **Road Agent Letter:**

20 There was a discussion of the letter that Mr. Coons submitted to the Planning Board regarding
21 the three Rewild solar project applications. The letter describes concerns about damage to Dort

22 Street and Bigelow Hill Road that could possibly occur during the construction phase of the
23 projects. The letter proposes potential agreements between the Town of Troy and Rewild to
24 specify how the costs of the repairs, if necessary, would be covered. Ms. Ogilvie clarified that
25 the agreements would be the responsibility of the Select Board. Chairman Smith indicated that a
26 letter would be sent to the Select Board with recommendations from the Planning Board.

27 There was a discussion of the upgrade to the Class VI section of Bigelow Hill Road. Mr. Farkes
28 requested the following: (a) the specification for the upgrade to class V standards, and (b) a
29 decision on whether, after the upgrade, the section would remain Class VI or be adopted by the
30 town as Class V. Mr. Coons will draft the Class V upgrade specification in consultation with
31 Rewild. Mr. Smith indicated that a letter would be sent to the Select Board informing them of the
32 item (b) request and the Planning Board's recommendation.

33 **Old Business**

34 Planning Board Vacancies: There is no new information.

35 Discussion of Solar Project Site Plan Applications:

36 Mr. Farkes reported that they intend to selectively cut trees along the buffer on the west side of
37 the Bigelow Hill Road solar array. In the long-term, the tree height will be maintained at 15 feet.

38 Chairman Smith reported that the Conservation Commission will send a letter to Rewild
39 requesting bird houses and bat boxes for habitat.

40 Mr. Underwood reported requirements in Troy's Water Resources Protection District Ordinance
41 related to the projects. To meet the requirements, the Conservation Commission will send two
42 letters to Rewild and will copy the Planning Board. The first will address potential upland
43 jurisdictional improvement and the second will address wetlands.

44 Mr. Meacham asked if Rewild planned to prevent invasive species, including buckthorn, from
45 growing in the cleared areas. Mr. Farkes reported that Bigelow Hill Road is relatively clean;
46 however, Dort Street is rampant with Buckthorn. Rewild met with the New Hampshire
47 Department of Environmental Services recently and will be drafting an invasive species
48 management plan.

49 Dort Street East Waiver

50 Mr. Smith read the waiver request for Dort Street West.¹ The waiver requests that the coverage
51 area limit be raised from 35% to 52%.

52 Mr. Underwood asked Mr. Farkes to explain the financial hardship. Mr. Farkes described three
53 hardship scenarios. First, that power generation is dependent on the spacing between rows. If the
54 spacing is too narrow, power generation will be lower (production efficiency) because the panels
55 will block the sun across adjacent rows. The decreased power generation will decrease project
56 revenue, and this will be a financial hardship. Second, there are fixed costs (e.g., substation
57 upgrade, road repairs) that are not dependent on the amount of power generated. Without the

¹ Memorandum to the Troy Planning Board, June 28, 2024; Subject: Site Plan Application for Solar Energy System at Map 11, Lot 5 (the "Property")/Memorandum in Support of Waiver Request

58 waiver, the fixed costs will be distributed across a smaller number of panels, and this will make
59 it harder to cover the costs and will result in economic hardship. Third, the landowner will be
60 paid on a per acre per year basis. If the project is too small, it may not be worthwhile for the
61 landowner to lease the land.

62 **MOTION** to approve Dort Street East coverage waiver. Mr. Underwood. **SECOND**, Mr.
63 Thackston. Motion passed, Mr. LeClerc voted No, all other members voted Yes.

64 Dort Street West Waiver

65 Chairman Smith read the Dort Street West Waiver.²

66 The waiver requests that the security fence along the northwestern property line (approximately
67 five hundred linear feet) will be setback five feet from that property line rather than the 100 foot
68 minimum specified in the ordinance.

69 **MOTION**, to approve the Dort Street West Setback Waiver, Mr. Thackston. **SECOND**, Mr.
70 Underwood. Mr. Meacham abstained, Mr. Leclerc No, all members Yes.

71 Bigelow Hill Road Waiver Request #1

72 Mr. Smith read the Bigelow Hill Road Waiver Memorandum Waiver Request #1³

73 Most of Bigelow Hill Road is a Class V right-of way. However, an approximately 1,200 linear
74 foot portion of Bigelow Hill Road classified as a Class VI right of way exists between the
75 proposed site entrance and the ending of the Class V right-of-way portion of Bigelow Hill Road.
76 The applicant is requesting a waiver from the requirement that the facility entry point be on an
77 approved Class V or better right-of-way.

78 Mr. Farkes indicated that Rewild will improve the 1,200 foot Class VI portion of Bigelow Hill
79 Road to the Town's Class V specifications. The waiver provides the Select Board with the
80 flexibility to either keep the classification as Class VI, after the improvements, and Rewild
81 would be responsible for road maintenance or to accept the 1,200 foot portion as Class V.

82 **MOTION** to approve Bigelow Hill Road Waiver #1, Mr. Thackston. **SECOND**, Mr.
83 Underwood. Motion passed; all members voted Yes.

84 Summary of Next Steps for the Solar Project Applications

- 85
- 86 • Planning Board will vote on regional impact.
 - 87 • Planning Board must make a decision on the applications by August 30th.
 - 88 • Rewild will add notes to buffer zones to all three project for bird houses and bat boxes.
 - 89 • Rewild will wait for a letter from the Conservation Commission.
 - Rewild will add note to the plan about invasive species management.

² Memorandum to the Troy Planning Board, June 28, 2024; Subject: Site Plan Application for Solar Energy System at Map 19, Lot 71 (the "Property")/Memorandum in Support of Waiver Request

³ Memorandum to the Troy Planning Board, June 28, 2024; Subject: Site Plan Application for Solar Energy System at Map 9, Lot 1 (the "Property")/Memorandum in Support of Waiver Request

- 90 • Rewild will do their best to create a rendering of the Bigelow Hill Road solar array from
91 the Mountain View Cemetery and the Blueberry Farm.
- 92 • Rewild will attempt to update the three applications prior to the August 21, 2024
93 Planning Board meeting.
- 94 • Rewild will provide more information on the methodology for estimating the
95 decommissioning bond amount relative to the current cost of decommissioning.

96 Selectman's Update: Mr. Thackston reported that a public hearing has been tentatively scheduled
97 to discuss possible changes to the traffic flows on Depot Street, Water Street, Prospect Street and
98 Old Keene Road.

99 **Next Meeting: August 21, 2024**

100 **Adjourn**

101 Chairman Smith adjourned the meeting at 10:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by
Jack Gettens
Planning Board Secretary