

MINUTES - JUNE 26, 2025
REGULAR MEETING
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
START TIME: 7:00 PM IN COMMUNITY ROOM, LOWER LEVEL, TOWN HALL
80 Main Street, Terryville, Connecticut

START OF MEETING PROTOCOL:

- i. **CALL TO ORDER.** The meeting was called to order at 7:05p.m. in the Community Room, Plymouth Town Hall, 80 Main St., Terryville, CT by **Chairman George Castle**.
- ii. **FIRE EXITS** - Pointed out by the **Chairman**.
- iii. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** -Led by the **Chairman**.
- iv. **ATTENDANCE.** Members in attendance were as follows: **Chairman George Castle, Gary Gallagher, Mike Gutowski, Jim Klaneski, Sue Murawski, Connie Kaprolas, Margus Laan** Director of Planning & Economic Development, Ron Tiscia-Council Liaison and Pam Pelletier-Recording Secretary.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. **Application of Terryville Solar One, LLC d/b/a Verogy, for Large Scale Ground Mounted Solar Electric System per Section 6.Z. Solar Electric Energy Systems at 270 Preston Road / Assessor Parcel Number 021-012-013E-1; Verogy Representative: James Cerkowicz; Engineer: Solli Engineering, LLC & PurePower Engineering; Property of Peter Tonn.**

This application was continued from the May 29, 2025 and June 12, 2025 meetings.

Chairman George Castle opened the Public Hearing for additional comments from members of the audience.

THOSE SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION:

Paul Hanson, 422 Preston Rd., Terryville, CT

Speaks in favor of the application; he feels that the Town should not regulate what a property owner would like to do to their property.

THOSE SPEAKING AGAINST THE APPLICATION:

Robert Allen, 17 Meghan Boulevard, Terryville, CT

Mr. Allen questions whether the property will lose its PA490 Farm Classification if this project is approved. **Margus Laan** advised they property owner will lose this classification, and the property owner will be assessed and tax as for the property; the applicant will also be responsible for personal property tax on the project.

Beverly Hill, 56 Old Farm Rd., Terryville, CT

Speaks against the proposal. Mrs. Hill has concerns over what will happen if a fire occurs There are no hydrants in this area. Does the Fire Dept. have the equipment needed to fight a fire in a solar field?

Response from James Cerkowicz – Verogy Representative –

There is a disconnect switch outside of the field and inside the field, there is also a knock box to gain emergency entrance. Water is used to put out fires after the system is de-energized, so no special equipment is needed by the Fire Dept. A gravel access will be installed around the perimeter on the western side of the project for Fire Dept. access. We also met with Town Officials, including the Fire Marshall prior to application submission and addressed their concerns.

Chris Simo-Kinzer, 52 Old Farms Rd., Terryville, CT

Speaks Against the proposal.

He lives at the end of Old Farms and states that this will affect the aesthetics of the neighborhood; he does not want to look out of his windows to see rows of solar panels.

Jason Dorso, 34 Old Farm Rd., Terryville, CT

Speaks against the proposal. He advised that his backyard has always been wet, he is worried that water run off from this site will increase his problem.

Gary Defilippo, 278 Preston Rd., Terryville, CT

Speaks against the proposal. State that the Fire Dept. access added to the plan is not sufficient for equipment to access the site. Access is only proposed for the West side of the property, what about the East side? There are no hydrants in the area, but he acknowledges that there are underground water tanks that were put in during the construction of the subdivision, but is unsure how big they are. He feels that the fire department should revisit the gravel access as there is no way for equipment to turn around. He also requests that a stormwater study be conducted on the property.

Joe Fusco, 22 Old Farm Rd., Terryville, CT

Speaks against the proposal. This proposal is in his backyard. He feels that this type of a project should not be allowed in or near a residential zone and is concerned that it will affect his property values.

Robert Berman, 42 Old Farm Rd., Terryville, CT

Speaks against the proposal. States that he lost a branch off of one of the trees last week from wind. Questions who and how maintenance will be handled. He does not feel that this project is in the best interest of the Town; the project only benefits one individual but will affect the property values of all of their neighbors.

Response from James Cerkowicz – Verogy Representative –

Mr. Cerkowicz provides an update and goes over changes to the plan since the site walk on the property. Residents had expressed concern regarding noise from the inverters that were previously proposed to be clustered in one area. The plan has been changed to scatter the inverts along the Eastern edge of the property away from Oakdale to address those concerns.

Drainage design and calculations have also been modified. Excavation that was proposed along the Western perimeter of the property will now be further enhanced by adding a 2' berm using the displaced soil along the trench to direct water run-off into the catch basin. Significant plantings to screen the project have also been added.

Mr. Cerkanowicz also emphasizes that the project has been reviewed by the Fire Marshall and has met their requirements.

Public Works **Director Carl Johnson** advised that staff have engaged an Environmental Engineer to review the design and stormwater calculations to ensure that they will work. He is concerned about the hard-pan soil type and wants to make sure that the existing 42" pipe will not be overwhelmed.

Chairman George Castle is concerned that once the trees are removed water run-off will increase, he recommends that erosion controls also be put into place. He confirms that we will be having an outside source reviewing this proposal. He reassures the audience that any decision by this Commission will be in the best interest of the Community.

Rob Allen, 17 Oakdale Rd., Terryville, CT

Questioned who will be paying for the independent review and whether the Town will be receiving any benefit from the energy generated. He advised that the existing solar panels at the school have had no reduction on the electric bills at the school. How does this facility benefit the Town. Will this project receive any abatements?

Margus Laan compares the town benefit as being something similar to that of a cell tower that might be located in Town. The energy generation is put back into the grid, possibly reducing costs. The Town will also collect additional tax on the property for Real Estate and Personal Property.

Margus will seek out answers to the other questions for a future meeting.

Lisa Simo-Kinzer, 52 Old Farms Rd., Terryville, CT

Speaking against the application. The inverters have now been moved to less than 200' of my home. She is concerned about noise, depreciation of property value, and aesthetics. She asks if there was a zone change to allow this use.

Margus Laan advised that solar fields are allowed in a residential zone by Special Permit; this property is zoned as residential S-40.

Tammy Defilippo, 278 Preston Rd., Terryville, CT

Mrs. Defilippo is concerned about possible dangerous materials leaching into the property and contaminating surrounding wells. She asks where the panels are made and what will happen if a panel is damaged and is in need of repair.

Response from James Cerkanowicz – Verogy Representative –

Mr. Cerkanowicz explains that the systems are very self-sufficient, they do not require a lot of maintenance. Inspections can be made in person or via drone. The panels are made in the U.S. and

do not cause any type of contamination. There is a USDA data sheet with a listing of all materials on the product.

Mrs. Defilippo thanks the Commission for listening and the consultant for providing answers, but is still concerned as her well is located within 100' for this equipment. She hopes that the Commission will take into consideration the differences between this site and others; this is not a flat piece of property, there are already drainage issues and residents are all expressing concerns about increase in water run-off.

Gary Defilippo, 278 Preston Rd., Terryville, CT

Speaking against the application. Questions size and depth of pipe with vendor; he does not believe that the size and proposed depth is sufficient; should be placed 6-7' deep. He is very familiar with this area and has lived there all his life. He requests that the Commission request a report from the Fire Dept. to be submitted at the next meeting.

Chris Simo-Kinzer, 52 Old Farms Rd., Terryville, CT

Speaking against the application. Will there be any water run-off into the Pequabuck River, is a Wetlands Permit required.

Response from James Cerkanowicz – Verogy Representative –

The proposal improves the ground cover to a grassy condition to slow the rate of run-off, decreasing the amount of run-off into the river than what currently exists.

XXXXXX addresses the Commission. He explains that he was asked to attend this evening's meeting by a resident. He is very familiar with this type of system and has experience with installation of this type of a project. He explains that he has listened to concerns and responses from the Verogy representative. Everything the vendor is telling you is correct. He is consistent with this type of a facility; he is doing a good job. This is a Community collaboration, and he is listening to the neighbors, and they are the same concerns that neighbors everywhere have.

He recommends that the Commission put together a revenue stream to estimate how much in taxes (Personal Property and Real Estate) will be collected on the property.

If this application is approved, he would recommend that this Commission do the following to ensure that the Town is protected before, during and after this project is completed.

- 1) Get a Stormwater study – existing run off will change.
- 2) Require a bond and maintenance plan in writing.
- 3) Require notification if there is a change in ownership. – Require that this must come before the Commission to ensure that the new owners comply with all documentation in place.
- 4) Require a decommissioning plan.
- 5) Codify all requirements into the permit approval.

a. **Chairman George Castle** asks the applicant if he would agree to a time extension for the Public Hearing Period to July 10, 2025. He feels additional information is needed to answer from the public. Mr. Cerkanowicz is agreeable to this request.

Gary Gallagher advised there is an existing drain on the property 8-10" that ties into an existing catch basin that is not shown on the plain. The vendor will investigate further. Mr. Gallagher also comments that this project is just below the State requirements for Siting Council review.

Connie Kaprolas questions whether the proposed 2" berm is sufficient to handle run-off during a heavy storm event.

There are no further questions, Public Hearing is continued until July 10, 2025

2. Application of Ron Gentile for Special Permit / Site Plan to construct Accessory Building at 227 Mount Tobe Road / Assessor Parcel Number 093-110-001 per Section 4.A.3.iii.; property owners Dan Gentile & Ron Gentile.

Danny Gentile is present to answer questions on his proposal. He would like to construct a new garage on his property. Plans are reviewed and there is general discussion.

Margus Laan advised that there was confusion when trying to determine where actual property lines are located; he believes there is plenty of room, but recommends that the Commission requires an A-2 Survey once project is complete.

MOTION: **Gary Gallagher** made a **MOTION** to close the Public Hearing for the application to construct a garage at 227 Mt. Tobe Rd; the **MOTION** is seconded by **Sue Murawski** and voted on unanimously.

3. Application of Premier Properties LLC for Special Permit / Site Plan to construct Industrial Park at 128 North Harwinton Avenue / Assessor Parcel Number 020-018-003-1 per Section 4.B. Table of General Use Regulations – Industrial Uses; engineer: Kratzert, Jones & Associates, Inc.; property owner: Benjamin Cangiano.

Ryan Geddes is present to answer questions on this request. The Commission was provided with copies of his plan and information related to his proposal.

He is requesting approval to construct a small Industrial Park on property with access from the end of Swicklas Court. The proposal will include construction of (7) commercial type flex buildings to offer to smaller contractor for storage and office space. Each building is proposed to be 200' x 60' with flexible inside dimensions depending on contractor needs; all units will have overhead door access. Plans have been submitted to Land Use along with a 50-page study to ensure that there are no issues. Drainage design has also been submitted. Mr. Geddes advised that there would be a pretty significant cut, buildings will be able to be seen from the Preston Rd side, screening is planned, and he is open to fencing or live trees. Only the roofs of the buildings will be visible from N. Harwinton Ave.

Jim Klaneski questions how many entrances the property will have; there is only one proposed.

Mr. Geddes also advised that there will be no outside storage allowed. **Jim Klaneski** asks if this will be in the lease agreements for each building. He also questions water availability.

Mr. Geddes states that no outside storage will be included in the lease, he also advised that hydrants exist on the street, and they do propose installation of a hydrant on the property.

Margus Laan recommends continuing the hearing until July 10, 2025; he needs to get departmental comments. Residents question why there is no information on a presentation board for them to review and ask questions. Mr. **Laan** explains that all information is available in the Land Use office; we did not intend to go into depth as much as we have tonight, we planned the presentation for July 10, 2025.

There is general discussion, residents seem to prefer a natural tree type screening along Preston Rd instead of fencing.

Rob Allen, 17 Meghan Blvd., Terryville, CT

He also would prefer tree screening, he questions signage and if this project was seeking tax abatements.

Ryan Geddes advised that signage would be on Swicklas Court at the base of the driveway entrance. He is also in negotiations on this property so is not at liberty to discuss if abatements are in the talks.

Louise Holmes, 242 Preston Rd., Terryville, CT

Comments that she has an ongoing issue with vendors/customers using her driveway which is across the entrance of Swicklas to turn around. Will there be another driveway to deal with traffic.

Ryan Geddes advises there is currently only one access into the property off of Swicklas Court.

The application is continued until the July 10, 2025 meeting.

MOTION: **Mike Gutowski** made a **MOTION**, which was seconded by **Jim Klaneski** to close the Public Hearing portion of the meeting. The **MOTION** is voted on unanimously.

REGULAR MEETING: PUBLIC COMMENT; NEW & RETURNING BUSINESS; DELIBERATION & DECISION ON NEW & RETURNING BUSINESS;; OTHER BUSINESS, ANNOUNCEMENTS & COMMISSION & STAFF DISCUSSION:

4. **Public Comment:** Requested limit of no more than 3 minutes in duration. Note: public comment is for non-agenda topics; comments on agenda related items need to be made during the discussion on that agenda item for inclusion in the item's record.

Stanley Klaneski, 20 Prospect St., Terryville, CT

Regarding property at 12 Prospect St (Prospect St School) and 22 Prospect St - Have all the proper permits been pulled by the contractor, has bonding been received, are environmental concerns being addressed, have there been any changes to the approved site plan is the contractor receiving tax abatements for either property. He wants to make sure that the requirements of the court are met.

Ryan Geddes agrees to provide answers to these questions. He confirms that all necessary permits have been obtained and that environmental concerns are being addressed; there are asbestos present in the boiler and one pipe in the basement. The renovations and improvements to the house at 22 Prospect St. are almost complete.

They have cleaned up and removed old furniture (desks, chairs, etc.) and resecured the structure. They are aware of the conditions required by the court – they will be completing all work in the school before starting on the buildings in the field. Their plan is to restore the brick facing on the building, new windows with black trim.

He is still in negotiations with the Town and cannot comment on abatements at this time.

Rob Allen, 17 Meghan Blvd., Terryville, CT

Reports mattresses and garbage on the OZ Gedney site. Voluntary Blight notification was sent to property owner last week; the Code Enforcement Committee is aware.

5. **Review, deliberate and MOTION & vote to approve, to amend or to reject the minutes of June 12, 2025 Regular Meeting & June 19, 2025 Site Walk Special Meeting.**

6. **Deliberation & Decision**

- a. **Application of Terryville Solar One, LLC d/b/a Verogy for Large Scale Ground Mounted Solar Electric System per Section 6.Z. Solar Electric Energy Systems at 270 Preston Road / Assessor Parcel Number 021-012-013E-1; Engineers: Solli Engineering, LLC & PurePower Engineering; Property of Peter Tonn. CONTINUED UNTIL 7/10/2025**
- b. **Application of Ron Gentile for Special Permit / Site Plan to construct Accessory Building at 227 Mount Tobe Road / Assessor Parcel Number 093-110-001 per Section 4.A.3.iii.; property owners Dan Gentile & Ron Gentile.**

MOTION: Gary Galagher made a **MOTION**, which was seconded by Sue Murawski to approve the application for construction of a residential garage at 227 Mt. Tobe Rd with the stipulation that the property owner provides an A-2 Survey upon completion of the project. The **MOTION** is voted on unanimously.

- c. **Application of Premier Properties LLC for Special Permit / Site Plan to construct Industrial Park at 128 North Harwinton Avenue / Assessor Parcel Number 020-018-003-1 per Section 4.B. Table of General Use Regulations – Industrial Uses; engineer: Kratzert, Jones & Associates, Inc.; property owner: Benjamine Cangiano. CONTINUED UNTIL 7/10/2025**

7. **Commission Discussion, Staff Discussion & Other Items before the Commission**

Gary Gallagher comments that he has the same list of issues that have not been addressed over the past few years. He will bring them up again at the next meeting.

There are no other comments.

8. Other items as may properly come before the Planning & Zoning Commission.

None.

ADJOURNMENT.

MOTION: Mike Gutowski made a MOTION, which was seconded by Gary Gallagher to adjourn the meeting, and the MOTION is voted on unanimously. 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Pelletier, Acting Recording Secretary