



City of Woonsocket, RI

Design Review Commission Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: Tue, August 6, 2019
Location: Harris Hall (3rd Floor of City Hall)
169 Main St, Woonsocket, RI 02895

I. Call to Order

Chairman Finlay called the meeting to order at ~8:00 p.m.

II. Attendance Review

DRC Members present:

1. Kenneth Finlay
2. Roji Eappen
3. Ron Miller
4. Stephen Crisafulli
5. John Pratt

Others in attendance: Kevin Proft, City Planner

III. New Business

1. Design Review Application: Singleton Street Solar Array | Owner/Applicant: Singleton Group, LLC | Project Location: Lot 7-17. The parcel north of Singleton Street, 500 feet west of the intersection with Harris Ave | The application proposes a ~250 KW ground mounted solar array in an I-1 (light industrial) district and the river corridor overlay district.

The Board reviewed the application materials and determined that the site plan should note that the area between the west fence of the solar array and the west property line should be seeded and loamed with a low-maintenance pollinator-friendly seed mix after construction. Currently this area is in poor condition.

The Board raised concerns about the 9-foot fence height. The board believes this would be out of place and unattractive. This height is required by the zoning regulations, even though the applicant noted that it is higher than other communities require and higher than National Grid requires. There was discussion about whether a lower fence would invite vandalism; Chairman Finlay said that solar arrays have historically not been targeted for vandalism. The Board recommended that the applicant go to the Zoning Board to request a variance to reduce the height of the fence.

The Board noted that a black chain link fence would be preferable to a galvanized chain link fence. The applicant said they intended to install a galvanized fence to save on costs. The zoning ordinance does not regulate the type of security fencing required.

The Administrative Officer noted that the applicant was responsive to the City's recommendations and requests during the application process. They added street trees where requested and limited cutting of existing vegetation. They agreed to add a note to the plan set about using a pollinator-friendly seed mix, raising the fencing to accommodate small animals, and minimizing the use of herbicides and pesticides.

Member Pratt made a motion to approve the application. Member Eappen seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

IV. Adjournment

Member Pratt made a motion to adjourn. Member Eappen seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at around 8:15.