

Town of Lincoln
Zoning Board of Review
100 Old River Road, Lincoln, RI
Minutes of February 4, 2025 Meeting

Present: David DeAngelis- Chairman, Kazem Farhoumand, Frank Spezzano, Stephen Kearns, Valarie Bataille, and Attorney DeSisto

Excused:

Minutes: January 2025 minutes

Correspondence:

Applications:

Motion to approve January meeting minutes- motion made by Member Kearns, second by Member Farhoumand. All in favor.

US Solar Works LLC, 64 Water Street, Attleboro, MA 02703- Application for Use Variance to install rooftop solar on a commercial building located on 4 Carol Drive, Lincoln, RI 02865.

AP 28, Lot 117 Zoned: MG-0.5.

Chairman: This application is to install solar rooftop on a commercial building. They would need relief from zoning regulation 260-19Z, which precludes installing a renewable energy system on the roof of a commercial building in the Town of Lincoln.

Peter Fine from US Solar Works: Sworn in.

Chairman: Read standards. 1. Is there a hardship due to unique characteristics of land that is not any physical or economic disability? 2. Is that there's a hardship that results and it's not from any prior action of yourself. 3. Granting of the variance will not alter the general character of the neighborhood, and comply with the Comprehensive Plan. 4. Cannot yield beneficial use.

Peter Fine: Looking to install solar to power building on the roof, not for financial gain.

Chairman: Why roof? Why not anywhere else.

Peter fine: Most practical place, close proximity to electricity. Existing landscape with trees would make it difficult to have on ground. No adverse effect will barely see on the roof. Set away from the edge of the roof.

Chairman: How many other businesses?

Peter Fine: Several, five in structure. Client owns the building.

Chairman: Structure similar to residential.

Peter Fine: Two basic ways to install. 1- Big field: stand alone, 2- Behind meter: reducing energy, behind meter is our preference. This is what he is doing. Most residential is this way.

Chairman: Address?

Peter Fine: 4 Carol.

Chairman: Describe area.

Peter Fine: Industrial, large industrial building no other solar.

Craig Hurder: Sworn in, owner of property. Supply building material. This is an industrial park, it is older and has mature trees; a ground mount would cut it. 3 phases, 1200 amp purpose, 1 meter (sub meter for rentals).

Member Kearns: How will panels be mounted?

Peter Fine: Ballast system.

Member Kearns: Your array will produce energy, even when you are not working?

Peter Fine: Fed back to grid, would like a battery one day.

Member Bataille: Tax benefits? Write offs?

Peter Fine: Yes, approval from RI Commerce. \$48,000 rebate- issued upon installation.

Member Bataille: Will rent go down?

Craig Hurder: Haven't thought about that.

Member Bataille: Number of panels?

Craig Hurder: 200.

Chairman: Intending to use this to bring down energy cost and promote more green energy.

Craig Hurder: Two car chargers possibly to put in too.

Chairman: Standard for beneficial use; is it common for a roof to now have an additional role?

Peter Fine: Yes, it's very common to put solar on the roof.

Member Bataille: 200 panels, 15 years to pay off.

Craig Hurder: Three phases- total of 600 panels. When the initial phase is complete about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the power used now. Possibly phase two we will look at the battery.

Member Farhoumand: Application only for the first 200?

Peter Fine: Yes.

Chairman: Reads TRC report. US Solar Works on behalf of Bram Realty – AP 28, Lot 117 – 4 Carol Drive – Use Variance: This application is to install solar rooftop on a commercial building. They would need relief from zoning regulation 260-19Z, which precludes installing a renewable energy system on the roof of a commercial building in the Town of Lincoln. The Planning Board discussed the positive recommendation from the Technical Review Committee and made a positive recommendation to grant the Use Variance. Approved by the Zoning Board

No public comment

Member Bataille: Motion to approve application, second by Chairman based on standards;

1. Is there a hardship due to unique characteristics of land that is not any physical or economic disability- unique characteristics testimony provided regarding no other practical place to put it?
2. Is that there's a hardship that results and it's not from any prior action of yourself- No prior action, also reduce carbon footprint. 3. Granting of the variance will not alter the general character of the neighborhood, and comply with the Comprehensive Plan; no altering area, no public portion/no one came out to oppose. 4. Cannot yield beneficial use- no beneficial use. All in favor.

Windmoeller & Hoelscher Corp., 23 New England Way, Lincoln, RI 02865- Use Variance to install rooftop solar on a commercial building located on 23 New England Way, Lincoln, RI 02865.

AP 28, Lot 149 Zoned: ML-0.5

Chairman: Use Variance: This application is to install rooftop solar on a commercial building. They would need relief from zoning regulation 260-19Z, which precludes installing a renewable energy system on the roof of a commercial building in the Town of Lincoln.

Ian Strom RISE: Sworn in.

Questions if can proceed without the applicant here

Solicitor approved to move forward.

Chairman: Read standards. 1. Is there a hardship due to unique characteristics of land that is not any physical or economic disability? 2. Is that there's a hardship that results and it's not from any prior action of yourself. 3. Granting of the variance will not alter the general character of the neighborhood, and comply with the Comprehensive Plan. 4. Cannot yield beneficial use.

Ian Strom: Rooftop ballast panels. Solar was designed for the roof, designed specifically. No prior action or financial gain, aligned with sustainable practices. Will not alter the surrounding area. Aligned with sustainable green practices. Trees would block ground mount.

Member Kearns: What is the business?

Ian Strom: Manufacturing warehouse/ offices. Net metered- this is projected to meet full use.

*Questions proximity to airport FAA approval, conditioned if approval.

Chairman: Reads TRC Report; The Planning Board discussed the positive recommendation from the Technical Review Committee and made a positive recommendation to grant the Use Variance. Approved with condition: The applicant/owner to provide approval from either the RI

Airport Corporation or the Federal Aviation Administration of the solar array not interfering with airport operations. (Possible solar glare from the panels).

Public Portion opened:

Dave Hart: Sworn in. Do not think they are that close to airport.

Public portion closed.

Motion to approve, motion made by Member Bataille 1. Is there a hardship due to unique characteristics of land that is not any physical or economic disability? - The rooftop is uniquely settled on the roof 2. Is that there's a hardship that results and it's not from any prior action of yourself- configuration to renewable energy. 3. Granting of the variance will not alter the general character of the neighborhood, and comply with the Comprehensive Plan- no alter to surrounding area. 4. Cannot yield beneficial use- not resulting in prior action or to gain any financial benefit. With condition of FAA approval. Second by Member Kearns. All in favor.

Progress of the of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

Member Kearns: No update on the Comprehensive Plan.

Dave Hart: Thanks Zoning Official Tom Peck for his time.

Motion to adjourn- made by Member Farhoumand, Second by Member Kearns. All in favor.