

TOWN OF WESTWOOD
COMMONWEALTH of MASSACHUSETTS

By :Westwood Town Clerk

Ellen Larkin Rollings, Chair
Sean R. Weller, Vice Chair
Joshua C. Ames, Secretary
Philip M. Giordano
Kathleen Nee



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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING BOARD

DECISION OF THE PLANNING BOARD
Modification of Solar Design Review & Approval

May 14, 2024

PROPERTY LOCUS 200 Nahatan Street – Westwood High School (WHS)
Assessor’s Map 21, Lot 048

APPLICANT Ameresco 200 Nahatan Street Solar 2 LLC
111 Speen Street, Suite 410
Framingham, MA 01701

PROPERTY OWNERS Westwood Public Schools (WPS)
200 Nahatan Street
Westwood, MA 02090

APPLICATION #PB-24-19

BACKGROUND AND PROJECT SUMMARY

Nick Granata on behalf of Ameresco 200 Nahatan Street Solar 2 LLC (hereinafter “Applicant”) filed an application (hereinafter “Application”) requesting a modification to an Solar Design Review and Approval previously granted on July 11, 2023 (PB-23-33) pursuant to Section 7.7 of the Town of Westwood Zoning Bylaw (hereinafter “Zoning Bylaw”) to modify the layout of the previously approved solar photovoltaic carports at WHS located at 200 Nahatan Street. The project (hereinafter “Project”) is in the Single Residence E (SRE) zoning district and Wireless Communications Overlay District (WCOD).

STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

PROCEDURAL FINDINGS

Having reviewed the plans and reports filed by the Applicant and its representatives and considered the technical analysis, supplemental information provided during the course of the public hearing, correspondence and testimony from the various boards, commissions, Town departments, and all other interested parties, the Town of Westwood Planning Board (hereinafter “Planning Board”) determined the following procedural and project findings:

1. In April of 2024, the Applicant team discovered the northernmost array of the previously approved solar photovoltaic carports at the approved clearance would interfere with the 25' no structure buffer of the gas utility easement on the northern boundary of the project area.
2. The Applicant submitted an Application requesting a Planning Board Modification of a Solar Design Review and Approval pursuant to Sections 7.3 & 7.7 that was filed with the Town Clerk on May 10, 2024.
3. The Planning Board provided digital copies of the Application to Town boards, commissions, departments, and officials – including, but not limited to, the Board of Health, Building Commissioner, Department of Public Works, Town Engineer, Conservation Commission, and Fire and Police Chiefs on May 10, 2024.
4. Public meeting for the Application was held on May 14, 2024 remotely via Zoom.
5. Westwood Planning Board Members Ellen Larkin Rollings, Kathleen Nee, Joshua C. Ames, Philip M. Giordano, and Sean R. Weller deliberated on the Application at a duly authorized meeting on May 14, 2024.
6. In a roll call vote with five (5) in favor and none (0) opposed, the Planning Board found that the proposed modifications to be minor in nature.

PROJECT SPECIFIC FINDINGS

1. The project site (hereinafter "Project Site" or "Property") is comprised of a 36.46-acre parcel bordered by WHS sports fields and Town of Westwood conservation land to the north, the Council on Aging and Thurston Middle School to the west, residential property and vacant Town of Westwood land to the west, and residential property to the south.
2. The previously approved Project included three (3) 280'x45' solar photovoltaic carports with a 14' clearance on the northeast portion of the WHS parking lot totaling 37,800 SF.
3. Since the carport cannot be raised due to height restrictions in the Zoning Bylaw, the proposed modification replaces the northernmost array with a 115.1' long array to parallel to the south of the two remaining arrays and a 158.3' long array perpendicular to the east of the two remaining arrays. The two remaining arrays will be 266.3' long and all arrays will be 42.6' wide with a 14' clearance.
4. The proposed southernmost array will not impede with traffic, including buses, using the drive aisle due to the height.
5. The solar array, as modified by this Decision, will still produce 668 kW of direct current, connect to WHS utilities, and have undermount lighting controllable by WPS.
6. The Project, as modified by this Decision, will still include a bituminous walk connecting the existing walkway that ends to the west of the existing parking lot with

the sports field to the north. This walkway, however, will no longer be shaded by the solar array. Instead, the School Department will present a tree planting plan to provide shading alternative – as it was discovered that nine (9) trees had been removed from the parking lot over time.

7. The beneficial effects of the project will outweigh any adverse impacts on the Town or the neighborhood, in view of the particular characteristics of the site, and of the Project in relation to that site, and the uses allowed are in harmony with the general purpose and intent of Sections 7.7 of the Zoning Bylaw.
8. The Project, as modified by the Conditions of this Decision, will not be detrimental to the Town or to the general character or visual appearance of the surrounding properties, and will be consistent with all applicable standards set forth in Section 7.7 of the Zoning Bylaw.

WAIVERS

No waivers were requested by the Applicant for the Planning Board to consider in this decision.

APPLICATIONS AND PLANS

The Planning Board evaluated the Application filed by or on behalf of the Applicants in the Office of the Town Clerk on May 10, 2024, and all material submitted through the close of the public meeting on May 14, 2024. All of the following plans and materials are hereby incorporated by reference and made part of this Decision:

1. Modification Application #PB-24-19 submitted by the Applicant and received by the Town Clerk on May 10, 2024, consisting of three (3) pages (as revised through the close of the hearing on May 14, 2024)
2. Project description memo regarding "Minor Modification Request Westwood High School Solar PV Development, 200 Nahatan Street, Westwood, MA 02090," prepared by the Applicant to the Housing & Land Use Planner, dated May 9, 2024, consisting of two (2) pages
3. Previously approved plans entitled "Westwood High School Solar PV Development," prepared by the Applicant, dated May 17, 2023 and revised through June 2, 2023, stamped by Registered Professional Engineer Robert J. Bukowski, consisting of four (4) sheets
4. 2023 decision entitled "Decision of the Planning Board Solar Design Review Approval," dated July 11, 2023, consisting of five (5) pages
5. Proposed plans entitled "Westwood High School Solar PV Development," prepared by the Applicant, dated May 17, 2023 and revised through May 9, 2024, stamped by Registered Professional Engineer Robert J. Bukowski, consisting of four (4) sheets
6. "Property Owner Application Authorization" signed by WPS Superintendent Timothy G. Piwovar, dated May 9, 2024, consisting of one (1) page

DECISION

On May 14, 2024, the Planning Board evaluated the Application in relation to the above Findings and – as the approving authority – on a roll call vote with five (5) in favor and zero (0) opposed, hereby **grants** the requested minor modification of the Solar Design Review and Approval pursuant to Sections 7.3 & 7.7 of the Zoning Bylaw for the Project as described above and in the Application therefore filed with the Town Clerk on May 10, 2024, subject to the Conditions stated herein, all of which are an integral part hereof:

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. Except as modified by the conditions and findings hereof, the Project shall comply with the Project Plans and with the conditions of all prior approvals, in all respects, and the Applicant shall pursue completion of the project with reasonable diligence and continuity.
2. If the Project, or any Condition imposed in this Decision, requires any other permit, license, or other approval from any board or commission, or any agency of the Town of Westwood, or other regulatory agency of the Commonwealth or the federal government, the Applicant shall make an appropriate application for the same and shall obtain all required approvals prior to the start of any work. If any condition of such permit, license, or other approval from any other board, committee, or agency is inconsistent with this Decision, the Applicant shall make application to the Planning Board for an amendment of this Decision, and the Planning Board shall consider such application in accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. Chapter 40A §9 and all applicable Planning Board rules and regulations.
3. Any proposed alterations, modifications, deletions or changes to the Solar Design Review shall be requested in writing to the Town Planner and Building Commissioner prior to implementation. Proposed alterations which are considered de minimis by the Building Commissioner may be accepted as a note to the file. Proposed alterations which are considered minor by the Building Commissioner shall require the filing of an Application of Modification of said approval for review by the Planning Board at a publicly posted Planning Board meeting. Proposed alterations which are determined to be major by the Building Commissioner or by the Planning Board, shall be considered by the Planning Board as a formal Amendment to the approval and will require a new public hearing before the Planning Board.
4. Applicant shall adhere to the conditions of approval per the Planning Board Solar Design Review Decision approved on July 11, 2023.
5. Prior to the start of construction, the Applicant shall submit a revised site plan with one extra parking space as discussed at the May 14, 2024 hearing. Said site plan shall be reviewed and approved by the Town Planner if consistent with the intentions expressed by a majority of Planning Board members at the May 14, 2024 hearing.
6. The Applicant and a representative from the School Department shall come before the Planning Board at the next available meeting, but no later than Tuesday August 6, 2024, to present a tree planting plan and tree plantings shall be installed prior to the completion of construction.

7. A copy of this Decision and the Project Plans shall be kept on the Project Site at all times during construction.

RECORD OF VOTE

The following members of the Planning Board voted on May 14, 2024 to grant the minor modification of the Solar Design Review and Approval for the abovementioned Project with conditions as set forth above: Ellen Larkin Rollings, Kathleen Nee, Joshua C. Ames, Philip M. Giordano, and Sean R. Weller

The following members of the Planning Board voted in opposition to the grant of the minor modification of the Solar Design Review and Approval for the abovementioned Project: none.



Elijah Romulus, Town Planner
May 20, 2024