



Town of China

571 Lakeview Drive; China, Maine 04358
(207) 445-2014 info@chinamaine.org

Approved by Planning Board by a vote of 5-0 on December 12, 2023

Planning Board Meeting

Meeting held in Portable Building at China Town Office and via ZOOM

November 28, 2023

Begin 6:30 PM

Board members in attendance: Toni Wall, Natale Tripodi, Elaine Mather, James Wilkens

Board members not in attendance: Michael Brown

Attendees: Brent Chesley, Cathy Chesley, Mary Grow, Ralph Addonizio

Code Enforcement Officer – Not Present

Board meeting opened by Chair Wilkens

Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag

Chair Wilkens brought Board Member Tripodi into voting capacity.

Review/Approve Minutes November 14, 2023 Meeting

- Chair Wall requested to postpone approval of November 14, 2023 minutes to next meeting to allow members time to review.
No further discussion. Unanimously approved.

Conditional Use Permit – Novel Energy Systems – Parmenter Hill Rd, China

- Chair Wilkens opened discussion on conditional use permit for Novel Energy System. Chair Wall motioned application is complete. Board Member Tripodi seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.
- Chair Wilkens explained the Planning Board will review the 15 criteria. Mr. Addonizio advised they provide as much information as possible with the applications.

- **Criteria**

1. Criteria 1 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wilkens inquired into the difference between a solar “garden” versus a solar “array”? Mr. Addonizio explained the solar array is the system where as the garden is where is the location. He continued to explain that the solar array is the mechanical part and the solar garden or solar farm is the manufacturing of energy instead of a crop. Board Member Tripodi motioned for approval of Criteria 1 as complete. Chair Wall seconded motion. No further discussion.
Unanimously approved
2. Criteria 2 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 2 as complete. Board Member Tripodi seconded motion. Chair Wall explained she was aware of where the access point to the project is but questioned if the turnaround is closer



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to the array? Mr. Addonizio advised it will be closer to array to make sure the Fire Department can get as close as possible as well as any other emergency vehicles. **Chair Wall added condition of a letter from appropriate Fire Department approving access for emergency vehicles.** No further discussion. Unanimously approved.

3. Criteria 3 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 3 as complete. Board Member Tripodi seconded motion. Chair Wall questioned if the one downward facing light that lights the sign for emergency information will be closer to the road or will be on the fence? Mr. Addonizio advised the light will be over the sign on the fencing surrounding the area. No further discussion. Unanimously approved.
4. Criteria 4 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 4 as complete. Chair Wilkens seconded motion. Chair Wilkens inquired if it is possible for more buffering? Chair Wall explained the location that they are looking at is on the downslope, near Hunter Brook. She questioned if it is possible to have coniferous planting on south side? Mr. Addonizio advised they can sketch out on map where the Planning Board would like plantings. Chair Wall advised this will provide a little more coverage of the view from the road. Chair Wall and Mr. Addonizio updated map of planning location. Mr. Addonizio questioned if there were any specific types of coniferous trees the Planning Board would like planted? Chair Wall advised that native species would be good. **Chair Wall added condition of planting of coniferous buffer along the south side.** No further discussion. Unanimously approved.
5. Criteria 5 and its responses were read aloud. Board Member Tripodi motioned for approval of Criteria 5 as complete. Chair Wall seconded motion. No further discussion. Unanimously approved.
6. Criteria 6 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 6 as complete. Board Member Mather seconded motion. Chair Wall questioned if there will be signage placed on or near the road during construction and if so, how far down will Novel be placing signage notifying of construction site and trucks entering and exiting? Mr. Addonizio explained that trucks would be parking on site of access road. He continued to explain the trucks will be unloading and then leaving the site. Chair Wall inquired how large are the delivery trucks? Mr. Addonizio advised it will depend on load of materials and they will be staggered deliveries as it can be hard to get everything all at once. Chair Wall advised that the entrance is around a corner on the road and there should be a sign at least 100 yards stating construction. Mr. Addonizio suggested they could also have a flagger on site. Chair Wall explained is a tough spot for visibility and drivers tend to drive at high rates of speed on the road. She continued that she is concerned for the safety of drivers and Novel personnel. Mr. Addonizio advised he will make sure they will have signage notifying of trucks on site and have a flagger present. No further discussion. Unanimously approved.



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7. Criteria 7 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 7 as complete. Board Member Tripodi seconded motion. No further discussion. Unanimously approved
8. Criteria 8 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 8 as complete. Board Member Mather seconded motion. Chair Wall states that in the application, Novel indicated they would not be taking down any trees. Mr. Addonizio confirmed Novel has no plan for taking down any additional larger trees. He continued to explain that Novel may plant other trees and that Novel tries to preserve existing buffers and tries to place solar gardens in places they will not be noticed. No further discussion. Unanimously approved.
9. Criteria 9 and its responses were read aloud. Board Member Tripodi motioned for approval of Criteria 9 as complete. Chair Wall seconded motion. Chair Wall questioned if there will be a portable toilet at the site during construction? Mr. Addonizio confirmed there will be one on location. No further discussion. Unanimously approved.
10. Criteria 10 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 10 as complete. Board Member Mather seconded motion. Chair Wilkens questioned if Best Management Practices (BMP) included with application are for State of Maine? Mr. Addonizio confirmed yes, the BMP's included are for Maine. No further discussion. Unanimously approved.
11. Criteria 11 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 11 as complete. Board Member Tripodi seconded motion. Chair Wall stated has a question on the stormwater management plan in regard to the site supervisor to be determined? Mr. Addonizio explained the site supervisor has not been appointed yet and will be someone local and will be appointed later in the Spring. **Chair Wall added condition that Novel contact the CEO or Town Office with name of site supervisor once appointed.** Board Member Mather advised that stormwater runoff language or inspection template states Minnesota permit on appendix G. Should be Maine? Board Member Mather pointed out section to Mr. Addonizio and asked if Novel will be submitting a corrected page to replace? Mr. Addonizio explained he will make sure a correct page is provided to the Town as soon as possible. **Chair Wall added condition that corrected paperwork regarding stormwater runoff to be provided to Town.** No further questions. Unanimously approved
12. Criteria 12 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 12 as complete. Board Member Mather seconded motion. Chair Wall advised of condition of letter from local Fire Departed on Criteria 2. No further discussion. Unanimously approved.
13. Criteria 13 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 13 as complete. Board Member Mather seconded motion. Chair Wall inquired into no hazardous during construction? Chair Wall question what would happen if, for



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example, a truck comes on site and is leaking fluids such as oil? Mr. Addonizio explained they would call the Fire Department since it is a spill and would reach out to EPA. He continued that the Fire Department would be determining how to handle the situation. No further discussion. Unanimously approved.

14. Criteria 14 and its responses were read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 14 as complete. Board Member Tripodi seconded motion. Chair Wall inquired into the planting for native vegetative species, what is the primary seed being planted? Mr. Addonizio explained he is not sure of specific plant species in seed blend being used. He did advise that mowing will be only done twice a year after the first year which will only be once to allow for the planting to take hold. Chair Wilkens inquired into invasive plant species? Mr. Addonizio advised they do not introduce invasive plant species into the area. Chair Wall advised that in regard to mowing, in past projects they have conditioned that no cutting or mowing until July due to ground nesting bird species that nest in the fields in the area. She further advised that mowing after July gives a chance for fledglings to be out of the nest. Mr. Addonizio advised he will do some research and check with environmentalists regarding native ground nesting bird species. No further discussion. Unanimously approved.

15. Criteria 15 and its responses read aloud. Chair Wall motioned for approval of Criteria 15 as complete. Board Member Tripodi seconded motion. Chair Wall advised project is located in a rural area. No further discussion. Unanimously approved.

Chair Wall advised of condition for approved decommissioning plan from DEP to be provided to Town before construction can begin. Chair Wall motioned that all 15 criteria have been met with conditions on Criteria 2 for a letter from the Fire Department regarding adequate access, Criteria 4 for planting of coniferous buffer, Criteria 11 for notification of site supervisor and correction to Maine on stormwater protection and will be including with stormwater management plan and condition of approved decommissioning plan to be provided to Town. Board Member Tripodi seconded motion. No further discussion. Unanimously approved.

Chair Wilkens advised of 30-day appeal period. Chair Wall advised the application packet was very informative and thanked Novel. Mr. Addonizio advised that on every application, they try to give more information than the alternative of not having enough information. Chair Wilkens explained the importance of having complete answers on the application in case it goes to the Appeals Board.

Solar Ordinance

- Chair Wall advised of draft ordinance for Solar Energy Ordinance. She advised that she asked the Town Manager to ask the Town Attorney about the Town of Readfield solar ordinance which has a site plan requirement. Chair Wall explained it was determined that the Town of Readfield's solar ordinance would not work for China. Chair Wall explained that Attorney Meader found the solar ordinance of the Town of Damariscotta and explained the ordinance is close to what China would need. Chair Wall ask the Planning Board members in attendance, that in thinking what Novel provided for information, is there anything they wanted to include in the solar ordinance or is there anything from past solar projects that they feel should be included? Chair Wilkens stated



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he likes to see a map of where the area is if they need to go view the area. He advised the ordinance should require a map to be provided. Chair Wall explained they will review at the next meeting.

Planning Board Ordinance

- Chair Wall explained the Planning Board ordinance was submitted to the Select Board and was reviewed. Chair Wall advised that in her conversation with the Town Manager, the Planning Board and the Select Board disagree on one area regarding the Planning Board wishing to remain as elected and Select Board would like to appoint. Chair Wilkens explained this section should be discussed with both the Planning Board members and Select Board members present. Chair Wall asked Select Board Member Chesley if there will be discussion on the Planning Board Ordinance at the next Select Board meeting? Select Board Member Chesley was unable to confirm if there would be discussion or not. Chair Wall advised that it would be good if the Planning Board members were able to attend the next Select Board meeting on December 4, 2023.

Chairperson Communications

- Chair Wall explained that CEO Gosselin gave his notice to the Town and that former assistant CEO Nick French will be filling in temporarily until a replacement can be found. He will be in attendance at the next meeting.
- Chair Wilkens motioned to cancel the December 26th meeting. He continued their next meeting will be December 12th and then the meeting after will be in the 2nd week in January. All Planning Board members in agreement.

Future Schedule and Adjourn

Next Planning Board Meeting: Chair Wall motioned adjourn the meeting and to set the next meeting date for December 12, 2023. She also motioned to cancel the scheduled December 26, 2023 meeting. Motion seconded by Board Member Mather

There was no further discussion and the motion to adjourn was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dawn Kilgore
Planning Board Secretary