TOWN OF COEYMANS PLANNING/ZONING BOARD MEETING

December 11, 2023

Attendees

Members Present: Mr. Nolan, Mr. Collins, Mr. Boomer, Mr. teRiele, Ms. Grogan, Mr. Cronin, Mr. Cinque

Members Absent: Mr. Pietropaoli

Also Present: Mr. Keniry, Mr. Chmielewski, Ms. Ziegler

Public Present:

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. There was a quorum; one member absent. Mr. Nolan led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Nolan read the notices for the public hearing.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Collins made motion to approve the minutes of November 22, 2023; seconded by Ms. Grogan; all in favor.

Public Hearing

**Carver Companies, LLC:** An applicationfor site plan review on property owned by TenEyck Powell III and Atlantic Cement Co. Inc. Property is located at 87 Bronk Road, Tax Map #156.-3-1.1 and 156.-2-1.11; and

Carver Companies, LLC: An application for an area variance on property owned by TenEyck Powell III and Atlantic Cement Co. Inc. Property is located at 87 Bronk Road, Tax Map #156.-3-1.1 and 156.-2-1.11

Mr. Nolan made motion to open the public hearing; seconded by Mr. Collins; all in favor. Mr. Nolan explained the procedure rules (e.g. three minute limit) for those who wish to speak during the public hearing.

Mr. Nick Laraway thanked the Board for holding the public hearing and for their consideration of the project. As a follow-up to the last meeting, they have taken into consideration the information, questions from the Board’s staff, engineer and attorney, as well as the feedback from the public at the meeting and put together tonight’s comprehensive presentation.

For the benefit of those who have not seen their prior presentation, tonight they began the public hearing with a full presentation of their project. These presentations should clarify many, if not all, of the questions previously asked by the Board and the public.

Mr. Dave Ingalls, Civil Consultant from Ingalls & Associates, who prepared the site plans and supplemental studies related to the project/SEQRA issues explained Program purpose and goals:

* GE manufacturing site – purpose is manufacturing wood blades for the off-shore wind projects
* 650 direct jobs will be created, 900 indirect jobs, and over 500 construction jobs
* Indirect investments to local economy
* Vicinity plan was reviewed: 515,000 sq. ft. of buildings; explained purpose of each building. Blade storage yard will be on 32 acres of Powell property.
* Project involves two properties: T. Powell and Atlantic Cement, north of the port and south of Bronk Road.
* There will be a secondary fire access road.
* No blades will on Route 144; all traffic will be internal
* Stormwater management – SPEDES permits will be needed;
* Utilities: water and sewer will be extended up Route 144 – water on one side of 144 and sewer on the other side of 144; no additional demand from utility use other than for employees; no water will be used for manufacturing activities
* SERQA; Type I action – put together reports.

Mr. Joe Hens (Ingalls Engineering) Project Manager for this project: Analysis and Impact on the Wetlands: Site selection needed to meet two criteria: Hudson River access for shipping the blades and also access to 80 contiguous acres for development. GE looked at numerous sites downstate and upstate which were discounted for various reasons and it was determined that the Port of Coeymans is the only viable site for this operation in NYS. On-site alternatives were examined: looked at various alternatives. Project has wetlands Impact: Requires individual and joint application which gets reviewed by both the Army Corps of Engineers and DEC; the application was submitted to both agencies in November. They are working through process - will require mitigation: purchase of Wetlands Bank Credits – 15 acres of wetlands credits will be required for the project.

Cafer Caylak, Manager of GE Vernova LM Wind Power: Provided a quick overview of the manufacturing process; no activity outside of the building – all activities will be inside.

Carver Laraway, President and CEO of Carver: Community Impact – This is an investment in his people and in the Town; there are 800 employees on site who work for 26 different companies which will grow to 1200 in one year; growth allowed Carver to buy properties and renovate those buildings. Carver and the Town of Coeymans have worked together and have done a lot of good things within the past 21 years. Twenty-one years ago P&M Brick closed down; he bought it and has worked tirelessly with the Town and the community to develop it into the port that it is today.

Stephanie Ferradino, Attorney for the project spoke about zoning, permitted uses, history of mixed uses on Powell property (agricultural, residential and industrial); transportation terminal is an allowed use; truck traffic will be internal to the site, area variance is requested for nine foot side yard set back; no sign impacts.

Del Gould, Stony Creek Archaeology: He was contracted by Carver and Ingalls to do a Phase 1 archaeological study of the property prior to construction. The goal is to identify any archaeological sites of significance within the property and determine whether or not they need to be looked at further and possibly mitigated prior to construction. In 1960 a survey was done for Atlantic Cement for 130 acres about 80 of which was a quarry – did not find any artifacts. He recommends no additional archaeological studies be done.

Kevin Morris of Clean Air Coalition did any analysis – lowest level would be required; blade construction emissions are below levels of significance; truck traffic emissions are within limits– lowest levels allowed by DEC ae be required.

Alanne Moran: Traffic impact evaluation was done on November 14; one day study is standard; peak times of 7:00-9:00 a.m. and 4:00-6:00 p.m. – manufacturing shifts are prior to the peak; truck traffic will be 3- 4 trucks per day; site distances meet the standards/guidelines.

Joe Bens reviewed the visual presentations which included visual and esthetic impacts, visual character impacts, site photos (which were taken in October (leaves) and November (no leaves); site renderings were done by LaBella Associates.

Kevin O’Connor, Director of Economic Development, Environmental Conservation and Planning for Albany County and Planning spoke on behalf of County Executive Daniel McCoy in support of the project and encouragement for Planning/Zoning Board approval.

Katie Newcomb, Center for Economic Growth (a non profit) voiced support for the project; this is an emergent industry; prime opportunity for Town of Coeymans; it’s about our community; there is no other site in New York.

Joe Derroni, Director of Special Programs Strategic Partners at BOCES: supports the project; he provided written info to the Board.

Hector Rodriguez of Hudson Valley Community College School of Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) spoke in favor of the project.

Dominic Bruno, Chairman of the Emergency Management Committee: Both he and Coeymans Fire Chief Deyo reviewed the project with Carver and support it.

Lily Dayler, Bank Manager of Bank of Greene County. She is a board member of the Community Business Association and spoke on their behalf in support of the project.

Josh Kowalski from Carver Companies stated they have 47 letters of support from various companies.

Nick Laraway read into the record a letter of support which County Executive McCoy had sent to the Planning/Zoning Board.

Afzal Weldingwala (“Z”): lives in the Town and has worked for Carver Company for ten years; he is positive the project will bring opportunities to the Town.

Vincent Gallozo, a Carver employee, stated the project will bring more jobs and give others opportunities.

Dick Cassen of Smuldes supports the project.

Michael Cody, CTI became member of the community.

Jenny Lippman of MJ Engineering provided brief comments/updates: She will provide the Board with a more detailed letter this week. She has reviewed the studies; re utilities: Village of Ravena sent letter to provide water; she will provide additional comments re traffic study; letter was received from SHIPPO – no effect; DEC – full EAF needs to be addressed on the form.

Meeting was opened to public comment:

Robert LaCosta, resident of North Coeymans and former member of RCS Business Association: Raised concerns pertaining to the Comprehensive Plan and concerned that industrial foot print would go further north of the Comprehensive Plan. Areas to the north of the site should be utilized for soccer fields, park and parking.

Zachery Assael of 6 Fox Street: Board needs to do a thorough review; do not allow GE and Carver

to pressure Board to quickly approve the project; issue with cleared trees on Bronk Road; land swap for the Powell/City of Albany; there land use issues, water and sewer use issues; needs to be well thought out; he has a few ideas. River Road is a two lane country road; there should be a park and ride at the Thruway which would eliminate need for parking lot; make sure impact is mitigated as much as possible.

Lisa Travis, 60 Fox Street: She is a concerned home owner; lived here all her life. She read Hudson River Sloop Clearwater letter which had been provided to the Board; requests the Board to deny the SPR application – it is being rushed through and is setting a precedent; will be dealing with it again in the future.

Debbie Oatman, 60 Civil Ave.: She referred to Engineer’s 11/22/23 review letter, item 20 on Page 3; three parcels involved in the project – only submitted applications on two of the three parcels; take this slow; do a lot of research and make an informed decision.

Jason Redfield of North Coeymans: Lives next to the Bronk Road clear cut - removed all the trees; zoning laws require a buffer between residential and industrial parcels; believes Bronk Road property will be used for warehouses, parking lot, etc.

Ashley Redfield, 1748 River Road: Concerned about clear cut forest; believes Carver wants to use residential land; Carver should work with the residents; wants full transparency; consider the needs of the residents.

Sarah Pruiksma: 224 acres are zoned R-1 single family residential; zoning schedule provides that when there is no water and sewer, zoning changes to R-A; transportation terminal is related to agricultural material – there is no accessory use; she referred to 11/22 Lippmann site plan letter; laydown is not an accessory use of Powell parcel – it is an accessory to the blades, manufacturing can’t be allowed as accessory use of Powell parcel – it is prohibited.

Bob Jones resident of Mountain Road Extension: He made reference to Carver vehicles going to and from the quarry and how Carver worked with residents and Town on the issue. Public should work with Carver. He is in favor of the project.

Ray Kottke: He read a prepared statement. His concern is air quality; Holcim is assisting with air resources permit. He referred environmental letter from Ken Walden of LaFarge dated August 2020. The Carver proposal cannot be approved without the review of impact on the air quality on the Holcim parcel.

Mike Stott: There are areas of concern; two issues for the Planning/Zoning Board: should a massive complex be built and should the Board allow residential/agricultural land to be used as part of this industrial endeavor; transportation terminal is a loophole to use residential/residential property for industrial use; also concerned about smell of epoxy; be careful; take time to figure out what is best for the community/for all of us.

Mike Rizzo: Area variance should not override an industrial zoning buffer – nine foot setback does not maintain industrial buffer; buffer has to be left in its natural state; application should be rejected as incomplete.

Jason Hutchinson: He travels Route 144 on a daily basis; concerned about truck traffic which has increased in the last few years; would have to expand the road; going against the comprehensive plan.

Barbara Heinzen: She referenced the packet her group had put together speaking to nine points; site plan review is needed for Atlantic Cement and Powell property. Carver’s application is for two separate parcels, there is no site plan for these parcels. Board should think very seriously and take their time and do this properly;

Kent Felice: Residents came to gather information; think about hours of operation; environmental impact after clearing – all wildlife is gone; doesn’t like the traffic; ask Carver to reduce speed of his trucks to 45 mph; feels one day traffic study is not adequate.

Sonya Stark: She read from Riverkeeper letter: ensure proper review is being done, proposals are related, there are significant environmental impacts. EIS is to be prepared before applications are considered complete; urged Board to take a hard look at zoning requirements for the project,

Bill Bruno from Camille Drive: This project will probably happen. He worked for GE for 25 years; they are a good company to work for. There are some questions that need to be addressed: traffic is a concern; staggering workload on day shift to minimize traffic; truck traffic is a greater concern; using rail system would be great. Other concerns would be lighting, noise and odor.

Dominic Bruno: Is a resident, grew up in Coeymans; area had started to come down; good to see progress and rehabilitation of Coeymans.

Motion was made by Ms. Grogan to adjourn the public hearing to December 27, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Cronin; all in favor.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Mr. Collins to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Boomer; all in favor.