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City Council Ordinance & Administration Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

March 17th, at 7:00 PM

City Hall, 62 Friend St.

Councilor Gilday called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Roll was called and present were: Councilor Gilday and Councilor Rinaldi. Councilor Wheeler was absent.

Also Present: Attorney Bethany Raffa, Attorney Leonard Johnson, Planning Director Nipun Jain, and Administrative Assistant Allie Connolly

Minutes for Approval: Councilor Rinaldi offered a motion to approve the minutes from the February 20th meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gilday and passed 2-0.

Communication and Updates:

- Planning Director Nipun Jain gave a verbal presentation on the history of 2024-096 outlining how things have transpired since the start of the project in July.
- Nipun spoke about how he heard the concerns of residents about the proximity of the proposed solar farm to the drinking water supply and took this seriously in his research
- Nipun stated that his team did use legal counsel to review policies surrounding solar facilities.
- Councilor Gilday thanked Nipun for all his hard work and effort on 2024-096.
- Nipun went page by page through the red line amendments explaining what had been changed.
- Nipun went through the new amendments added to the ordinance.
- He explained that new development and performance standards had been added relating to hazardous materials, energy storage, and construction phasing.
- Councilor Gilday asked what happens if the team is unsatisfied with the Ecological Assessment Report. Nipun answered that there are specific standards the report needs to meet and if needed they could employ outside consultants to give their feedback on the report.
- Councilor Gilday asked where the requirement for 300 ft from adjacent parcels (farmlands/residences...) came from. Nipun answered that 300ft is standard best practice and the measurement on which they base their abutters lists on.
- Councilor Gilday asked about safety parameters for energy storage systems currently in place. Nipun answered that they have always had safety parameters, but they wanted to spell it out specifically in the ordinance.
- Attorney Raffa and Attorney Johnson thanked Nipun for his hard work and dedication on this project.

Public Comment:

- Wayne Adams of 22 Orchard St (Merrimac) Merrimac Select Board Member shared that his fellow board members have environmental concerns about the impact of 2024-096 and that his board fully supports the Amesbury residents and their concerns.
- Julie Cole of 3 Ellis Court shared her personal frustration over a lack of a noise ordinance in Amesbury and asked the Council for any advice or help they could offer

- Councilor Gilday responded that she would look into this issue.
- Angela Bick of 81 Lake Attitash Road shared that she represented the Lake Attitash Association and wanted to thank Nipun Jain and Nick Cracknell for their hard work and the collaborative efforts. She shared the Lake Attitash Association fully supports the new amended plan for 2024-096.
- Earl L. Doliber of 26 Oak Circle thanked the Planning Board for their efforts and encouraged the council members to accept the amended plan for 2024-096.
- Councilor Gilday thanked the residents for doing their part by coming to Council meetings and speaking up for what they believe in

2024-096 An Ordinance to amend the Amesbury Zoning Ordinance expanding the Renewable Energy Development Overlay District (REDD) – **Mayor Sponsor**

Councilor Rinaldi made a motion send 2024-096 back to City Council with a positive recommendation to accept the Planning Board's March 10, 2025 red line version of 2024-096. Councilor Gilday seconded the motion and it passed 2-0.

Adjourn

Councilor Rinaldi made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 PM. Councilor Gilday seconded, and the motion passed (2-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Allie Connolly