**Town of Madrid**

**Planning Board Minutes**

**November 2, 2023**

Time: 6:40 p.m.

Attendees: Allen Kelly Sec., Wayne Day, Bruce Durant

Absent: Joe Finnegan Chr. (Excused), Bill Hull (Excused)

Others: David Fisher, Jordan Fisher Mapleview Farms Inc., Scotler Moser LF Bioenergy, Director of Projects.

New Business: No new business is before the board this evening.

Old Business:

Mr. Fisher and LF Bioenergy have proposed the construction of a Methane Digester Project to be located on the properties of Mapleview Farms located on the Jones Road in the Town of Madrid. This would be a large scale project where manure would be processed and the methane gas captured and refined and then distributed into existing pipelines owned by Liberty Gas Co. That connection would be located on the Sweet Road behind the Mapleview Farms location. There would be an approximately ¼ mile long pipeline across their property connecting to Liberty”s existing distribution system lines.

Mapleview and the LF Bioenergy are requesting that the Board assume the position of being Lead Agency for the purpose of moving the proposed project forward. It is necessary for someone to assume this role for management of referrals and other things to proceed expeditiously. This project will have to be reviewed by the County Planning Board also due to the size and the location of the properties it is located on. The Town Planning Board will be required to make a referral to them and provide pertinent information and documents to enable the review process and procure recommendations and comments from them on the proposal.

A Motion for the Planning Board to accept the role as lead agency for this project was made by Bruce Durant and seconded By Allen Kelly. The Motion was then voted upon with all members present voting in the affirmative.

Mr. Fisher stated that they are seeking a negative declaration on the SEQRA concerning the project. That would be a statement that no significant environmental impacts have been identified and that the project should be alright to move forward. This would need to be completed and addressed by the DEC and the Army Corps. Of engineers and then prepared by the Developer and submitted to the Planning Board. It would accompany other documentation to be forwarded to the County for their review and commentary also.

The Developer stated that they have deadlines and schedules that they must try to meet and that there are also public notifications that must be considered as well.

Sec. Kelly told Mr. Fisher and Mr. Moser that it likely would be necessary for a third party engineering firm to be employed to review the proposal for the Town of Madrid. This would to be to ensure that everything has been professionally looked at and evaluated as it should be from the Town’s perspective. This would likely be at a cost to the Town initially but then passed along to the developer.

Sec. Kelly inquired about the possibility of a PILOT agreement being entered into with respect to taxes on this project as it is similar in nature to some of the solar projects that have been constructed in the recent past in the Town of Madrid.

Like the proposed Methane Digester these projects have transformed Agricultural land into commercial types of properties generating significant incomes for landowners and outside Developers who lease and utilize the properties for lucrative commercial enterprises. Pilot agreements have been used in all of the Solar Projects to balance the perceived imbalances in tax rates regarding these types of projects. There is no obligation attached to this suggestion but it is an option that is available for consideration.

It is the Boards intention to act expeditiously to forward documents and make referrals for the required reviews to facilitate processes and enable this project to move forward. Once the SEQRA is complete a packet for the County will be assembled and sent for their consideration and commentary.

A motion to Adjourn was made by Allen Kelly and seconded by Bruce Durant.

7:15 Meeting was adjourned