

**TOWN OF WHEATLAND
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
June 3, 2025**

Members present: Joe Burns, Eric Stein, Jay Coates, Kane Gascon, Robert Hatch and Laura Michaels

Members absent: Mike Grasso,

Also present: Ed Shero, Town Board Liaison
Mark Boylan, Attorney for the Town

Chairman Coates called the Town of Wheatland Planning Board meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

J. Burns made a motion to approve the Town of Wheatland Planning Board minutes from 3/4/2025, seconded by L. Michaels and approved as follows:

Joe Burns – aye
Kane Gascon -aye
Mike Grasso -absent
Laura Michaels -aye
Robert Hatch - abstain
Eric Stein -aye
Jay Coates -aye

Old Business:

➤ **GreenSpark Solar**

This project is being done in 2 phases. Phase 1, which will be 36.632 acres with the array area being 11.87 acres and 2.25 MWAC. Phase 2 is on a 43-acre parcel, the array area will be 10 acres, 2.375 MWAC. The Town of Wheatland Planning Board is the Lead Agency on this project.

There will be a joint SEQR for Phase 1 & Phase 2.

The Public hearing will be for the SEQR for both Phases, the Special Exemption use for Phase 1, and the site plan for Phase 1. Phase 2 approval will be done at a later date.

Engineer responses have been received.

NYS AG & Markets are concerned with the loss of farmland.

The DEC stated that there are no wetlands on the site.

The Applicants gave a presentation to the Public explaining their plans for the project.

GreenSpark Solar is a local company in business since 2002.

This project will be done in 2 phases. Phase 1 will be around 36 acres and 43 acres for phase 2. The system size is 2.2 MW for phase 1 and 2.3 for phase 2. The fenced area will be 11.8 acres for phase 1 and 10.8 acres for phase 2. There is an easement area for phase 1 to connect the access road from Scottsville chili road to North Rd.

There will be tree plantings and green slats in the fencing to help block the array. There will be a buffer along the creek planted with native species.

GreenSpark Solar is hoping to start construction in Winter of 2026.

At least 12 acres will remain clear of arrays and can be used for farming or left as open space.

Jay Coates opened up the meeting for questions from the Public for the Applicant. The following questions and concerns were raised at that time:

→ *Replacement and monitoring of foliage?*

- GreenSpark Solar stated that the trees have a 2-year warranty.
- They have to replace the plantings due to the contract.
- They test the PH in the soil and choose a variety of trees that match.

→ *Is the energy remaining local?*

- The energy will go to the grid; whoever buys the energy will be credited. It hasn't been decided if they will be community Solar, which would enroll local residents, or remote crediting, which would be for businesses.

→ *How does radiation and heat affect the land, and how long until the land can be farmed again?*

- GreenSpark Solar stated that they will work with AG & Markets, they are not familiar with a lag time for planting.

→ *How much will the Town and School receive annually through taxes?*

- GreenSpark Solar stated that this will be negotiated with the Town Board as payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreement.

→ *What will the effect of this project be on people and animals?*

- GreenSpark Solar stated that there should be no impact.

- *Is there a project access from North Rd?*
 - No, there is only one point of access from Scottsville Chili Rd.
- *Concerned about the effect on the creek if there is a fire due to fire water.*
 - There will be buffer zones with plantings, and fires are rare with solar projects.
- *Array on Oatka Creek Rd was put up a year ago and is not generating any energy yet.*
 - J. Coates stated that the company has been contacted, and they are not responding.
- *Are the materials sourced domestically?*
 - GreenSpark Solar stated that the panels are assembled in Georgia.
- *Who is your financier?*
 - They use Kendall Sustainable Infrastructure.
- *What is your obligation to maintain?*
 - The Town can enforce and issue fines to make sure that it is done.
- *What will be done about the noise?*
 - The only noise generating parts are the invertors.

The public hearing was opened at 8:20 P.M. by reading the following Public Hearing Notice:

**REVISION -
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING:**

The Planning Board of the Town of Wheatland, pursuant to Section 130-60.B of the code of the Town of Wheatland, will hold a Public Hearing on ***Tuesday, June 3, 2025***, at 7:00 P.M. in the Wheatland Municipal Building, 22 Main Street, Scottsville, NY to consider the following:

The application of GreenSpark Solar, and North Wheatland Solar, LLC, for Site Plan and Special Exception Use approval to allow a large-scale Solar Energy System in an AR-2 Zoning District. This is Phase 1 (2.25 MW AC/3.006MW DC) of a possible 2 Phase Solar Project. Tax Parcel # 186.04-1-19.2 is located between 1206 and 1226 North Road and Tax Parcel # 186.04-1-1.1, located off Chili Scottsville Road.

All interested parties are asked to attend and be heard or to submit written comments concerning this application. View public access files by using this link or find the link on the Town of Wheatland website calendar under the meeting date:

https://townofwheatland.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/WheatlandPublicAccess/EjV1qV9gVSRKicp_WiKWTUEBPn0cwWXRKELFI1FxerrUug

Jay D Coates, Chairman
Wheatland Planning Board
Dated: February 11, 2025

The following comments and concerns were made by the public in attendance:

- **Linda Potter**, 9589 Union St.
 - Expressed concerns about the noise. She currently lives ¼ mile from a current solar farm and stated that it is very loud at times.
 - Concerned about losing the “rural” feeling of the Town.
 - Vegetation and fence maintenance concerns.

- **Brian Daily**, 1219 North Rd.
 - Questioned how he can benefit.

- **Colin Clement**, 3062 Oatka Creek Rd.
 - Concerned with filling land with solar panels, not sure that it really benefits people, it doesn't lower electric costs.

- **Maureen Terena**, 1 Birchwood Dr.
 - Agrees with Mr. Clement.
 - Concerns about destroying the environment.

- **Dave Burns**, 1167 North Rd.
 - Is there a contract stating that GreenSpark cannot sell the project?
 - Concerned about the noise.
 - Will the front lot be farmed?

- **Pat Hirokawa**, 1313 North Rd.
 - Are the panels recycled?
 - She likes the company and solar energy; she has solar panels on her barns.
 - Concerned about the maintenance, and the loss of farmland.

- **Karen Coyle**, 1763 Beulah Rd.
 - Concerned about loss of farmland.
 - More work for the Town since they need to enforce maintenance.
 - Would like to see other projects that GreenSpark has done in other areas.

- **Peter Burns.**, 467 North Rd.
 - Will this energy go to RG&E or National Grid?
 - JC stated that this is all going to National Grid.

- **Vern Palmer**, 1139 North Rd.
 - Concerned about the noise.
 - Questioned if the Board can consider the failed projects and consider the impact on the Town.
 - J. Coates stated that the Board learns from each project.

The Public hearing was closed at 8:40 P.M.

J. Coates stated the noise issues will need to be addressed.

The drain tile location needs to be identified in Phase 1.

The foliage plan needs to be reviewed. J. Cates stated that maybe a 2-tier approach of rapid growth and long-term growth foliage needs to be addressed.

➤ **Future Business:**

- 77 Blue Pond; subdivision and lot line adjustment.

- There will be no work session

R. Hatch made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by K. Gascon and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Smith