Town of Acton, Maine

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Date: November 2, 2023

Members Present:

Christopher Whitman (Chairman), Gavin Maloney (Vice-Chairman), John Qua, Patricia Pearson, Ryan Gleason, Adam Brock (Alternate), Andrew Johnson (Alternate).

Also Present:

Jason Sevigny (Code Enforcement Officer), David Riley (Land Use Assistant), Joe Griffin & Ryan Menary (Civilworks New England), Jenna Gilbert (Sevee & Maher Engineering)

Public: Charles Adams (372 Foxes Ridge Road)

Absent: N/A

Pledge of Allegiance

Designate Alternates:

No Alternates Necessary

Approval of Minutes:

John Qua – "I move we approve the minutes for September 7th as written."

Ryan Gleason – "I second." Motion Passed 4 – 0. (Chris Whitman, John Qua, Ryan Gleason, and Andrew Johnson were the voting members for the approval of the September 7^{th} , 2023 Planning Board Meeting Minutes. All other members abstaining as they were not present at the September 7^{th} , 2023 meeting.)

Patricia Pearson – "I'll make a Motion we accept the minutes for September 21st."

Gavin Maloney – "Second." Motion Passed – 4 – 0. (Chris Whitman, Gavin Maloney, John Qua, and Patricia Pearson were the voting members for the approval of the September 21^{st} , 2023 Planning Board Meeting Minutes. All other members abstaining as they were not present at the September 21^{st} , 2023 meeting.)

Adam Brock – "I'll make a Motion to accept the October 19th minutes as submitted."

Andrew Johnson – "Second." Motion Passed 4 – 0. (Gavin Maloney, Patricia Pearson, Adam Brock, and Andrew Johnson were the voting members for the approval of the October 19^{th} , 2023 Planning Board Meeting Minutes. All other members abstaining as they were not present at the October 19^{th} , 2023 meeting.)

Public Hearings:

• John O'Keefe: 193 Foxes Ridge Road. Map 248; Lot 009. 6.6.4 Site Plan Review

Michael Menary and Joe Griffin from Civilworks New England have come to the Planning Board Public Hearing representing Hurd Storage. Micheal and Joe begin by describing for all in attendance, the scope of the project. They describe that the project consists of three self-storage buildings with 8,100 sq. ft. of area. Mr. Menary also states that there is no disturbance to any of the wetlands or the wetland buffers. A soil filter and roof line infiltration trench are being utilized to mitigate storm water runoff. The total disturbance caused for this project is under 1 acre. There are also two waivers being asked for this project. The first waiver is to not allow trucks over 40 feet in length (WB40) and the second is a landscape waiver. The applicant would like to not have vegetation over the proposed soil filter at the front of the site. Mr. Menary also commented that the DOT has approved the driveway permit at 22 feet wide and handed copies to the Board. Mr. Griffin explained to the Board that Civilworks New England had discussions with the State of Maine to eliminate the culvert under the driveway because it would not effectively drain water anywhere. He continued to say the Maine Stormwater engineer reviewed the plans and agreed with the findings from Civilworks New England and asked that the outlet for the soil filter be revised to a larger size. The new underdrain to the soil filter will now be 4 inches instead of a 2-inch factory drilled orifice.

Chairman Christopher Whitman asked if there were any comments from the public. Charles Adams from 372 Foxes Ridge Road approached the podium for comment. Mr. Adams explained to the Board that he is aware that the road in front of the site is a state-owned road, but there is a sizeable puddle after it rains that collects in front of the proposed site. Mr. Adam's is asking if the water issue on the road can be resolved through this project. Mr. Griffin explained that the project is proposing to capture 95% of the

proposed development within the soil filter to mitigate the storm water runoff. Mr. Griffin also explained that the State's storm water engineer mentioned that if drainage issues were still present after completion of the project, there may be additional remediation required. There were no further questions from the public. Chairman Christopher Whitman closed the Public Hearing for Hurd Storage.

• Nathan Gardner: 2740 Route 109. Map 141; Lot 045. Conditional Use Application for a Ground Mounted Solar Array.

Nathan Gardner was called to the podium for a public hearing around his proposed project. Mr. Gardner explained to those in attendance that he is installing a ground mounted solar array consisting of about 20 panels for personal use only. There was no public comment. Chairman Christopher Whitman closed the public hearing.

Old Business:

• Nathan Gardner: 2740 Route 109. Map 141; Lot 045. Conditional Use Application for a Ground Mounted Solar Array.

Mr. Gardner remained at the podium to continue the review of his proposed project. The Planning Board described how the project was straight forward. There were no line-of-sight issues with where the array would be placed, and the array is 8.4 feet tall. The Planning Board moved on to read through the standards applicable to Conditional Use applications as follows;

	Th	e Standards listed in Section 6.6.3.7 have been reviewed and found that:
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	a.	The use will not have an adverse impact on spawning grounds, fish,
		aquatic life, bird, or other wildlife habitat;
	b.	The use will conserve shore cover and visual, as well as actual, access
		to water bodies; Yes □ No □ N/A
	C.	The use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; Yes $\ \square$ No $\ \square$ N/A
	d.	Traffic access to the site meets the standards contained in this
		Ordinance; and traffic congestion has been addressed in accordance
		with performance standards in this Ordinance;
	e.	The site design is in conformance with all municipal flood hazard
		protection regulations;
	f	Adequate provision for the disposal of all wastewater and solid waste

	has been made; ☐ Yes ☐ No ✓ N/A
g.	Adequate provision for the transportation, storage, and disposal of
	any hazardous materials has been made;
h.	A storm water drainage system capable of handling a twenty-five
	(25) year storm without adverse impact on adjacent properties,
	has been designed;
i.	Adequate provisions to control soil erosion and sedimentation have
	been made;
j.	There is adequate water supply to meet the demands of the proposed
	use, and for fire protection purposes;
k.	The provisions for buffer strips and on-site landscaping provide
	adequate protection to neighboring properties from detrimental
	features of the development, such as noise, glare, fumes, dust, odor,
	and the like; Yes $\ \square$ No $\ \square$ N/A
I.	All performance standards in this Ordinance applicable to the
	proposed use will be met;
m.	Archeological and historic resources, as designated in the
	Comprehensive Plan, will be protected;

John Qua — "Mr. Chairman, I'll make a Motion that the Board approve the Conditional Use Application for Nathan Gardner at 2740 Route 109 for the installation of a ground mounted solar array, 20 module grid tied with three Conditions. The first is that at the end of the life of the solar panels it is incumbent upon the property owner to remove or replace at their expense said panels. The second Condition is that the vegetative buffer that exists today be maintained, and the third Condition is that as the construction is finished that you replant grass in a timely manner."

Patricia Pearson – "Second." Motion Passed 5 – 0.

• John O'Keefe: 193 Foxes Ridge Road. Map 248; Lot 009. 6.6.4 Site Plan Review

Michael Menary and Joe Griffin returned to the podium to continue the Site Plan Review for Hurd Storage. Board member John Qua asked if there were any changes other than the outlet from the soil filter. Mr. Griffin stated there was not. The trees requested by the Planning Board at the previous meeting to be placed in the front of the property to

the side of the soil filter have been added to the site plan. Board member Patricia Pearson asked what adding more vegetation to the front of the property would do to the project. Mr. Griffin explained that woody vegetation would infiltrate the soil filter and clog the system and should not be put in that area. Board member Gavin Maloney asked what was located to the right of the driveway. Mr. Griffin explained that it was a possible snow storage area that has a grade that drains effectively away from the site towards the wet land. He continued to say that the grade should be kept with grass and not woody vegetation because the woody vegetation has the tendency to inhibit drainage. Board Member Adam Brock stated that while he understands the need for a vegetative buffer, he doesn't believe there needs to be more added in this area as it would hurt drainage more than help it. John Qua agreed that the applicant has given some items in good faith where they could and has requested waivers. Mr. Qua mentioned to the Board that the Site Plan Review checklist should be read through to make sure everything is covered. John Qua moved on to read through the Site Plan Review Checklist as follows:

6.6.4.6.2 Information regarding existing conditions provided – This section was deemed complete by the Planning Board.

6.6.4.6.3 Proposed Development Activity - Information is provided including:

- N/A Estimated demand for water supply and sewage disposal;
- N/A Location and dimensions of all provisions for water supply and wastewater disposal;
- N/A Evidence of water supply adequacy including soils test pit data if on-site sewage disposal;
- ✓ Direction of proposed surface water drainage;
- ✓ Assessment of impacts on downstream properties;
- N/A Provisions for handling all solid wastes, including hazardous and special wastes;
- ✓ Location and proposed screening of any on-site collection or storage facilities;
- N/A List of all chemicals and materials which will be used or stored on the site;
- Partial with a Waiver Proposed driveways, parking, loading areas, walkways, changes in traffic flow onto or off-site;
- ✓ Partial with a Waiver Proposed landscaping and buffering;
- ✓ Proposed buildings or building expansion location, dimensions, ground floor, floor plans,
- ✓ Signs location, front view, materials, and dimensions, method for securing the sign;
- ✓ Location and type of exterior lighting;
- access to a lock box for the gate will be provided Location of all utilities, including fire protection systems;
- ✓ Description of the proposed use or activity;
- ✓ Estimate of the peak hour and daily traffic to be generated;
- ✓ Stormwater calculations, erosion and sedimentation control measures, and water quality and/or
- N/A phosphorous export management provisions.

6.6.4.7 Approval Standards and Criteria – the following minimum requirements have been reviewed by the Planning Board:

6.6.4.7.1 Utilization of Site

- √ The natural capabilities of the site to support development are noted on the plan and appropriate measures for protecting these resources are included;
- ✓ Environmentally sensitive areas:

√ Wetlands

√ steep slopes

√ floodplains

√ significant wildlife habitats

√ fisheries

√ scenic areas

√ habitat for rare and endangered plants and animals

√ unique natural communities and natural areas

√ sand and gravel aquifers

√ Natural drainage areas

✓ Buildings, lots, and support facilities are clustered in those portions of the site that have the most suitable conditions for development;

6.6.4.7.2 Adequacy of Road System -

- √ Adequate capacity to accommodate additional traffic generated is provided may be waived
- ✓ A development not meeting this requirement may be approved if the applicant demonstrates that:
 - √ A public agency has committed funds
 - √ The applicant will assume financial responsibility

6.6.4.7.3 Access into the Site

- √ Vehicular access to and from is safe and convenient:
- Driveway / proposed street is designed to the current Town of Acton Subdivision Standards;
- ✓ Points of access / egress avoid hazardous avoid conflicts with existing turning movements and traffic flows;
- ✓ Proposed drive / street grades are not more than ±3% for a minimum of two (2) car lengths, or forty feet (40') from the intersection;
- ✓ Intersection of access/egress drive or proposed street functions:
 - (A) At a Level of Service of D following development if the project will generate one thousand (1,000) or more vehicle trips per twenty-four (24) hour period; or
 - (B) At a level which will allow safe access into and out of the project if less than one thousand (1,000) trips are generated.
- ✓ Streets with less potential for traffic congestion and for traffic and pedestrian hazards is used when the lot has frontage on two or more streets;
- ✓ Turning lanes, traffic directional islands, and traffic controls are provided when necessary;
- ✓ Access ways are designed and have sufficient capacity to avoid queuing;
- √ The driveways meet the criteria:
- ✓ Use which generates less than one hundred (100) vehicle trips per day has more than one (1) two-way driveway onto a single roadway no greater than thirty (30) feet wide;
- ✓ Use which generates one hundred (100) or more vehicle trips per day has more than two (2) points of entry from, and two (2) points of egress to, a single roadway with a combined width of all access ways not exceeding sixty (60) feet;

✓ Sight distances on town ways conform with the current edition of the Town of Acton Subdivision Standards.

6.6.4.7.4 Access way Location and Spacing -

- ✓ Private entrances/exits are located at least fifty (50) feet from the closest unsignalized intersection and one hundred fifty feet (150') from the closest signalized intersection;
- ✓ Private access ways in or out of a development are separated by a minimum of seventy-five feet (75') where possible.

6.6.4.7.5 Internal Vehicular Circulation

- ✓ The layout of the site provides for the safe movement of passenger, service, and emergency vehicles;
- √ (With a Waiver) Nonresidential projects provide a clear route for delivery vehicles with appropriate
 geometric design to allow turning and backing for a minimum of WB-40 vehicles;
- Gavin Maloney "I'll make a Motion that we waive part of section 6.6.4.7.5 Internal
 Vehicular Circulation under the second heading down, Nonresidential
 projects provide a clear route for delivery vehicles with appropriate
 geometric design allow turning and backing for a minimum of WB-40
 vehicles. So, I make a motion that we grant a waiver to not worry about
 this subsection."
- John Qua "I Second." Motion Passed 4 0. Patricia Pearson is abstaining as she is friends with the owner.
 - ✓ Clear routes of access are provided and maintained for emergency vehicles, and are posted with appropriate signage "fire lane" "no parking";
- Gavin Maloney "I make a Motion that we waive sub box number three under 6.6.4.7.5

 Internal Vehicular Circulation and that we do not require them to have any signage regarding parking, but we do require it in the lease agreement."
- John Qua "I'll Second." Motion Passed 4 0. Patricia Pearson is abstaining as she is friends with the owner.
 - Parking layout and design provide for safe and convenient circulation of vehicles;
 - √ Roadways are designed to:
 - √ harmonize with the topographic and natural features,
 - √ minimize filling, grading, excavation, or other similar activities
 - √ The road network provides for:
 - ✓ vehicular, pedestrian, cyclist safety,
 - √ all season emergency access,

- ✓ snow storage,
- √ delivery and collection services.

6.6.4.7.6 Parking Layout and Design: Off-street parking conform to the following standards:

- N/A Parking areas with more than two (2) parking spaces are arranged so that it is not necessary for vehicles to back into the street;
- N/A Parking spaces, access drives, impervious surfaces are located at least five (5) feet from any side or rear lot line, except where standards for buffer yards require a greater distance;
- N/A No parking spaces or asphalt type surface are located within five (5) feet of the front property line;
- N/A Parking lots on adjoining lots are connected by access ways not exceeding twenty-four (24) feet in width:
- N/A Parking stalls and aisle layout conform to the required standards;
- N/A The direction of traffic flow is indicated by signs, pavement markings, or other permanent indications;
- N/A Parking areas for nonresidential uses are designed to permit each motor vehicle to proceed to / from the parking space provided for it, without requiring the moving of any other motor vehicles;
- N/A Both spaces in double stack parking are assigned to the occupants of the same dwelling unit;
- N/A Provisions are made to restrict the "overhang" of parked vehicles.

6.6.4.7.7 Pedestrian Circulation

- ✓ Pedestrian ways are appropriate to the type and scale of development;
- ✓ This system connects the major building entrances/exits with parking areas and with existing sidewalks, if they exist or are planned in the vicinity of the project;
- ✓ The pedestrian network is located either in the street right-of-way, or outside of the right-of-way in open space or recreation areas;
- √ The project links with residential, recreational, and commercial facilities, schools, bus stops, and existing sidewalks in the neighborhood or, when appropriate, to connect with amenities such as parks or open space, on or adjacent to the site.

6.6.4.7.8 Stormwater Management

- ✓ Adequate provisions are made for the collection / disposal of stormwater that runs off proposed streets, parking areas, roofs, and other surfaces, through a stormwater drainage system and maintenance plan;
- √ The plan retains stormwater on the site using the natural features of the sit;.
- ✓ Systems detain or retain water such that the rate of flow from the site after development does not exceed the predevelopment rate;
- ✓ On- and off-site downstream channel or system capacity is sufficient to carry the flow without adverse effects to flooding and erosion of shoreland areas;
- ✓ Natural drainage ways are preserved at their natural gradients, and are not to be filled or converted to a closed system unless approved as part of the site plan review;
- √ The stormwater drainage system provides for the disposal of stormwater without damage;
- ✓ Storm drainage systems are fully cognizant of upstream runoff which passes over / through the site, and provides for this movement.
- √ The biological and chemical properties of the receiving waters are not degraded by the stormwater runoff from the development site.

6.6.4.7.9 Erosion Control

- ✓ Designs and layouts harmonize with existing topography conserving desirable natural surroundings; filling, excavation, and earth moving activity are kept to a minimum. Parking lots on sloped sites are terraced to avoid undue cut and fill, and/or the need for retaining walls;
- √ Natural vegetation is preserved and protected;
- ✓ Soil erosion and sedimentation of watercourses and water bodies are minimized by an active program.

6.6.4.7.10 Water Supply

✓ A system of water supply that provides each use with adequate water for domestic use and fire protection is planned.

6.6.4.7.11 Sewage Disposal:

- ✓ A method of disposing of sewage which is in compliance with the State Plumbing Code is planned
- √ Sanitary sewage is discharged into a public or private sewage collection and treatment system;
- ✓ If the public or private collection system is not at the lot line, but can be extended in the public or private right-of-way, the collection system is extended by the owner and the new or expanded use connected to the public or private system. Such extension shall be required if the public or the private system is within one hundred feet (100') of a new use with a design sewage flow of less than five hundred (500) gallons per day, or within three hundred (300) feet of a new use with a design sewage flow of five hundred (500) or more gallons per day, and the system has adequate capacity to accommodate the additional flow. The Planning Board may waive this requirement if the use is already served by a properly functioning subsurface disposal system that is properly sized for the projected flows, provided that connection to the public or private system will occur if and when the subsurface system needs to be replaced, which shall be confirmed by a licensed site evaluator or sanitary engineer;
- ✓ If the public or private system cannot serve or be extended to serve a new or expanded use, the sewage is an on-site sewage disposal system meeting the requirements of the Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules;
- ✓ If two (2) or more lots or buildings in different ownership share the use of a common subsurface disposal system, the system is owned and maintained in common by an owners' association;
- ✓ Covenants in the deeds for each lot require mandatory membership in the association, and provide for adequate funding of the association to assure proper maintenance of the system;
- ✓ Industrial or commercial wastewater discharged to public sewers may require pretreatment at the industrial or commercial.

6.6.4.7.12 Utilities:

- √ the plan provides for adequate utilities to service anticipated use -
- √ screened from view to the extent feasible –
- √ underground if street and adjoining lots have underground.

6.6.4.7.13 Natural Features -

√ The landscape is preserved in its natural state insofar as practical - extensive grading and filling is avoided

6.6.4.7.14 Groundwater Protection -

√ The project does not adversely impact either the quality or quantity of groundwater available to abutting properties - demonstrates groundwater compliance with State standards

6.6.4.7.15 Water Quality Protection – The project is designed so that:

- ✓ No discharge of any substance contaminates surface or groundwater or is harmful to human, animal, plant, or aquatic life.
- ✓ All storage facilities for fuel, chemicals, chemical, or industrial wastes, and biodegradable raw materials, meet the standards of the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the State Fire Marshall's Office.
- √ The project complies with the standards of the DEP with respect to the export of total suspended solids and/or phosphorous

6.6.4.7.16 Hazardous, Special and Radioactive Materials -

- √ handling / storage / use complies with standards of all agencies.
- ✓ No storage is planned unless:
 - ✓ Storage located at least seventy-five (75) feet from any lot line, or forty (40) feet in the case of underground storage.
 - ✓ Storage complies with rules and regulations of appropriate federal, state, and local regulations.

6.6.4.7.17 Shoreland Relationship:

√ The development does not adversely affect the water quality

6.6.4.7.18 Technical and Financial Capacity:

√ (A copy of an Insurance certificate will be provided) - The applicant demonstrates financial and technical
capability in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance and plan.

6.6.4.7.19 Solid Waste Disposal:

- √ The proposed development provides for adequate disposal of solid wastes.
- ✓ All solid waste must be disposed of at a licensed disposal facility having adequate capacity to accept the project's wastes.

6.6.4.7.20 Historic and Archaeological Resources:

✓ Appropriate measures for protecting any identified historic

6.6.4.7.21 Floodplain Management:

✓ Development within flood hazard is consistent with the Town's Floodplain management provisions.

6.6.4.7.22 Fire Protection:

Fire protection standards are met at a minimum with either one of the following:

(The applicant will provide a key for the entrance gate to the Acton Fire Department)

- √ NFPA-13 Installation of Sprinklers (including the most current revisions) or
- ✓ NFPA-1142 Standards on Water Supplies for Suburban and Rural Fire Fighting

Following the site plan review checklist, Board member John Qua mentioned that the remaining waiver that needed to be discussed was in relation to the reduction in a landscape buffer. The waiver would be considered a partial waiver as they are planting a small number of trees.

John Qua — "I make a Motion we grant the applicant a partial waiver for the buffer requirements for their site except for the trees to the north-west corner of the property by the soil filter."

Gavin Maloney asked if anyone on the board would be opposed to asking the applicant for more than 3 trees to be planted in that area or does the board feel the amount is sufficient. John Qua stated that he believed the three trees would be sufficient because it gives a buffer to the house that is across the street from the site.

Gavin Maloney – "I Second your Motion." Motion Passed 4 - 0. Patricia Pearson is abstaining as she is friends with the owner."

The Planning Board determined that all the necessary criteria had been met for this project.

John Qua — "I'll make a Motion we approve the Site Plan proposal for OKM Property Management at 193 Foxes Ridge Road, tax map 248; lot 009 with the following three conditions:

- 1.) Access by key or code be given to the fire department for the lock box on the gate.
- 2.) The lease agreement be amended to include no overnight parking allowed at the facility.
- 3.) The applicant provides the CEO with a certificate of insurance."

Gavin Maloney – "Second." Motion Passed 4 - 0. Patricia Pearson is abstaining as she is friends with the owner.

New Business:

• Arthur Kelly: 82 Sanborn Road. Map 234; Lot 044. Application for Site Plan Review for Acton Solar LLC.

Jenna Gilbert from Sevee and Maher Engineers approached the podium to represent Arthur Kelly and Acton Solar LLC. Mrs. Gilbert explained that this project was before the Planning Board a couple of years prior, and she handed the Board revised site plan documents. CEO Jason Sevigny stated that the solar field was previously approved and proposed to extend into the Village District of Acton's zoning. The proposed project had been approved but nothing had happened with the project and the approval thus expired after two years. He continued to state that the new project had to be shrunk to conform with the new zoning requirements that were adopted in June. The new land use chart in the zoning ordinance does not allow for solar fields in the village district. Jenna then provided the CEO with a flash drive with slides to be shown to the Board.

Jenna began her presentation stating that the project was originally designed for 14 acres at 2.75 MW and has been reduced to 5 acres at 0.600 MW. Jenna also detailed on the site plan, a 50-foot variance that would be requested for the field to extend toward the village district as allowed by the zoning ordinance. The arrays are to be a total of 10 feet tall and there will be landscaped buffer installed around the site of approximately 48 evergreen trees. The arrays will also be of the tracking style and will be installed with helical piles. After the array is installed, the area will be regressed with a pollinator seed mix and the site will only be mowed twice per year. The fence around the site will be a farm style agricultural fence with large openings to allow wildlife to pass through without issue.

John Qua inquired what the decommissioning value is. Mrs. Gilbert stated that the value is approximately \$28,000.00 and it is outlined in the decommissioning plan in the packets that were provided to each member. Gavin Maloney asked what the life span of the field is. Jenna stated that it's likely to be around 30 years, but the option is to lease the field out for 40 years. The site will have a fence around the perimeter that meets the standards for protection from electrical services. There will also be a gate to the site with a knox box provided for the fire department. The Planning Board decided at this time to schedule a site walk for the project.

John Qua – "I make a Motion we do a site walk for the Acton Solar Array Site Plan on November 11th at 10:00am."

Gavin Maloney – "I'll Second that." Motion Passed 5 - 0.

Jenna asked the Planning Board if she should be submitting a Conditional Use application for the 50-foot variance into the village district that is being requested. Gavin Maloney stated that there might be some discussion around this scenario at future meetings but just setting a condition on the project like a variance waiver should suffice. Jenna informed the Board that she would bring the revised documents to the upcoming site walk.

Round Table Discussions:

The Planning Board discussed potential zoning changes for the next town meeting. Gavin Maloney discussed a proposed ordinance change that would require a landowner who plans to have timber harvesting done on their property, notify the town prior to commencing work. The CEO stated that the Planning Board had removed timber harvesting from the ordinance a couple years prior and that he is notified by the State when someone plans to timber harvest. Gavin stated that he understood this but is not looking to add a whole timber harvesting section and it sometimes takes the State weeks to let the town know. Mr. Maloney would like to put the responsibility of notifying the town on the landowner, so that the town is notified at the same time as the State. Mr. Maloney also stated that this was just a suggestion of his and could be discussed more at other meetings.

Pending Projects:

None

John Qua – "I move we adjourn."

Gavin Maloney – "Second." Motion Passed 5 – 0.