

MINUTES OF THE WOODBRIDGE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 12, 2026

A regular meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) for the Town of Woodbridge was held in the Central Meeting Room of the Woodbridge Town Hall, 11 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge, Connecticut on Monday, January 12, 2026, attended by:

MEMBERS: Acting Chairman Hank Nusbaum, Kalman Watsky, Cynthia Gibbons, Nigel Light, and Shawn Flynn

ALTERNATE: Maurice Clarke, Lewis Shaffer and Thomas Kenefick

The regular meeting of the Woodbridge Zoning Board of Appeals was called to order at 7:00 pm by Nusbaum in the Central Meeting Room of the Woodbridge Town Hall, 11 Meetinghouse Lane, Woodbridge, Connecticut. Also present for the meeting was Zoning Enforcement Officer Kristine Sullivan. No alternates needed to be seated for the meeting.

ELECTION OF BOARD CHAIR

The Acting Chair noted that the first order of business for the evening's agenda was the election of a Board Chairman.

*** **Mr. Watsky moved to nominate Hank Nusbaum as Chairman of the Zoning Board of Appeals.**

*** **Mr. Light seconded**

There being no other nominations for Chairman the following vote was then taken.

*** **In favor: Nusbaum, Watsky, Gibbons, Light, and Flynn**

*** **Opposed: No One**

*** **Abstain: No One**

Unanimous approval.

PUBLIC HEARING

Green Skies Clean Energy, LLC: 89 Acorn Hill Road Ext.

Variance of Table 3.1 – “Uses Allowed by Zone” to permit the construction and operation of a 4.33 acre ground mounted solar array within the Residential A Zone.

The Chairman opened the public hearing on the application of Green Skies Clean Energy, LLC, for a variance of Table 3.1 – “Uses Allowed by Zone” to permit the construction and operation of a 4.33 acre ground mounted solar array with the residential A Zone, on Town owned property located at 89 Acorn Hill Road Ext. on what is a capped former landfill.

Dennis Hicks from Green Skies Clean Energy, Ryan Linares from Green Skies Clean Energy and Michael Gagnon, engineer with SLR International, LLC were present to speak on behalf of the application. In their presentation, Messrs. Hicks, Linares and Gagnon commented and responded to questions from Board members, noting:

- In response to an RFP by the Town of Woodbridge, for the installation of a solar farm on the close capped Town owned landfill located at 89 Acorn Hill Road, extension, Green Skies Clean Energy, LLC had submitted the variance request to allow the use of the solar farm on the site.
- The solar farm would produce 999 kw of energy.
- The solar panels would be placed on ballasted blocks on the top of the land fill as a field tilt array.
- The Town would receive part of the proceeds from the energy produced by the solar array.

- An application has also been submitted to the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), which also has to issue a permit for the solar array since it would be on a capped landfill.
- Once the solar array was installed, Green skies would mow the site, which would be vegetated with a pollinator seed mix.
- The solar array would be in place for 20 years, after which the array would be removed by Green Skies unless an additional deal was made with the town to lease the site.
- The Zoning Regulations, which do not list a solar farm as an allowed use in the Residence A Zone in which the property is located, would not be reviewing the project.
- In 2019, the use of a solar array was approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals for another location in Woodbridge.
- As shown on the submitted site plans, onsite drainage areas and natural gas well caps have been avoided in terms of placement of solar panels in those areas.
- 20 years is an industry standard for the life of a solar farm.
- Typically land caps are considered “impervious”.
- The land cap liner is covered with 12” ~ 18” of soil.
- The land fill was closed and capped in 1995.
- The existing series of drainage swales on the property will be maintained between solar arrays.
- The amount of “run-off” from solar panels is not the same as a parking lots because of the angle of the panels.
- The land fill, with the cap/liner is considered “impervious”
- Any disturbed areas of the site would be restored with a native seed mix to assist with maintaining a good stand of turf as a cover.
- Load bearing capacities of the land fill cap been provided to DEEP as part of DEEP’s review of the project. They cannot exceed .5 kips per square foot.
- The panels would be south oriented. A glare study was not done towards residences or the ball field access road. Green Skies is open to adding screening, which could be a condition of approval.
- Trees could not be planted on the cap itself but might be able to be planted off the cap. There could also be page fencing installed with privacy panels inserted, options could be looked into if needed.
- There has been some discussion with the baseball league, but the league was mainly concerned with electromagnetic interference with the scoreboards. Any damage to panels by stray balls would be done at Green Skies’ expense.
- DEEP would be inspecting the landfill during installation of the solar panels. If something were to occur to the cap, Green Skies would be responsible.
- Woodbridge Town Counsel has required that a “decommissioning” bond be posted for removal of the panels at the end of the project life.
- Green Skies has installed about 15 solar farms on landfills in the state, the oldest in Meriden. To date there have been no negative issues with any of those projects.
- Construction and sediment and erosion controls will be coordinated with DEEP and third party such as SLR Engineering also overseeing.
- The cap cannot be pierced, so erosion controls would not use staking but compost filter tubes whose weight secures them to the ground.
- As needed, roads ways will be kept clean, with a street sweeper if needed.
- DEEP will monitor storm water during and post construction.

- In accordance with the national electrical code, a seven foot high fence would enclose the solar field. The fence would be set back from the playing field access road.
- Post construction there would be minimal activity at the site, typically once a month.
- Separate from the fenced solar array would be a 10' x 20' equipment pad for the invertors and transformers to be placed on. As shown on the plans it would be near the access road to the ball fields. The pad, due to weight, cannot be located on the landfill cap itself, and is also required to be fenced. If needed the pad could be relocated away from the access road. Typically, a project going before the Connecticut Siting Council would have that equipment pad at least 200' from a residence.
- Construction equipment driven on the cap would have to comply with the project plans stated maximum wheel loading specifications. In addition, "timber swamp mats" could be utilized to minimize site disturbance.
- After 20 years the panels, which are no longer considered "hazardous waste" would be removed.
- Each inverter would produce a sound similar to a computer or refrigerator fan, but only during daytime hours when electricity was being generated. A sound study could be done if required.
- The Town would receive \$60,000 per year for the lease of the property and \$20,000 more per year for "kilowatt savings", equal to power used for municipal buildings excluding the Regional High School.

The Chairman then asked if there was any member of the public who wanted to speak regarding the application.

It was noted that as part of the hearing record was an email and attached letter had been received from Marlow Tinari of 74 Acorn Hill Road, which had been emailed to all the Board members prior to the meeting and distributed in hard copy form at the meeting.

The following members of the public then spoke for the hearing record:

- **Marlow Tinari: 74 Acorn Hill Road.**
Note: Mr. Tinari read his previously submitted letter for the record and supplemented it with additional comments.
- **Robert Hill: 68 Acorn Hill Road**
- **Desiree Balbuena: 70 Acorn Hill Road**
- **Peter Morgan: 52 Rimmon Road**
- **Andrew Mortenson: 84 Beecher Road**
- **Edgar Melo: 70 Acorn Hill Road**

At the conclusion of public comment, the Board members then acted as follows to close the public hearing:

- *** Ms. Gibbons moved to close the public hearing on the application of Green Skies Clean Energy, LLC for a Variance of Table 3.1 – "Uses Allowed by Zone" to permit the construction and operation of a 4.33 acre ground mounted solar array within the Residential A Zone on town owned property at 89 Acorn Hill Road Ext.
- *** Mr. Watsky seconded
- *** In favor: Nusbaum, Watsky, Gibbons, Light, and Flynn
- *** Opposed: No One
- *** Abstain: No One

Unanimous approval.

After the close of the public hearing, Board members discussed the application prior to a motion regarding the application being proposed noting:

- It appeared that project needed further study.
- There appeared to be a lack of due diligence regarding the application demonstrated during the applicant's presentation.
- Risks to the land fill cap and potential for downstream plume of contamination.
- The land fill is currently a non-conforming site, and a solar farm would be a continuation a non-conforming use.

The following motion was then made, discussed and acted on as noted:

*** **Mr. Nusbaum moved to approve the application of Green Skies Clean Energy, LLC for a Variance of Table 3.1 – “Uses Allowed by Zone” to permit the construction and operation of a 4.33 acre ground mounted solar array within the Residential A Zone on town owned property at 89 Acorn Hill Road Ext.**

The variance is granted based on the Boards’ finding of the hardship that with the land to be occupied by the solar array, being a capped land fill, has very limited use.

*** **Mr. Light seconded**

*** **In favor: Nusbaum, Light and Watsky**

*** **Opposed: Gibbons and Flynn**

*** **Abstain: No One**

The motion did not pass due to the lack of four members of the Board voting in favor of approval.

SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEETING DATES

A schedule of draft meeting dates had been distributed to the Board members for review. It was the consensus of the Board members to approve the meeting dates as drafted, with a meeting start time of 7 pm.

OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

ZEO Sullivan noted that Board members under State Statute are required within their first year of serving on the Board to take four hours of training, one of which must focus on housing. Thereafter every two years continuing Board members must complete an additional four hours of training of which one must focus on housing. The ZEO will let Board members know when training opportunities occur, with any costs for training registration covered by the Town.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND DISTRIBUTED

1. Fall 2025 issue of the Connecticut Federation of Planning & Zoning Agencies Quarterly Newsletter
2. Fall 2025 issue of the Connecticut Federation of Planning & Zoning Agencies Quarterly Newsletter

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*** **Mr. Watsky moved to approve as submitted, the minutes of the ZBA’s meeting on October 14, 2025**

*** **Mr. Wiznia seconded**

*** **In favor: Nusbaum, Watsky, Gibbons, Light, and Flynn**

*** **Opposed: No One**

*** Abstain: No One
Unanimous approval.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

*** Mr. Watsky moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 pm.
*** Mr. Flynn seconded
*** In favor: Nusbaum, Watsky, Gibbons, Light, and Flynn
*** Opposed: No One
*** Recused: No One
*** Abstained: No One

Unanimous approval.

Accordingly, the meeting was adjourned at 9:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristine Sullivan, Staff