

Selectboard Meeting

January 13, 2026 . 6:28 PM . ID: 233643381

Transcript

00:00 - 00:03

[speaker unknown]

This conference will now be recorded.

00:15 - 00:18

Worthington Town Hall

All right, so thanks, everyone, for being here.

00:18 - 00:29

Worthington Town Hall

We are going to try to depend on the microphones for the benefit of the folks who are online, certainly as well as everybody in the room, because again, acoustics in here are pretty awful.

00:30 - 00:40

Worthington Town Hall

So please, I've already got four mics set up, I'm sorry, but please feel free to take these two out of the stands and pass them as needed.

00:42 - 00:56

Worthington Town Hall

Folks in the audience, if you have something you wanna ask or contribute for that matter, please raise your hand and then I'll have you come up to where there's a microphone and Mike or Nestor can hand it back to you.

01:00 - 01:07

Worthington Town Hall

So meeting getting underway and first thing on the agenda is the petition that we've received.

01:08 - 01:10

Worthington Town Hall

Signatures have been certified.

01:13 - 01:16

Worthington Town Hall

And we need to set a special time meeting date.

01:16 - 01:24

Worthington Town Hall

My understanding is, as of tonight, we have 45 days, right, to schedule a town meeting.

01:24 - 01:26

Worthington Town Hall

And then you need to hold a hearing in the meantime.

01:30 - 01:35

Worthington Town Hall

So I'm probably more interested in what you have to say right at the moment than anyone else.

01:38 - 02:12

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, my understanding is that there's the select board has 45 days to schedule the town meeting and in order for zoning amendment to bylaw amendment to actually be legitimate there needs to be a hearing considering it before that I think that there's no reason they can't happen on the same day at least no legal reason but it does in order for that to work the Planning Board has to come out of hearing with a recommendation about the bylaw change.

02:15 - 02:22

Worthington Town Hall

I think, I don't know, it's really whether the planning board is comfortable with holding the hearing on the same day as the town meeting.

02:23 - 02:25

Worthington Town Hall

And then it's just timing.

02:28 - 02:30

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know what you guys, if you guys want to speak to.

02:33 - 02:38

Worthington Town Hall

Just so for info, say so 45 days from 10, please see one.

02:43 - 02:46

Worthington Town Hall

So one of the questions that has been coming up for us.

02:47 - 02:51

Worthington Town Hall

We're looking at the last week of February at the latest, really, to pull up a special timing.

02:52 - 02:52

Worthington Town Hall

Sorry, go ahead.

02:53 - 02:53

Worthington Town Hall

Ok.

02:54 - 03:03

Worthington Town Hall

Was whether there would be any recommendations for amendments to the moratorium language.

03:05 - 03:30

Worthington Town Hall

And I guess the question is, is that best handled If we try to do it all at this on the same day or I'm gonna clarify because the the petition language that is that that language can't be changed At the hearing and it can be it has to be what's on the warrant at town meeting It can be amended at town meeting.

03:30 - 03:31

Worthington Town Hall

But oh, I see.

03:34 - 03:38

Worthington Town Hall

So if you're planning on proposing something else that obviously you need to.

03:42 - 03:52

Worthington Town Hall

In the mic We have to have the exact language and it has to be actually published several weeks in advance?

03:53 - 03:53

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

03:53 - 03:54

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah.

03:54 - 04:05

Worthington Town Hall

So the hearing has to be publicized, it has to be in the newspaper and the rules are more than 14 days in advance and then again in the week following.

04:07 - 04:15

Worthington Town Hall

Because the country journal is the much cheaper place to publish and maybe it gets better coverage in town, that's the preferable one.

04:16 - 04:18

Worthington Town Hall

And really, that means three weeks, because I can't remember.

04:19 - 04:20

Worthington Town Hall

You have to get it into them.

04:20 - 04:24

Worthington Town Hall

They publish on Thursday, and it has to be into them by Monday, I think.

04:25 - 04:27

Worthington Town Hall

So basically, it's a three week.

04:28 - 04:31

Worthington Town Hall

You have to get it in the newspaper three weeks before the hearing.

04:33 - 04:38

Worthington Town Hall

And when you do that, you have to actually have the language complete and finish in the final.

04:39 - 04:52

Worthington Town Hall

So that's obviously not an issue for the petition language, but it would be for any of if we were going to propose it an alternate amendment and just just to Why are we talking about an alternate amendment?

04:55 - 04:58

Worthington Town Hall

The Language on the petition is broad.

04:58 - 05:07

Worthington Town Hall

It is a broad prohibition of solar And I as I recall batteries too, but solar in Worthington There's no notion.

05:07 - 05:12

Worthington Town Hall

It is 100 of the town It is a temporary in nature that makes in a moratorium.

05:12 - 05:25

Worthington Town Hall

So it's I think it's 18 months, but the In the last two years the AG's office hasn't allowed a single moratorium for solar That's a broad prohibition.

05:25 - 05:27

Worthington Town Hall

So there's a fairly good chance.

05:27 - 05:33

Worthington Town Hall

The AG's office is not going to allow it on review Which they have to in order for it to take effect.

05:33 - 05:47

Worthington Town Hall

So the Planning Board was considering putting together an alternate moratorium one that would not compete with the petition moratorium but would simply, in our view, have a better chance of passing AG's review.

05:48 - 05:54

Worthington Town Hall

The idea would be if both of them went forward and the AG's office approved both of them, the more restrictive one would apply.

05:55 - 05:56

Worthington Town Hall

That would be the petition one.

05:56 - 06:08

Worthington Town Hall

But if we put both forward, as in the town meeting votes to approve both of them and the AG's office rejects one, hopefully they wouldn't reject both and we'd get some protection rather than no protection.

06:15 - 06:19

Worthington Town Hall

So come on up Mike can you hand them like the trip.

06:22 - 06:29

Worthington Town Hall

And please identify yourself in your address so just your name at least it's not on press the button.

06:34 - 06:52

Worthington Town Hall

Trip shot 27 old North Road I think a lot of people have got the question I think we heard at the last conservation committees something about three more proposals or two more proposals I think a lot of people want how this petition affects the other proposals.

06:53 - 07:01

Worthington Town Hall

Specifically, there's already plans online for the Old Post Road project.

07:03 - 07:04

Worthington Town Hall

At one meeting.

07:08 - 07:14

Worthington Town Hall

It was made clear that that Old Post Road project was somehow grandfathered in.

07:15 - 07:20

Worthington Town Hall

I just want clarity on why the petition wouldn't stop.

07:21 - 07:22

Worthington Town Hall

We did all this work.

07:24 - 07:24

Worthington Town Hall

Why the petition?

07:26 - 07:27

Worthington Town Hall

These other two applications.

07:28 - 07:31

Worthington Town Hall

Just more clarity on the process works.

07:31 - 07:32

Worthington Town Hall

Thank you.

07:33 - 07:46

Worthington Town Hall

So as soon as the application for a project is received by the planning board, the zoning that's in effect at that moment is what's in effect for that project.

07:47 - 07:54

Worthington Town Hall

So if we get a proposal today, then whatever zoning is in effect today, that's how we evaluate it.

07:54 - 08:00

Worthington Town Hall

If the zoning changes tomorrow, that doesn't matter if the zoning that's in effect when the application is received.

08:01 - 08:10

Worthington Town Hall

So the current project, the 190 Ridge Road project will not be affected by any moratorium or any bylaw change that we happen to pass in the future.

08:11 - 08:14

Worthington Town Hall

The old post road, there has been no application made.

08:15 - 08:23

Worthington Town Hall

And therefore, currently, if we made a bylaw change tomorrow, not that we could, it hasn't been applied for.

08:24 - 08:31

Worthington Town Hall

That new zoning would apply if and when they actually get around to applying for it, submitting that application.

08:31 - 08:53

Worthington Town Hall

And the caveat is that solar companies in general, and Blue Wave in particular, are aware of this issue and aware of moratoriums, and their practice in Blandford and Northfield and I think throughout the state.

08:54 - 09:20

Worthington Town Hall

Is that when they see a hearing noticed, as in made public for a moratorium or bylaw change that affects solar, they don't issue their application for cycle interview or special permit, they issue what's called a preliminary subdivision plan for the parcels that are affected by the project they want to do.

09:21 - 09:26

Worthington Town Hall

And that preliminary subdivision plan has the effect of freezing zoning on that parcel for three years.

09:26 - 09:33

Worthington Town Hall

And it's frozen as of when they submit it, and that's how it is.

09:33 - 09:41

Worthington Town Hall

It doesn't actually have any content and they're not actually gonna do a subdivision, but it's a mechanism that exists in the law that allows them to free zoning on that parcel.

09:42 - 09:52

Worthington Town Hall

If they feel like it, they can turn it into a definitive subdivision plan and make it frozen zoning for eight years, which, great, but that's the mechanism.

09:55 - 10:05

Worthington Town Hall

So, just to be clear, until the Attorney General's Office rules on any type of zoning bylaw change including a moratorium, it's not in effect.

10:07 - 10:11

Worthington Town Hall

I believe that this is where things get weird.

10:13 - 10:26

Worthington Town Hall

My memory is that it's when the zoning comes into effect the day that town meeting passes it but it may be the day the town clerk submits it to the AG's office which is a close.

10:27 - 10:35

Worthington Town Hall

The problem is that you don't know if it passed review or not until the AG's office reviews it six months later.

10:36 - 10:46

Worthington Town Hall

So there's this period of time if you pass the zoning the moratorium you gotta wait six months to see if it actually came into effect six months ago you know it's it.

10:46 - 10:49

Worthington Town Hall

So if there's a new applicant in that period, they just have to wait?

10:50 - 10:52

Worthington Town Hall

That's where things are fuzzy.

10:54 - 11:02

Worthington Town Hall

I think we'd have to, you know, I think that's why they just submit their application before, when the hearing is noticed.

11:02 - 11:03

Worthington Town Hall

Just to avoid the question.

11:03 - 11:04

Worthington Town Hall

Just to avoid the question.

11:06 - 11:13

Worthington Town Hall

And once they've made the subdivision application, that freezes all zoning, including an application for a by-right solar installation.

11:15 - 11:18

Worthington Town Hall

So that's regardless of what the AG says.

11:18 - 11:21

Worthington Town Hall

And Bart, one other clarification.

11:22 - 11:28

Worthington Town Hall

I believe that the planning board is only aware of these two projects, 190 Ridge Road and the Old Post Road project.

11:29 - 11:33

Worthington Town Hall

We have not heard of any other solar projects from Worthington to this date.

11:34 - 11:37

Worthington Town Hall

And I've done my best to try to figure out if there might be any.

11:38 - 11:41

Worthington Town Hall

It's hard, this is not my world.

11:41 - 11:55

Worthington Town Hall

I've asked people who it's more their world And it's all Eversource knows, but getting information out of Eversource is, as far as I know, not possible unless they want it to be out there.

11:57 - 12:04

Worthington Town Hall

It is public in the sense that there's a particular feeder that comes to Worthington.

12:04 - 12:07

Worthington Town Hall

And there are three projects in the pipeline for that feeder.

12:08 - 12:13

Worthington Town Hall

I think one of them is Plainfield that just got its approval of 30 acres of clear cutting.

12:14 - 12:21

Worthington Town Hall

And I think the other two are Ridge Road and Old Post Road, but there's no identification, they're just, there are three, that's what we know.

12:23 - 12:26

Worthington Town Hall

So you sort of take that how you want to take it.

12:26 - 12:31

Worthington Town Hall

You can say maybe there are only two coming to Worthington, maybe there are three, maybe there are more than we don't know.

12:32 - 12:34

Worthington Town Hall

It's a, sorry, it's not a very satisfying.

12:37 - 12:39

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, so let's talk about a date then.

12:39 - 12:45

Worthington Town Hall

So can we work backwards from a potential town meeting date and look at the last week of February?

12:47 - 12:48

Worthington Town Hall

Does that make sense for everyone?

12:51 - 12:52

Worthington Town Hall

You say last week of February.

12:52 - 12:55

Worthington Town Hall

I think it's the 24th is?

12:55 - 12:56

Worthington Town Hall

Would be 45 days.

12:56 - 12:58

Worthington Town Hall

I guess that's 42 days.

12:58 - 12:59

Worthington Town Hall

So you're right, the 27.

13:00 - 13:05

Worthington Town Hall

So I guess the first question I have for you is, do you want to hold it on a weekday or a weekend?

13:09 - 13:12

Worthington Town Hall

We typically hold special town meetings on weeknights.

13:12 - 13:21

Worthington Town Hall

I don't have a strong feeling, we might have held the one back when we voted on the school on a Saturday, I can't remember, does anybody remember?

13:24 - 13:41

Worthington Town Hall

Weeknights tend to work best, but typically special town meetings aren't particularly well attended either, and this will certainly be otherwise, so I mean, have you guys got a feeling or a preference as the petitioners?

13:45 - 13:48

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, the mic, please.

13:50 - 13:59

Worthington Town Hall

Hello, I would say for the petitioners, a weeknight would probably be preferable for us to have that meeting, so.

14:01 - 14:07

Worthington Town Hall

So we typically will look at a Tuesday night to start with, because that's so convenient for the select board, I guess.

14:07 - 14:09

Worthington Town Hall

Let me just see if that's a regular select night.

14:10 - 14:14

Worthington Town Hall

Could I request it to be at six or later?

14:14 - 14:15

Worthington Town Hall

Sure.

14:15 - 14:15

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

14:17 - 14:18

Worthington Town Hall

So I can come.

14:20 - 14:20

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

14:21 - 14:22

Worthington Town Hall

So that'd be fine.

14:22 - 14:24

Worthington Town Hall

We could have a select board meeting after as necessary.

14:25 - 14:26

Worthington Town Hall

So starting at six.

14:27 - 14:28

Worthington Town Hall

It's cool.

14:29 - 14:48

Worthington Town Hall

So I think that my interest is having it as late as possible just to give us the planning board some time to get our alternate moratorium language drafted Not late in the month as in the 24th is the last Tuesday that it could be and that's what I would vote for but.

14:52 - 14:56

Worthington Town Hall

Seeing nods from the planning board Somebody want to make a motion.

14:57 - 14:59

Worthington Town Hall

I move that we hold.

15:06 - 15:10

Worthington Town Hall

Hey Kevin How's the 24th?

15:12 - 15:14

Worthington Town Hall

The record note we have a thumbs up.

15:17 - 15:23

Worthington Town Hall

I Move that we hold a special town median for a petition for temporary moratorium.

15:26 - 15:33

Worthington Town Hall

On LSGMPI and battery storage systems on the 24th of February at 6 p.m.

15:34 - 15:35

Worthington Town Hall

I second.

15:36 - 15:45

Worthington Town Hall

So let me just say for the sake of discussion here then do you think you would hold a hearing the same night in which case is 6 a little early for the town meeting?

15:49 - 16:01

Worthington Town Hall

I think I would like to hold a hearing the same night Partially because special town meetings get less attention, and so it's just like, let's all do it one night and not have to come twice, but.

16:04 - 16:08

Worthington Town Hall

Typically zoning bylaw changes can be really complicated, but I don't think this one is.

16:08 - 16:20

Worthington Town Hall

I think that the moratorium is very straightforward and short enough for people to react to on its surface, as well as our proposed moratoriums are also just a couple of paragraphs.

16:21 - 16:23

Worthington Town Hall

It's not a complicated issue.

16:23 - 16:30

Worthington Town Hall

So, is the hearing for something you would be proposing or do you have to hold a hearing on their petition or both?

16:30 - 16:30

Worthington Town Hall

Both.

16:34 - 16:40

Worthington Town Hall

I guess really the question is, are the members of the Planning Board, do they have any time constraints?

16:40 - 16:42

Worthington Town Hall

Like, can we not meet beforehand?

16:47 - 16:50

Worthington Town Hall

Do you mean on the 24th are we?

16:50 - 16:50

Worthington Town Hall

Yes.

16:50 - 16:51

Worthington Town Hall

Can we make it on the 24th?

16:52 - 16:53

Worthington Town Hall

I can make it on the 24th.

16:54 - 16:54

Worthington Town Hall

I can make.

16:54 - 16:54

Anna Maunz

It on the.

16:54 - 16:55

Worthington Town Hall

24th.

16:57 - 17:07

Worthington Town Hall

Going back to your original question, I think probably the hearing should start at six, because I imagine people would want to come to both the hearing and the town meeting or 630 or whatever works for everyone.

17:08 - 17:10

Worthington Town Hall

That would make sense to me.

17:10 - 17:12

Worthington Town Hall

Does that make sense to you, Annie?

17:13 - 17:13

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

17:17 - 17:18

Worthington Town Hall

So yeah, go ahead.

17:19 - 17:26

Worthington Town Hall

So will the petitioners be involved at all in the second proposal?

17:26 - 17:33

Worthington Town Hall

Because I think, you know, if we're gonna change it, we might all have good ideas, maybe we could discuss.

17:34 - 17:37

Worthington Town Hall

That's what the hearing's for, sure.

17:38 - 17:39

Worthington Town Hall

I don't want to speak for you, but.

17:40 - 17:46

Worthington Town Hall

So all of our work to develop the language happens in open meetings, which, so you're welcome to come to them.

17:47 - 17:58

Worthington Town Hall

I think that my concern is we don't get through this, like drafting language is hard enough, So a lot more cooks gets worried to me that we have limited time.

17:58 - 18:00

Worthington Town Hall

But I think we're trying to keep it wicked simple.

18:00 - 18:04

Worthington Town Hall

It's going to be, I think.

18:06 - 18:12

Worthington Town Hall

A prohibition on solar and batteries, but not throughout the town.

18:13 - 18:33

Worthington Town Hall

We're just looking at areas that are identified by the state as either environmentally sensitive or have water sensitivity, I'll say, like the Westfield watershed, it adds up to a pretty significant, like 70% of the town, maybe 80% of the town, but it's not 100% of the town.

18:34 - 18:40

Worthington Town Hall

And so that's the, it's kind of a test to see what the AG's office says.

18:41 - 18:47

Worthington Town Hall

But I think the language is gonna be very much like your language is just gonna be only applied to areas.

18:50 - 18:51

Worthington Town Hall

Kate's the one working on it.

18:51 - 18:51

Worthington Town Hall

Maybe I should let her talk.

18:53 - 19:03

Worthington Town Hall

Well, I think we've been looking at a lot of towns moratoriums that the AG's office has reviewed and either denied or approved.

19:04 - 19:12

Worthington Town Hall

And it seems like a town's best recourse right now is to restrict these types of projects to their industrial park, for example.

19:12 - 19:14

Worthington Town Hall

And we don't have an industrial park.

19:15 - 19:46

Worthington Town Hall

So our tactic with this is to look at our most environmentally sensitive areas, which is our water resources as we all said if you know um if that becomes compromised then we're in a really bad way um as well as some other hopefully some other environmentally sensitive areas um so that's our that's our idea with the moratorium we're also working on bigger by-law revisions that would um give us some some better setbacks for example for any projects no matter where they were in town.

19:47 - 19:48

Worthington Town Hall

We're looking at those.

19:48 - 19:51

Worthington Town Hall

And those, we hope to be ready for Maytown meeting.

19:57 - 19:58

[speaker unknown]

Go ahead.

20:04 - 20:06

Worthington Town Hall

When you submit to- And it's Emily, right?

20:06 - 20:08

Worthington Town Hall

Yes, Emily, 130 at Whithill.

20:08 - 20:09

Worthington Town Hall

Last name.

20:09 - 20:10

Worthington Town Hall

Lairby.

20:10 - 20:10

Worthington Town Hall

Thank you.

20:11 - 20:24

Worthington Town Hall

When you submit to the AG, do you or can you provide some sort of explanation as in, you know, 80% of our town or however much is already in conservation or whatever it is?

20:24 - 20:29

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, there is a, you can support, you can submit supporting documents.

20:29 - 20:32

Worthington Town Hall

We've never done it, but it seems like in this case, it's a very good idea.

20:32 - 20:40

Worthington Town Hall

And I think we're, we're expecting to try to include a map, just to be like, this is what we're talking about, because it's otherwise it's almost impossible to understand.

20:41 - 20:41

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, thanks.

20:50 - 20:58

Worthington Town Hall

So any other comment as far as the date, or we're really just talking about the date for the special time meeting, but if it's relevant to that might go ahead.

21:01 - 21:04

Worthington Town Hall

I'm Mike Don Diego, 82 Lindsay Hill Road.

21:04 - 21:09

Worthington Town Hall

Really just kind of a related question you can tell me if it's pertinent or not.

21:09 - 21:22

Worthington Town Hall

So you mentioned earlier applicants can file a preliminary zoning subdivision plan which can freeze the zoning bylaw for up to three years or maybe even longer.

21:23 - 21:35

Worthington Town Hall

Is there any intention or can we pursue some zoning bylaw that removes that subdivision plan as a stop gap for applicants?

21:37 - 21:38

Worthington Town Hall

I have no idea.

21:38 - 21:39

Worthington Town Hall

I'd have to talk to council.

21:39 - 21:46

Worthington Town Hall

I assume no because otherwise all towns would have done it.

21:47 - 21:50

Worthington Town Hall

And that's a state rule as far as, it's not in our bylaw.

21:50 - 21:52

Worthington Town Hall

No, it's definitely not in our bylaw.

21:53 - 22:00

Worthington Town Hall

It's definitely master no law and it's part of the subdivision law which is- And then just ask if we can have our council weigh in on it.

22:00 - 22:02

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, I'm happy to ask him and see what he says.

22:03 - 22:04

Worthington Town Hall

Thank you.

22:09 - 22:11

Worthington Town Hall

All right, seeing no other discussion.

22:12 - 22:14

Worthington Town Hall

I think it's just the three of us voting on the date.

22:15 - 22:30

Worthington Town Hall

So all in favor of the motion to hold special town meeting on the 24th with the planning board holding their hearing first at six followed by the special town meeting, I guess we would say approximately seven.

22:36 - 22:36

[speaker unknown]

Amy.

22:38 - 22:38

[speaker unknown]

Deb.

22:40 - 22:41

Worthington Town Hall

And I'm I.

22:41 - 22:42

Worthington Town Hall

All right.

22:42 - 22:43

Worthington Town Hall

So we got that out of the way.

22:49 - 23:04

Worthington Town Hall

So moving on from there, I think we want to open this up particularly again, I think for the planning board to get feedback from other boards as necessary as they are concerned with this project.

23:06 - 23:08

Worthington Town Hall

I know you've sent materials to them asking for feedback.

23:09 - 23:11

Worthington Town Hall

So this is trying to facilitate that.

23:11 - 23:13

Worthington Town Hall

Do you wanna take that on?

23:16 - 23:18

Worthington Town Hall

Sorry, Tripp, come on up.

23:25 - 23:26

Worthington Town Hall

Any public hearing I can, so.

23:28 - 23:30

Worthington Town Hall

In the mic, in the mic, please.

23:33 - 23:34

Worthington Town Hall

It's not public.

23:34 - 23:44

Worthington Town Hall

Madam Chair, members of the select board, before this meeting proceeds further, I need to make a statement in my official capacity to as a town certified drinking water operator.

23:44 - 23:57

Worthington Town Hall

Under Massachusetts law, I'm legally responsible for safeguarding the public drinking water supply and for notifying governing bodies when actions or proposals may affect water quality or system integrity.

23:58 - 24:03

Worthington Town Hall

The matter before the board directly implicates drinking water protection.

24:03 - 24:05

Worthington Town Hall

For that reason, I must place my concerns on the record.

24:06 - 24:08

Worthington Town Hall

This is not a matter of preference or opinion.

24:08 - 24:13

Worthington Town Hall

Is part of my statutory duty to protect public health.

24:14 - 24:18

Worthington Town Hall

So I'm requesting to be recognized now so I can fulfill that responsibility.

24:19 - 24:21

Worthington Town Hall

It's just a quick statement.

24:21 - 24:22

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, sure, go ahead.

24:22 - 24:22

Worthington Town Hall

Thank.

24:24 - 24:25

[speaker unknown]

You.

24:25 - 24:26

Worthington Town Hall

All right.

24:26 - 24:39

Worthington Town Hall

So consistent with these obligations, I have reviewed the proposed industrial energy project at 190 Ridge Road for its potential impacts to Worthington's public drinking water supply.

24:40 - 24:54

Worthington Town Hall

Based on my professional responsibilities and discussions with certified water operators from other Massachusetts towns, I must emphasize the level of risk this type of project poses to Worthington's drinking water resources.

24:54 - 25:14

Worthington Town Hall

My consultation with other certified water operators was undertaken as a matter of professional due diligence to ensure that my assessment was informed by independent, experienced operators with direct knowledge of industrial, solar, and energy facilities and was not based solely on local or personal perspective.

25:14 - 25:19

Worthington Town Hall

Worthington's water supply is limited, interconnected, and highly vulnerable to contamination events.

25:20 - 25:29

Worthington Town Hall

Water operators in other communities who have reviewed the location and scope of the proposed project have stated that it is situated too close to Worthington's drinking water supply.

25:29 - 25:44

Worthington Town Hall

They have further emphasized that if an industrial accident were to occur, whether through a spill, equipment failure, fire, or contaminated runoff, the impacts to groundwater and source water could be immediate and irreversible.

25:45 - 25:56

Worthington Town Hall

In a town such as Worthington, an incident of this nature could contaminate or source water to the extent that the entire town water supply could be rendered

unusable for an extended period of time, if not permanently.

25:56 - 26:03

Worthington Town Hall

In practical terms, this would leave the town without safe drinking water and without a realistic or timely alternative supply.

26:04 - 26:08

Worthington Town Hall

It is also important to note that this concern is not theoretical.

26:08 - 26:22

Worthington Town Hall

There have been numerous documented accidents and emergency incidents involving large-scale solar and industrial energy facilities throughout the United States, including incidents occurring in nearby communities just a couple of towns away.

26:22 - 26:29

Worthington Town Hall

But these events have included fires, equipment failures, and releases of contaminated runoff.

26:29 - 26:34

Worthington Town Hall

Such incidents demonstrate that even well-regulated projects can experience serious failures.

26:36 - 26:45

Worthington Town Hall

And when they do, the consequences to nearby environmental resources, particularly drinking water supplies, can be severe and long-lasting.

26:46 - 26:53

Worthington Town Hall

Unlike large municipalities, Worthington does not have redundancy or the financial capacity to quickly replace a compromised water source.

26:54 - 27:09

Worthington Town Hall

Once contaminated, remediation is uncertain, extremely costly, and may restore water supply to, it may not restore, sorry, this tiny print, may not restore the water supply to a usable condition.

27:09 - 27:11

Worthington Town Hall

This is not a hypothetical concern.

27:11 - 27:15

Worthington Town Hall

It is a conclusion consistently reinforced by experienced water operators.

27:16 - 27:25

Worthington Town Hall

Given these realities, I strongly urge the planning board to carefully consider the potential consequences to the town's water supply when reviewing this project.

27:25 - 27:28

Worthington Town Hall

Protection of drinking water is non-negotiable.

27:29 - 27:31

Worthington Town Hall

This application must be denied.

27:32 - 27:36

Worthington Town Hall

The proposed project poses an unacceptable risk to Worthington's town water supply.

27:37 - 27:43

Worthington Town Hall

The planning board has a clear duty to protect the town and its residents and approval would feel that responsibility.

27:44 - 27:46

Worthington Town Hall

Thank you.

27:48 - 27:49

[speaker unknown]

Thank you.

27:51 - 27:59

Worthington Town Hall

So would it make sense to kind of go around the table here from your perspective or do you want to?

28:01 - 28:04

Worthington Town Hall

I go, I guess I'm not clear on your question.

28:05 - 28:13

Worthington Town Hall

The point of this exercise, if you will, is for you to get feedback, for the planning board to get feedback from other boards, not so much for us to speak.

28:14 - 28:27

Worthington Town Hall

I think what I would just say, and I think I probably said this to most of the boards and departments who are here is that we don't do projects of this scale very often, if ever.

28:27 - 28:30

Worthington Town Hall

And so I think the process isn't very clear.

28:30 - 28:32

Worthington Town Hall

It wasn't totally clear to us.

28:32 - 28:34

Worthington Town Hall

I imagine it's not totally clear to you.

28:34 - 28:44

Worthington Town Hall

But what we're looking for is concerns, like the Board of Health gave us.

28:47 - 28:49

Worthington Town Hall

Or ultimately, we're going to use those.

28:49 - 29:07

Worthington Town Hall

We're going to try to, you're bringing your expertise, which allows us to dig in and work with the applicant and our technical review to try to answer those questions and concerns and understand them, understand whether the project can be modified to mitigate the concerns or not.

29:08 - 29:16

Worthington Town Hall

And one of our tools to mitigate concerns is to place what are called conditions on any approval.

29:16 - 29:31

Worthington Town Hall

And that process of developing the conditions is important regardless of whether this project ever gets approved or not because the courts are very, they really only care about safety and health.

29:32 - 29:35

Worthington Town Hall

Welfare is vague and I don't think it's well defined.

29:36 - 29:55

Worthington Town Hall

But those are the three, safety, health, and welfare are the three things in the oft cited in Chapter 40A, Section 3, which provides really broad protection to solar, which is why it's hard for local communities to say no to these kinds of projects,

because they have to show some sort of impact to health, safety, or welfare.

29:57 - 30:09

Worthington Town Hall

But they also have to show that they worked to try to solve the concerns, to mitigate the concerns, and so that developing the conditions is really necessary.

30:09 - 30:18

Worthington Town Hall

We need to be able to, even if we reject this thing, we need to reject it with conditions in place, because there's a good chance the court is going to overrule us.

30:19 - 30:26

Worthington Town Hall

And if those conditions aren't in place, there's a possibility that they'll simply approve what was submitted, which is not the right outcome for the town.

30:26 - 30:34

Worthington Town Hall

So we need to develop those conditions prior to whatever decision we make, because the court will respect that work.

30:34 - 30:38

Worthington Town Hall

They will respect those conditions were they to overturn our decision.

30:40 - 30:44

Worthington Town Hall

So, what is a condition, I think, was a question for me.

30:44 - 30:51

Worthington Town Hall

It's simply, you know, if we approve their site plan review, but we apply conditions.

30:51 - 31:04

Worthington Town Hall

Conditions can be things like they'll supply firefighting equipment to the fire department because this is the kind of fire that Worthington doesn't fight normally,

and so here's a piece of equipment that they need.

31:04 - 31:06

Worthington Town Hall

Fire department has stated the need.

31:06 - 31:10

Worthington Town Hall

The applicant has agreed to pay for it, we write it down, that's a condition.

31:11 - 31:24

Worthington Town Hall

Things like the understanding what kinds of runoff might be possible, a condition could be that they make sure that they don't mess up the road, I'm not being very articulate.

31:25 - 31:41

Worthington Town Hall

So it's important for us to understand your concerns earlier than maybe you're probably used to dealing with this kind of stuff during construction or after a building permit has been pulled, or at least as part of that process.

31:42 - 31:50

Worthington Town Hall

You drive by and you're like, look, you didn't put your silt fence in the right place, this grating is screwed up, you're going to dump all this water on the road.

31:50 - 32:02

Worthington Town Hall

We need to understand those potential concerns as early as we can so that we can try to constrain the project Through conditions.

32:02 - 32:04

Worthington Town Hall

I'm not I'm still not being very articulate.

32:04 - 32:07

Worthington Town Hall

I think but that's why we're well, that's one of the reasons We're here.

32:07 - 32:28

Worthington Town Hall

We're hoping to get as much Input from the department broad swath of the departments as we can That's why we're here And yeah, I want to listen not talk so why don't we just start Kevin if you have something and then move our way around Okay, so Steve.

32:33 - 32:50

Worthington Town Hall

Steve's trial chair of the shade tree committee My concerns might seem a little frivolous when you compare them with the public health and safety that you other folks are talking about.

32:51 - 33:05

Worthington Town Hall

But Ridge Road, in my grand scheme of things, was high on the priority to tree planting, to replace the trees that had died.

33:05 - 33:23

Worthington Town Hall

So, my concern would be how do you possibly screen the ugliness of an industrial power plant, so-called solar installation, from public view.

33:28 - 33:30

Worthington Town Hall

And private view.

33:32 - 33:46

Worthington Town Hall

In my view, it's almost impossible to do a complete screening, but the selection of screening material would have to be subject to town approval.

33:48 - 33:56

Worthington Town Hall

The tree warden is the only person in town that has legal authority to plant a tree, touch a tree, remove a tree.

33:58 - 34:04

Worthington Town Hall

Fortunately, Ben and I are on the same page with regards to what needs to be done in the town.

34:05 - 34:10

Worthington Town Hall

So I feel fairly strongly that I can speak on his behalf although he's not here.

34:11 - 34:22

Worthington Town Hall

Screening would be of ultimate concern for me and I'd certainly want to be part of the decision making when it comes to the screening issue.

34:26 - 34:28

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know what the right way to do this is.

34:31 - 34:32

Worthington Town Hall

I'm glad you said that.

34:33 - 34:41

Worthington Town Hall

I think that screening is something we've talked about, but only we need to figure out how to address it.

34:41 - 34:42

Worthington Town Hall

And I would love to have your involvement.

34:43 - 34:52

Worthington Town Hall

I think that, again, this is a process we're not very familiar with, and so we're not quite sure about the timing of things.

34:52 - 34:59

Worthington Town Hall

But it feels like, I don't know who does the proposal, right?

34:59 - 35:06

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know if we say to the applicant, look, we need screening along this stretch here, propose us something.

35:06 - 35:27

Worthington Town Hall

Or if we say to them, we need screening along this section and we need it to have depth and variation of height and variation of foliage and consider seasonal, you know, I think that probably would be helpful to them, but I'm not someone who could come up with that description.

35:27 - 35:44

Worthington Town Hall

So I think it would be great if you would, whatever capacity you have to sort of, what is the best possible, given that it's not a great thing, if it has to go in, what do we do?

35:45 - 35:47

Worthington Town Hall

And proposing that would be fantastic.

35:49 - 36:03

Worthington Town Hall

The other comment I'll make is that you may have noticed that, I mean, I'm pretty aware that the applicant is not, I don't think they feel love in Worthington.

36:03 - 36:14

Worthington Town Hall

And they might be looking for ways to gain a little bit of good feeling from the community.

36:14 - 36:20

Worthington Town Hall

And I've wondered about tree planting as a, not just on that site, but throughout town.

36:20 - 36:26

Worthington Town Hall

If there are projects that, I don't know why tree planting in particular has always stuck out to me, but it has been right from the start.

36:26 - 36:31

Worthington Town Hall

I've been like, well, maybe there are places in town that we've been struggling to put trees, but we'd like to.

36:32 - 36:33

Worthington Town Hall

That's something we could ask.

36:33 - 36:38

Worthington Town Hall

It's not a big lift for them, but it might be helpful for us.

36:39 - 36:43

Worthington Town Hall

I feel like it's worth the conversation, but it would be definitely coming from you.

36:49 - 37:03

Worthington Town Hall

So, if we're going around in October, before I knew about this project, I had reached out to ask to be appointed to the historical commission, so I'm actually officially on the board.

37:04 - 37:05

Worthington Town Hall

Or a board.

37:06 - 37:07

Worthington Town Hall

And you're speaking to that, I assume.

37:08 - 37:08

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah.

37:08 - 37:14

Worthington Town Hall

And there's 10 places in our bylaws that mention historic values and historic aspects.

37:14 - 37:24

Worthington Town Hall

So, um, the, I've been reaching out to the other members of the historical commission, trying to get that resurrected.

37:24 - 37:37

Worthington Town Hall

Um, and that was on purpose, not again, not to do a solar per se, but because, um, I understood that there were things that we could do in town that might, um, protect some of the districts, which I think would be a nice thing to do.

37:37 - 38:04

Worthington Town Hall

Um, since there's so much, um, happening in the world, but you know, as, as I Um, as, as a board member and, and taking a look at other boards and just as somebody who's been concerned about this project, since I first heard about it in early November, I feel like I'd be at a place not to say a couple of things that I noticed that I think we have to do a much better town job at in town.

38:04 - 38:11

Worthington Town Hall

Um, so that we don't invite lawsuits from any aggrieved parties at all.

38:12 - 38:19

Worthington Town Hall

And one of the big ones for me is one transparency and I'll talk about it a little bit and the other thing is minutes.

38:20 - 38:43

Worthington Town Hall

And I'd like to thank the planning board on this one addressing you because I had

said something early in the process and I see so much information coming out from the planning board that's been really, really helpful because as a town member and a board member, you know, just trying to cull through all this information and try to understand as to what the boards are thinking is.

38:43 - 38:44

Worthington Town Hall

Is really helpful.

38:45 - 38:54

Worthington Town Hall

But I'm just going to say a couple of things, um, there does, and I know this is a lot of people in the room, but this is our internal meeting.

38:55 - 39:01

Worthington Town Hall

Um, the, uh, select board minutes haven't been updated on the website since July.

39:01 - 39:05

Worthington Town Hall

And the conservation commission minutes haven't been updated in two years.

39:05 - 39:17

Worthington Town Hall

It becomes hard to evaluate what the thinking is so that we can have a response to it and that needs to change.

39:19 - 39:38

Worthington Town Hall

There's a lot of questions that I'm getting from the town about where things are posted and I know that there are two places that we post meetings one outside the town hall and one outside the store But we do live in a digital era and a community calendar is online.

39:38 - 39:55

Worthington Town Hall

It would be very, very helpful if we could count on that community calendar also to be a tertiary review and have meetings posted as far in advance as possible against

the people could plan.

39:55 - 39:57

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, it's certainly, I think it's important that I'm here.

39:57 - 40:08

Worthington Town Hall

Maybe not everyone would agree on the 24th of February, but you know that having that date is helpful to me So I would ask us to do a little bit better there.

40:11 - 40:33

Worthington Town Hall

Also the Planning board does a wonderful job and making sure they butters get notified of actions I'd like to see the conservation commission do the same thing and give a butters 14 days notice So, again, the butters know something's happening versus finding out from third-hand parties and trying to figure things out.

40:35 - 40:54

Worthington Town Hall

I've got a lot, and I don't really think it's necessarily fair to take my position in the Historical Society and ask, and maybe I'll do that as a general comment later, but I just felt like we could do a better job, and I think the towns folks would really appreciate it, and it will keep us out of some potential legal trouble.

40:55 - 40:56

Worthington Town Hall

Thank you.

40:57 - 40:59

Worthington Town Hall

So let me just try and address that a little bit.

40:59 - 41:05

Worthington Town Hall

And I think those are all fair suggestions, criticisms, whatever you want to call them.

41:05 - 41:16

Worthington Town Hall

As far as minutes go, we have literally just switched to a new cloud platform, which I'm hoping will facilitate getting the minutes up there.

41:16 - 41:22

Worthington Town Hall

There's a section, and unfortunately, Katrin doesn't do it often enough that she remember how to do it.

41:22 - 41:25

Worthington Town Hall

So I'm trying to simplify the process.

41:25 - 41:32

Worthington Town Hall

So but you know when all else fails, you certainly can come into the office and request minutes as far as the select board's concerned.

41:33 - 41:41

Worthington Town Hall

If they're approved then or even the drafts I think are available or or by email or phone and certainly try to facilitate.

41:41 - 41:47

Worthington Town Hall

But it's a fair absolutely request that they just be there and you shouldn't have to search and make calls.

41:48 - 42:04

Worthington Town Hall

I can't speak for the Conservation Commission other than to say I literally just did the same thing with Ed who keeps all their minutes and documents and they've all been on his SharePoint platform and he's given me access.

42:04 - 42:09

Worthington Town Hall

I've copied them all over to the Newtown platform and I will be linking to them this week.

42:09 - 42:18

Worthington Town Hall

So the ConCom page will have access to all their documents including minutes and Ed is rate at keeping minutes, so.

42:20 - 42:32

Worthington Town Hall

And as far as post codes, so there are the two legal locations and we did discuss last time this came up, it was actually when we moved one legal location from the post office to the bulletin board outside the store.

42:34 - 42:38

Worthington Town Hall

And that's a legal thing and we had to vote to do it and I think maybe even get AG approval.

42:39 - 42:48

Worthington Town Hall

And we debated whether to include the website as a legal location, the decision for better or worse was made not to make it a legal location.

42:50 - 42:54

Worthington Town Hall

Which is not to say we couldn't do a better job of getting things up there.

42:54 - 43:00

Worthington Town Hall

I certainly do my best to post whatever I get and Bart takes care of the planning board.

43:02 - 43:08

Worthington Town Hall

Other than that, I can't speak for other boards who sometimes maybe don't get their materials to me as quickly as they might.

43:09 - 43:13

Worthington Town Hall

But again, work in progress and something we can all work on.

43:13 - 43:16

Worthington Town Hall

So, it's good to get that out in the open tonight.

43:17 - 43:18

Worthington Town Hall

So, that helps.

43:20 - 43:22

Worthington Town Hall

So, I just wanted to at least address that.

43:22 - 43:24

Worthington Town Hall

Those are actually things we're working on.

43:27 - 43:27

Worthington Town Hall

Mike.

43:34 - 43:35

Worthington Town Hall

Go ahead, it's fine.

43:44 - 43:45

Worthington Town Hall

That mean, is it on?

43:45 - 43:48

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, it was green before.

43:48 - 43:56

Worthington Town Hall

So, actually maybe it was what Bart said, but same, whoever said it.

43:56 - 44:03

Worthington Town Hall

Blue wave, maybe we could ask them to do the screening or something like that.

44:03 - 44:13

Worthington Town Hall

They have submitted a screening plan to us as butters and it was really rudimentary and actually laughable.

44:13 - 44:14

Worthington Town Hall

I was very disappointed.

44:14 - 44:16

Worthington Town Hall

We haven't responded yet.

44:16 - 44:21

Worthington Town Hall

We just need some time for my husband and I to sit down and talk about it.

44:21 - 44:32

Worthington Town Hall

But it was one row of trees and they were maybe 12 feet apart, which means it may be 20 years before they would even get close to coming together.

44:32 - 44:42

Worthington Town Hall

So I think having the screening from someone on the outside is probably best and I would love to be a part of the process.

44:42 - 44:47

Worthington Town Hall

I'm very spatial oriented and I can just visualize things pretty well.

44:47 - 44:49

Worthington Town Hall

I can pack a car like crazy.

44:52 - 45:05

Worthington Town Hall

Also, I would recommend asking for a screening bond so that way if any of the trees die for if you're using trees that they could be replaced without us having to ask Blue Wave to do it.

45:08 - 45:09

Worthington Town Hall

Just pass it on to Mike.

45:12 - 45:13

Worthington Town Hall

Oh, you got one too.

45:13 - 45:14

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

45:14 - 45:25

Worthington Town Hall

Just Mike, before you go, Annie, I think it's really useful for you to tell us, give us feedback about like they made that change.

45:25 - 45:35

Worthington Town Hall

We never asked for the changes, but it was because of a conversation with you guys, I assume that the ditch and the screening, and it seemed responsive to me.

45:35 - 45:39

Worthington Town Hall

But if it's not satisfactory, please send us a note.

45:42 - 45:51

Worthington Town Hall

I think that from our perspective, we could come up with some condition that said that they had to screen in a way that was acceptable to you guys.

45:51 - 46:02

Worthington Town Hall

But I think it might be stronger if you came, if you have a proposal or something, some criteria or something, please, we'll, we'll bring it to them and, but you can to it.

46:03 - 46:08

Worthington Town Hall

We're, we're in a sort of a strange, like, they're clearly trying to work with you a little bit anyway.

46:09 - 46:16

Worthington Town Hall

So hopefully more than a little bit, but my husband works out of town.

46:16 - 46:18

Worthington Town Hall

He gets up at 330.

46:18 - 46:20

Worthington Town Hall

He gets home at seven or later.

46:21 - 46:26

Worthington Town Hall

We have very limited time to speak together and both of us on the weekend are exhausted.

46:27 - 46:36

Worthington Town Hall

So all these meetings that are happening that are popping up and I'm thinking I have more time to do something all of a sudden.

46:37 - 47:25

Worthington Town Hall

It's something different and I don't have my stuff together so I'm trying and I and I really would welcome support from the planning board for you know what we're going through because it's a lot and it's stressful and heartbreaking and lots of other additives so we absolutely do post at least 48 hours though in So keeping you know somebody needs to keep an eye on the bulletin boards do my best to do better on the town calendar online But you got to watch those bulletin boards because they have to be up 48 hours in advance That's impossible to ask of people seriously.

47:25 - 47:26

Worthington Town Hall

I cannot do it.

47:26 - 47:34

Worthington Town Hall

Well, that's state law I mean that I mean we can try to do more obviously we can do it further in advance if possible but that's the legal requirement.

47:37 - 47:42

Worthington Town Hall

I think you can do more, and I think you should do more.

47:43 - 47:52

Worthington Town Hall

Having something in the digital world, not beyond the digital world, and then when we see that meetings are there, then all of a sudden they're not.

47:54 - 47:58

Worthington Town Hall

And meaning they were posted, they've been posted, we planned on them.

47:59 - 48:04

Worthington Town Hall

And then the last few meetings didn't get on there until the last minute.

48:04 - 48:12

Worthington Town Hall

So it's inconsistency that is the problem, I think, for people to know.

48:12 - 48:16

Worthington Town Hall

I didn't like, I didn't know about this meeting until I was at work today.

48:17 - 48:18

Worthington Town Hall

The timing and everything.

48:18 - 48:20

Worthington Town Hall

It was posted on Friday.

48:21 - 48:34

Worthington Town Hall

And just, I mean, I personally, as the chair of the planning board, it's my responsibility to get these meetings posted and it is really hard to get the, I apologize.

48:34 - 48:40

Worthington Town Hall

I know it's hard for people that the law says I have to have it 48 hours in advance on two bulletin boards in town.

48:40 - 48:42

Worthington Town Hall

That means that, you know, I'm a farmer.

48:42 - 48:46

Worthington Town Hall

I don't leave home, but I do because I have to go do these things.

48:46 - 48:55

Worthington Town Hall

I think you're probably referring to our meeting, I want to say January 5th, which was a Monday, and I put it up on the town calendar.

48:56 - 48:57

Worthington Town Hall

I was like, oh, I got it ahead of myself.

48:57 - 48:57

Worthington Town Hall

This is great.

48:58 - 48:58

Worthington Town Hall

It's there.

48:58 - 48:59

Worthington Town Hall

We know we're doing it.

48:59 - 49:29

Worthington Town Hall

Then I realized that when I went to post it on Thursday that Thursday was a holiday and therefore didn't count for my 48 hours and so I couldn't actually hold the meeting on the Monday so we had to move it didn't want to push it off until after the hearing it's it's that life is really this I mean I hear you on it's a lot it's a lot it's just a ton to keep it managed and to like I I hear you.

49:29 - 49:32

Worthington Town Hall

I think it would be great if everything were online.

49:32 - 49:37

Worthington Town Hall

I would love to have someone we could send these things to that just put them online.

49:37 - 49:39

Worthington Town Hall

But it's not it's volunteers.

49:39 - 49:40

Worthington Town Hall

It's us doing it.

49:40 - 49:42

Worthington Town Hall

And we're gonna do the best we can.

49:42 - 49:43

Worthington Town Hall

But good Lord, it's a lot.

49:44 - 49:46

Worthington Town Hall

So I apologize.

49:46 - 49:49

Worthington Town Hall

And at the same time, I'm like, I'm doing the best I can.

49:50 - 49:58

Worthington Town Hall

If there's a way we can streamline the posting of meetings to the website, the calendar, that'd be or eight right now, it's kludgy.

49:58 - 49:59

Worthington Town Hall

Well, you have access.

49:59 - 50:01

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know how much easier it's supposed to be.

50:01 - 50:02

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, I don't know.

50:02 - 50:08

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, you have a login access and you can go in and change it and post anytime, so.

50:08 - 50:13

Worthington Town Hall

I know, it's still a lot.

50:13 - 50:14

Worthington Town Hall

It's one more thing.

50:14 - 50:14

Worthington Town Hall

No, it is.

50:15 - 50:16

Worthington Town Hall

They're all one more thing, so.

50:18 - 50:31

Worthington Town Hall

And then just again, speaking for the select board, we do wait till Friday to post our Tuesday meetings because we just can't know far enough in advance exactly what needs to be on that agenda Tuesday.

50:32 - 50:42

Worthington Town Hall

And if we did it the Tuesday before, we'd constantly be chasing our tail trying to deal with something three weeks out instead of three days out.

50:42 - 50:43

Worthington Town Hall

Go ahead, Amy.

50:49 - 51:09

Worthington Town Hall

And also, when we are trying to get our agenda together, There are people want to be able to bring things to us knowing that For instance our next meeting will be two weeks from today They want to bring things to us and so they want to bring it to us

almost to the last minute So to be told no.

51:09 - 51:10

Worthington Town Hall

I'm sorry.

51:10 - 51:21

Worthington Town Hall

We finalized this agenda four days earlier So you're gonna have to wait three weeks doesn't make anybody happy or four weeks Nobody's happy then and it doesn't feel fair to people.

51:21 - 51:27

Worthington Town Hall

This is the reason that we try and hold off as long as possible before we post it.

51:27 - 51:35

Worthington Town Hall

And as they've said, weekends don't count as two of the days and legal holidays don't count.

51:35 - 51:45

Worthington Town Hall

So you can imagine how much fun it is with Thanksgiving, where Thursday is a holiday, Friday is a good day, Wednesday is a good day, Monday is a good day.

51:46 - 51:52

Worthington Town Hall

But if there's another holiday on the Monday, sometimes you're posting on Wednesday for the next meeting.

51:53 - 52:00

Worthington Town Hall

So, you know, yes, it's hard, it's a juggle, but it's a juggle which we have to do according to the law.

52:03 - 52:05

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, we can all do better.

52:05 - 52:07

Worthington Town Hall

So I think that's the bottom line and we will try.

52:08 - 52:16

Worthington Town Hall

So let's continue around with Mike, did you, you didn't speak yet, did you?

52:26 - 52:32

Worthington Town Hall

Mike Dundego, 82 Windsor Hill Road and I'm the Fire Chief.

52:34 - 52:41

Worthington Town Hall

I've been doing a lot of work and a lot of research on numerous aspects of this.

52:44 - 52:53

Worthington Town Hall

Had the meeting with the fire risk consultant, James Caulfield, about two weeks ago, got a lot of decent information from that.

52:55 - 52:59

Worthington Town Hall

I have been looking into both the Massachusetts code.

53:02 - 53:17

Worthington Town Hall

The number escapes me at the moment, Also, the NFPA regulations on battery energy storage systems, NFPA 855, which is about 200 pages of very enlightening reading.

53:18 - 53:24

Worthington Town Hall

There's two more codes I still have to chase down that got mentioned last week, NFPA 6968.

53:25 - 53:27

Worthington Town Hall

I'm still digging into that.

53:28 - 53:36

Worthington Town Hall

I have started drafting an outline of my questions and concerns and possible considerations.

53:38 - 53:42

Worthington Town Hall

They run the entire gamut of this project.

53:44 - 54:06

Worthington Town Hall

Not just the battery energy storage system, but also all the other, I'll say, electrical considerations of the installation, the solar panels, the motors and batteries that drive the solar panel, pointing system, distribution within the installation.

54:07 - 54:14

Worthington Town Hall

Transformers, inverters, the connection to the grid, and yes, the battery energy storage systems.

54:16 - 54:24

Worthington Town Hall

I know I've been getting a lot of information from various folks in town, emails and flyers and handouts.

54:24 - 54:27

Worthington Town Hall

I am trying to keep up with all of that as well.

54:28 - 54:30

Worthington Town Hall

A lot of good information there as well.

54:32 - 54:43

Worthington Town Hall

I'll make a couple of, I guess, highlight points and I'll certainly answer any questions that I can tonight, but this is very much a work in progress for me at this point.

54:45 - 54:47

Worthington Town Hall

Battery energy storage systems.

54:49 - 54:54

Worthington Town Hall

A couple of the key takeaways I have so far from NFPA 855.

54:56 - 55:01

Worthington Town Hall

They list 24 different battery technologies.

55:04 - 55:17

Worthington Town Hall

Lithium ion and a couple others get a lot of airplay and media coverage for the various incidents and fires that they've provoked, But that is only one technology.

55:19 - 55:28

Worthington Town Hall

I have asked and started pushing the applicant if they could name the top three battery technologies they might consider.

55:29 - 55:34

Worthington Town Hall

So I can kind of start focusing on what those considerations may be.

55:36 - 55:37

Worthington Town Hall

I've also had discussions.

55:37 - 55:39

Worthington Town Hall

I have not asked them directly.

55:39 - 55:57

Worthington Town Hall

And the NFPA standard also lists different energy storage mechanisms besides batteries, mechanical and electromagnetic storage systems.

55:57 - 56:12

Worthington Town Hall

Two quick examples that I'd like to follow up with the applicant is high-speed flywheels and compressed air energy storage systems.

56:14 - 56:24

Worthington Town Hall

Those are two technologies that kind of bracket the space that is currently targeted for battery energy storage.

56:25 - 56:40

Worthington Town Hall

For the discussion we had a week or so ago, I'm losing track of time, they're in the one to five megawatt hour energy storage range here, batteries, yes, are kind of squarely centered.

56:41 - 56:47

Worthington Town Hall

That technology, whatever the flavor, whatever the chemistry is, kind of squarely centered in that range.

56:49 - 56:59

Worthington Town Hall

What you find is that mechanical high-speed flywheels are in a lower range, hundreds of kilowatt hours.

57:00 - 57:16

Worthington Town Hall

So one question would be, how is the technology developing and in two to five years, can that technology be scaled up to be an effective option in the one to five megawatt hour range?

57:18 - 57:58

Worthington Town Hall

The flip side of that is compressed air energy storage systems are in the hundreds of megawatt storage range and those are typically used by utilities at their larger installations but same question in reverse you know has the technology improved to the point where you can start scaling those down into again the target range of one to five megawatt hours that's I think a viable set of options to investigate what the alternatives are.

57:58 - 58:09

Worthington Town Hall

Because I know everybody is rightfully concerned about batteries, leakage, fire, explosion, firefighting, all the rest of that.

58:10 - 58:14

Worthington Town Hall

That's not to say these other technologies don't have their own similar considerations.

58:14 - 58:18

Worthington Town Hall

But it's something I think is worth looking into.

58:18 - 58:25

Worthington Town Hall

So that's one aspect of the outline that I'm looking at so far.

58:28 - 58:35

Worthington Town Hall

I think there's a number of other questions from a site review perspective.

58:36 - 59:18

Worthington Town Hall

Access to the site, the driveway, the landing pads, access for our fire vehicles to get bridge road and onto that property access through the field stone wall or whatever there is right at the driveway access point can we actually make the turn with our and mutual aid departments vehicles our ladder truck our tanker truck our engines our brush truck and mutual aid vehicles you know do we have information to figure

out whether we can actually get our vehicles on site.

59:20 - 59:24

Worthington Town Hall

Do we need water storage on site?

59:25 - 59:34

Worthington Town Hall

Do we have access to the perimeter road, not just to the landing pads where all of this equipment is based, but around the perimeter?

59:34 - 59:44

Worthington Town Hall

If there's a fire, brush fire, hay fire, whatever, under the arrays themselves, can we get access there with our brush trucks, et cetera.

59:45 - 59:49

Worthington Town Hall

So access is another major point of consideration.

59:54 - 01:00:01

Worthington Town Hall

The storage containers that the proposed battery systems come in, there's a whole host of questions there.

01:00:02 - 01:00:11

Worthington Town Hall

They have made pretty big strides per the code as to what's required in those battery energy storage containers.

01:00:13 - 01:00:21

Worthington Town Hall

Multiple detectors and sensors for leakage, smoke, fire, et cetera, redundancy.

01:00:22 - 01:00:38

Worthington Town Hall

But there are questions as to how that monitoring system alerts, either locally or remotely, to a monitoring system that notifies our dispatch and our fire

departments.

01:00:38 - 01:00:42

Worthington Town Hall

So there's a number of questions to pursue there still.

01:00:46 - 01:00:55

Worthington Town Hall

Containment and suppression, or I'll turn that around, suppression and containment, but what's the recommended method?

01:00:56 - 01:01:14

Worthington Town Hall

Kind of interesting to hear, they really want us to stand off at a distance, not try to fight the fire in a particular storage container, but to protect the nearby exposures, whether So that's another energy storage container or the inverters or the transformers or whatever.

01:01:15 - 01:01:39

Worthington Town Hall

So a need to understand the actual physical arrangement and layout of this equipment and what that standoff distance means from a suppression or exposure protection point of view, what that means for us in terms of water flow and so forth to do that suppression and exposure protection?

01:01:41 - 01:01:48

Worthington Town Hall

What do we do in terms of containment of the water we're using to protect those exposures, et cetera?

01:01:49 - 01:02:29

Worthington Town Hall

Are there possibilities for some kind of containment system, call it whatever you will, a bathtub or whatever, underneath these containers to contain any suppression materials water or other that we may end up applying that's a whole nother list of questions overhaul and clean up after the fact that's more than just the fire department there are considerations from a DEP perspective I mentioned I think the other night with the track the trailer rollover we had up on Cold Street.

01:02:29 - 01:02:32

Worthington Town Hall

We had to have a DEP involvement in the cleanup there.

01:02:32 - 01:02:36

Worthington Town Hall

So there's a whole host of questions related there.

01:02:39 - 01:02:46

Worthington Town Hall

And that's it from kind of an operational point of view, but there's also maintenance and other related questions.

01:02:47 - 01:03:02

Worthington Town Hall

You know, batteries or whatever that technology is needs periodic repair, maintenance, potential swap out of batteries, for whatever their original intended life is over the life of this project.

01:03:03 - 01:03:04

Worthington Town Hall

When do they get swapped out?

01:03:04 - 01:03:06

Worthington Town Hall

What does that maintenance period look like?

01:03:06 - 01:03:09

Worthington Town Hall

Do we have access to those maintenance records?

01:03:11 - 01:03:28

Worthington Town Hall

And there's a whole list down there from a maintenance over time, preventive corrective maintenance, replacement of original equipment with OEM equivalent, whatever it is, batteries, transformers, inverters, with the whole shooting match.

01:03:32 - 01:03:33

Worthington Town Hall

I think I'll stop there.

01:03:35 - 01:03:37

Worthington Town Hall

But I'm certainly open to questions.

01:03:44 - 01:03:58

Worthington Town Hall

Mike, I just, I'm very interested in the access issue, but I think, you know, so as a member of the planning board, I, you know, thinking about conditions around those, but really, you know, it'd be more, it'd be great to come from you, what is really needed for emergency management on the site.

01:03:58 - 01:04:08

Worthington Town Hall

But I just wanted to mention that I have seen other communities require access roads around the whole perimeter of the installation just for that reason.

01:04:08 - 01:04:15

Worthington Town Hall

So you're certainly within your rights to ask for access roads that are needed for the emergency response.

01:04:22 - 01:04:25

Worthington Town Hall

I was just gonna make two comments.

01:04:25 - 01:04:32

Worthington Town Hall

One is that earlier this evening, we agreed on which engineering firm we're gonna hire for technical review.

01:04:33 - 01:05:08

Worthington Town Hall

And they, in their proposal, included fire and fire safety as components of their

services they can provide so hopefully we can get you connected with them to get some for better or worse expert help I don't know what and the second was I think that you asked about a site visit and so we asked at the hearing and the applicant seems open to scheduling a site visit for all interested departments to go and see this project.

01:05:10 - 01:05:16

Worthington Town Hall

So I think that I don't quite know how we're going to organize, pick a date for that.

01:05:17 - 01:05:19

Worthington Town Hall

That's on the agenda tonight, too.

01:05:19 - 01:05:20

Worthington Town Hall

Excellent.

01:05:20 - 01:05:21

Worthington Town Hall

Then I'll wait for that.

01:05:25 - 01:05:36

Worthington Town Hall

I was just going to mention when we were talking about access, a question came up about whether there's appropriate access in case of fire to the residents that's on the property.

01:05:36 - 01:05:40

Worthington Town Hall

And that might be something to pay a little attention to also.

01:05:42 - 01:05:48

Worthington Town Hall

And it might be too early, but I was just curious about this idea of water storage on the site.

01:05:49 - 01:05:58

Worthington Town Hall

Has your research so far indicated that we're going to need more water than we can supply for emergencies?

01:06:07 - 01:06:09

Worthington Town Hall

I think that's still an open question.

01:06:11 - 01:06:14

Worthington Town Hall

A lot depends on the battery.

01:06:14 - 01:06:38

Worthington Town Hall

If it goes battery, what type of battery chemistry is involved, what kind of temperatures it's potentially burning at, what's the standoff distance, again, what's the layout and arrangement of the equipment there, what's that spacing in terms of how much we have to protect from an exposure suppression point of view.

01:06:39 - 01:06:43

Worthington Town Hall

That all goes into figuring out how much water we may need.

01:06:48 - 01:06:51

Worthington Town Hall

I can cite a couple of examples.

01:06:52 - 01:07:00

Worthington Town Hall

One large residence in town in the neighborhood of 11 ,000 square feet.

01:07:00 - 01:07:04

Worthington Town Hall

We asked them to put in a pond for water fire water service there.

01:07:05 - 01:07:11

Worthington Town Hall

I think that pond is somewhere in the vicinity of 130 ,000 to 150 ,000 gallons.

01:07:14 - 01:07:28

Worthington Town Hall

On some of our more major structure fires in this town and other towns, we've probably moved in the neighborhood of 50 ,000 to 100 ,000 gallons with tanker shuttles and mutual aid trucks.

01:07:28 - 01:07:45

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know the real sense of scale here yet for this, because a lot depends, again, like I said, on the technology, the layout, the arrangement, and how much equipment we may have to protect from an exposure point of view.

01:07:46 - 01:07:47

Worthington Town Hall

I hope that helps.

01:07:54 - 01:07:55

Worthington Town Hall

Come on up to the mic.

01:07:59 - 01:08:02

Worthington Town Hall

Hi, I'm Charlie Ryan, 43 Thayer Hill Road.

01:08:03 - 01:08:10

Worthington Town Hall

I just did a simple Google search, and it said that a Tesla fire is 6 ,000 gallons.

01:08:10 - 01:08:42

Worthington Town Hall

So my question is you know if like you say if you need say a couple hundred thousand gallons of water and then obviously that's all gonna be contaminated waste so it's like what happens then I mean I saw the I was at the last meeting and the battery stores they put like what 20 feet outside of the critical water zone but I mean that's all subjective you know very subjective as to what is protected water and what is not.

01:08:43 - 01:08:48

Worthington Town Hall

And obviously, a lot of people have the same concern as we all have wells.

01:08:50 - 01:09:06

Worthington Town Hall

And who's going to foot that bill to what dig up acres of land where this 200 ,000 gallons of not radioactive but obviously toxic water has been spilt?

01:09:06 - 01:09:17

Worthington Town Hall

It seems to me like, you know, if you have an Airbnb in this town or in this state now, they want you to put fire suppression system built into the building.

01:09:18 - 01:09:25

Worthington Town Hall

So it's like, you know, they don't have to have any kind of standards for built-in fire suppression inside those containers.

01:09:26 - 01:09:32

Worthington Town Hall

And then, yeah, that's just, you know, one of my many questions that they come up with.

01:09:39 - 01:09:40

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

01:09:40 - 01:09:40

Worthington Town Hall

So, Real?

01:09:48 - 01:09:49

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, Tripp.

01:09:49 - 01:09:49

Worthington Town Hall

Go ahead.

01:09:53 - 01:09:54

Worthington Town Hall

Let's see here.

01:09:57 - 01:09:58

Worthington Town Hall

Citing the...

01:09:58 - 01:10:03

Worthington Town Hall

So, is this in regards to fire and...

01:10:06 - 01:10:06

[speaker unknown]

Go ahead.

01:10:06 - 01:10:07

Worthington Town Hall

All right.

01:10:07 - 01:10:10

Worthington Town Hall

In regards to mass general law.

01:10:12 - 01:10:26

Worthington Town Hall

I don't want to cite it, but considering that we can restrict projects based on public health and safety.

01:10:27 - 01:11:15

Worthington Town Hall

I want to thank Bart for clarifying or if you could clarify a little further I believe what you said is if we build enough a strong enough case that this project is going to every good portion of the town's health and safety and we put all these restrictions on them etc but we still reject it and you said the blue wave sues and the court rules in

blue waves favor you said all the conditions and would still be in effect even if we lose the case.

01:11:15 - 01:11:21

Worthington Town Hall

And then, so that was my question, just to make sure that was a guarantee.

01:11:21 - 01:11:26

Worthington Town Hall

If we do all these conditions, still say, well, we can't satisfy the concerns because you just cannot.

01:11:27 - 01:11:30

Worthington Town Hall

So we reject the application as we need to.

01:11:30 - 01:11:33

Worthington Town Hall

Blue Wave sues, but we have all these conditions.

01:11:33 - 01:11:38

Worthington Town Hall

So at least if they bully us and what have you, at least we'll be protected that way.

01:11:38 - 01:11:40

Worthington Town Hall

And then to say further is.

01:11:45 - 01:11:49

Worthington Town Hall

See, this is kind of more, I'm sure you all understand this, but it's a state.

01:11:49 - 01:11:51

Worthington Town Hall

This is kind of more for the state.

01:11:52 - 01:11:55

Worthington Town Hall

The point of this meeting is for the committee.

01:11:55 - 01:11:57

Worthington Town Hall

I know this is to respond.

01:11:57 - 01:12:01

Worthington Town Hall

I'm just a direct response to what someone said about a solution as well.

01:12:01 - 01:12:05

Worthington Town Hall

If it's not relevant to fire, can you hold it to the end?

01:12:05 - 01:12:05

Worthington Town Hall

Sure, yeah.

01:12:05 - 01:12:06

Worthington Town Hall

Thanks.

01:12:08 - 01:12:35

Worthington Town Hall

Go ahead real very I'm the highway superintendent one of the only or some of the concerns that I'd have is maintaining the town right-of-ways Ridge Road, Buffington Hill and controlling the water runoff that comes off that property that would have potentially erode the road and cause damage and then another factor that we have up here is a lot of snow and a is the snow drifting across that road.

01:12:36 - 01:12:38

Worthington Town Hall

So it's a potential problem.

01:12:43 - 01:12:44

Worthington Town Hall

Were you able to look at the plans?

01:12:44 - 01:12:49

Worthington Town Hall

There is a drainage ditch at the newly paved access road.

01:12:49 - 01:12:54

Worthington Town Hall

I don't have the expertise to say that's adequate drainage capacity or not.

01:12:54 - 01:12:56

Worthington Town Hall

But I don't think that's a chance to look at the plan.

01:12:57 - 01:13:07

Worthington Town Hall

I did see it did have drainage on it, but I'm just needing to make sure it's able to take the full of the water and run off of that property.

01:13:08 - 01:13:21

Worthington Town Hall

And if there's any fire incident there, if there's massive amounts of water brought, it's going to be able to withstand and support that without eroding the road.

01:13:26 - 01:13:26

[speaker unknown]

So.

01:13:32 - 01:13:43

Worthington Town Hall

One of the things I've been thinking about is kind of if there was an issue, an emergency issue there or even during the time of construction.

01:13:44 - 01:13:59

Worthington Town Hall

The likely way that trucks would get to the site, Ridge Road, you know, obviously that would be a lot of traffic, but as well, Buffington Hill.

01:13:59 - 01:14:14

Worthington Town Hall

And the concern that I had there just growing up where that little dip is in the road in the little culvert I don't know that it could handle the traffic of large trucks especially if they're filled with heavy equipment and you know water trucks and so on.

01:14:14 - 01:14:25

Worthington Town Hall

I mean one could probably get by it but a number of them might cause a problem so I was thinking that that would be something that we might need to remediate.

01:14:27 - 01:14:35

Worthington Town Hall

On Buffington Hill Road the little culvert the bridge the culvert that goes the little goes through.

01:14:36 - 01:14:36

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah.

01:14:40 - 01:14:46

Worthington Town Hall

I think we actually are looking at Buffington Hill culvert actually as a replacement issue.

01:14:46 - 01:14:47

Worthington Town Hall

So that's actually on the table.

01:14:49 - 01:14:50

Worthington Town Hall

Nothing to do with this project.

01:14:53 - 01:14:58

Worthington Town Hall

I just have a question in regards to plowing snow in the winter.

01:14:59 - 01:15:02

Worthington Town Hall

I know we're talking about having an access road.

01:15:03 - 01:15:10

Worthington Town Hall

I also have seen that there's been some postings online looking for snowplow drivers in town.

01:15:12 - 01:15:24

Worthington Town Hall

So my thought is if it will be Blue Wave's responsibility to keep that access road clear, will they be able to find reliable drivers to do that?

01:15:25 - 01:15:37

Worthington Town Hall

Or will it be the town that will end up being responsible for doing that if they cannot find the right people to plow?

01:15:37 - 01:15:42

Worthington Town Hall

And then, yeah, will there be somebody monitoring that?

01:15:46 - 01:15:50

Worthington Town Hall

Just a little comment while I bring the microphone back.

01:15:50 - 01:15:58

Worthington Town Hall

That road used through my childhood up until in my 20s, that road used to be closed in the wintertime because of the snowdrifts.

01:15:58 - 01:15:59

Worthington Town Hall

Ridge Road.

01:16:00 - 01:16:00

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah.

01:16:02 - 01:16:09

Worthington Town Hall

So I'm sure it would be that it would be blueways responsibilities and it would be one of your conditions I'm sure to keep those roads.

01:16:11 - 01:16:21

Worthington Town Hall

I mean since we're sitting here Mike I have no idea what happens if if there's a fire and a road a driveway has not been plowed What do you guys do?

01:16:29 - 01:16:42

Worthington Town Hall

Um typically we we communicate with our highway department and ask them to come in and plow our sand as need be to get us access to road or in some cases even to a household driveway.

01:16:45 - 01:16:52

Worthington Town Hall

In the event of an emergency right not under normal conditions yes.

01:16:55 - 01:17:14

Worthington Town Hall

Annie go ahead so speaking of access roads around the property does is that mean it's it would go around the perimeter so we would have one more kind of industrial thing to look at and then have to worry about having piles of snow and and behind our house as well.

01:17:23 - 01:17:30

Worthington Town Hall

I guess the access roads were brought up mostly because Mike, you've talked about having a fire actually in amongst the panels.

01:17:31 - 01:17:33

Worthington Town Hall

Like my favorite example is the tractor fire.

01:17:35 - 01:17:36

Worthington Town Hall

And I don't know.

01:17:36 - 01:17:40

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, I would imagine those, the fire risk in winter would be quite small.

01:17:41 - 01:17:44

Worthington Town Hall

So I'm not sure that those would need to be kept clear, but.

01:17:48 - 01:17:57

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, it does seem logic would say that your fire risk in the winter would primarily be the batteries and maybe the inverters and things.

01:17:59 - 01:18:14

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, so I think my concern is, right, depending on what the finished height of these panels are and how low they can be when they're tracking, right, what's that minimum clearance there?

01:18:15 - 01:18:19

Worthington Town Hall

And can we get their access with our brush truck most likely?

01:18:20 - 01:18:25

Worthington Town Hall

Do we have sufficient clearance height-wise or width-wise to get in there?

01:18:25 - 01:18:26

Worthington Town Hall

Close enough.

01:18:26 - 01:18:32

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, we don't have to have the truck right on top of it that's got hose reels and all the rest of it.

01:18:33 - 01:18:45

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know if it necessarily needs a perimeter road as long as from the main access road you can get into the arrays and where you need to be within the given arrays.

01:18:47 - 01:18:53

Worthington Town Hall

And that's really a level of detail I think we need to come to some level of understanding.

01:18:54 - 01:19:09

Worthington Town Hall

I guess when I mentioned access roads being, you know, my thoughts about it, I really think it's the fact that there is a residence on site and there's one driveway in and if there were an emergency that people in that residence would not be able to evacuate.

01:19:10 - 01:19:24

Worthington Town Hall

So if we have an emergency access road to access the home that is sitting in the middle of this project, then it could be designed also to give more access to other parts of the field.

01:19:25 - 01:19:32

Worthington Town Hall

So I don't think it needs to be a whole perimeter, but I just think we look at it holistically and say, how can you get in and out of the back of the property in case of an emergency?

01:19:34 - 01:19:35

Worthington Town Hall

Yes, I agree.

01:19:36 - 01:19:37

Diane Brenner

Can I say something?

01:19:39 - 01:19:39

Worthington Town Hall

The CNAs, do you have this?

01:19:39 - 01:19:40

Worthington Town Hall

Just a moment, Diane.

01:19:41 - 01:19:42

Worthington Town Hall

We're coming to you next.

01:19:42 - 01:19:42

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

01:19:42 - 01:20:15

Worthington Town Hall

I just quickly seen as do you have an access another access to that field across from Paul and Judy's house right right up there so that could be another way in maybe we could request that that be graveled for example so that it's more acceptable but might have to take a look at it and see what this equipment could use it and that's the consideration right for the homeowners and their private residents on the site.

01:20:16 - 01:20:19

Worthington Town Hall

Do we have adequate access for emergency services?

01:20:22 - 01:20:25

Worthington Town Hall

Irrespective of the main access route, I guess.

01:20:26 - 01:20:28

Worthington Town Hall

I think for me, this really comes up.

01:20:28 - 01:20:41

Worthington Town Hall

If a battery fire is a 12 plus hour event and someone in the house has a heart attack, can we actually drive down the driveway or is there a 100 foot perimeter that you can't pass through and so how do you get access?

01:20:42 - 01:20:47

Worthington Town Hall

It could be solved by moving the pad, it could be solved by putting a road in, but it seems like something to at least consider.

01:20:51 - 01:20:53

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, I agree, absolutely.

01:20:55 - 01:20:58

Worthington Town Hall

So Diane, do you have something relative to this?

01:20:58 - 01:21:00

Worthington Town Hall

Yes, I do, I.

01:21:00 - 01:21:00

Diane Brenner

Know.

01:21:00 - 01:21:00

Diane Brenner

Okay, go ahead.

01:21:00 - 01:21:01

Diane Brenner

No, I do.

01:21:02 - 01:21:10

Diane Brenner

Talking about water needs, I'd like to say that there are water needs related to maintenance as well as to any potential fires.

01:21:10 - 01:21:18

Diane Brenner

These panels have to be cleaned on a regular basis and because they're so high, they need special cleaning equipment.

01:21:19 - 01:21:32

Diane Brenner

I think I don't know how much water is involved, but it is likely that given their location, one of our concerns as a Board of Health is that they will need more frequent cleaning than is typical.

01:21:33 - 01:21:38

Diane Brenner

Partly because of their location, partly because of the nature of life around here.

01:21:39 - 01:21:48

Diane Brenner

So, when considering that you might need to require water availability on site, I would like.

01:21:48 - 01:21:48

Worthington Town Hall

That.

01:21:50 - 01:21:53

Diane Brenner

It's concerned about that issue as well.

01:22:11 - 01:22:14

Worthington Town Hall

Real, going back to your, are we good?

01:22:16 - 01:22:25

Worthington Town Hall

Your concern about water running off, is there already an issue with the field with

water off the field?

01:22:27 - 01:22:31

Worthington Town Hall

We do currently have issues with water running off the field in multiple locations.

01:22:31 - 01:22:37

Worthington Town Hall

So simply making the conditions the same as today won't actually, will leave a problem?

01:22:37 - 01:22:38

Worthington Town Hall

Yes.

01:22:38 - 01:22:38

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

01:22:41 - 01:22:46

Worthington Town Hall

I think I'm looking at just rainwater runoff but not fire response.

01:23:08 - 01:23:11

Worthington Town Hall

So if you have a concern, you want to come up and grab the microphone?

01:23:18 - 01:23:31

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, I'll repeat Charlie's question, which had to do with the fact that he's concerned that if there's a fire situation and there's a lot of water, that it's runoff and it's possibly toxic.

01:23:31 - 01:23:32

Worthington Town Hall

And what do we deal with that?

01:23:32 - 01:23:34

Worthington Town Hall

That might be beyond snow runoff.

01:23:35 - 01:23:58

Worthington Town Hall

I think that that's where we're going to get our engineers involved and I think that we're going to go to them first to see what's typically done to understand what they believe toxicity levels are and and hopefully one assumes that this has come up before and that they'll have some plan that we can adopt so that's what we're looking for.

01:24:03 - 01:24:07

Worthington Town Hall

So Diane do you want I mean are we still addressing highway concerns?

01:24:07 - 01:24:09

Worthington Town Hall

Because if we are, I don't mean to...

01:24:15 - 01:24:16

Worthington Town Hall

You have something, come on up, it's fine.

01:24:21 - 01:24:23

Worthington Town Hall

Steven Best, Parris Road.

01:24:24 - 01:24:30

Worthington Town Hall

I'm wondering, since I've been here, I think 13 years, two houses within a mile of that site have been hit by lightning.

01:24:31 - 01:24:32

Worthington Town Hall

What's the lightning mitigation?

01:24:32 - 01:24:39

Worthington Town Hall

I know lightning rods help, but they aren't gonna stop if the battery thing gets hit by lightning or the panels get hit by lightning.

01:24:40 - 01:24:42

Worthington Town Hall

Is it gonna backfeed into the power lines?

01:24:42 - 01:24:43

Worthington Town Hall

Is it gonna fry things?

01:24:43 - 01:24:45

Worthington Town Hall

Has that been looked into?

01:24:45 - 01:24:52

Worthington Town Hall

I see he's done a very good job of doing research into this stuff, but just another concern.

01:24:53 - 01:24:54

Worthington Town Hall

All right, thank you.

01:24:54 - 01:24:56

Worthington Town Hall

We have not considered that.

01:25:01 - 01:25:04

Worthington Town Hall

So Diane, do you want to address Board of Health concerns?

01:25:07 - 01:25:11

Diane Brenner

We've submitted our concerns in writing pretty detailed.

01:25:11 - 01:25:13

Diane Brenner

I don't have anything really to add to that.

01:25:14 - 01:25:17

Diane Brenner

I agree with the concerns that have been voiced here.

01:25:18 - 01:25:23

Diane Brenner

We kind of support all investigation to all of the ones that have been voiced.

01:25:25 - 01:25:26

Diane Brenner

I can't think of anything to add.

01:25:27 - 01:25:31

Diane Brenner

It has been posted on the planning board site and on the town email site.

01:25:32 - 01:25:36

Diane Brenner

So I don't think I have anything further to add at this moment.

01:25:40 - 01:25:42

Worthington Town Hall

Thank you, Diane, and thank you for submitting them.

01:25:42 - 01:25:55

Worthington Town Hall

I think that there's this If the Board of Health comes up with more stuff, please let us know.

01:25:55 - 01:25:55

Diane Brenner

Absolutely.

01:25:55 - 01:25:56

Diane Brenner

She did today.

01:25:57 - 01:26:00

Worthington Town Hall

Fire and Highway and any other departments, we have some time.

01:26:01 - 01:26:09

Worthington Town Hall

We don't have an unlimited amount of time, but if you're, you know, you can, I think we're open to whatever works for you.

01:26:09 - 01:26:14

Worthington Town Hall

If you wanna come up with the full list and submit it in its entirety, great.

01:26:14 - 01:26:19

Worthington Town Hall

If you wanna send us a dribs and drabs as they come, great.

01:26:20 - 01:26:25

Worthington Town Hall

We might prefer digested rather than, you know, every three minutes get a new one.

01:26:27 - 01:26:30

Worthington Town Hall

But it's really just trying to gather as much input.

01:26:30 - 01:26:32

Worthington Town Hall

We've just hired technical review.

01:26:32 - 01:26:39

Worthington Town Hall

We're going to take whatever we've got, which is a lot, to them and try to start understanding how to think about it all.

01:26:39 - 01:26:41

Worthington Town Hall

We'll have back and forth with the applicant.

01:26:42 - 01:26:45

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know how long this process is going to last.

01:26:45 - 01:26:54

Worthington Town Hall

Um, we, I, I expect this hearing, the hearing that was on January 8th to can be continued.

01:26:54 - 01:26:56

Worthington Town Hall

It's, you know, February 11th is the next date.

01:26:56 - 01:26:57

Worthington Town Hall

I expect that one to get continued.

01:26:58 - 01:27:01

Worthington Town Hall

I expect it to happen for a few more times at least.

01:27:01 - 01:27:03

Worthington Town Hall

So we have months.

01:27:04 - 01:27:16

Worthington Town Hall

We don't have probably six months, but the, the, the, um, at some point the applicant could say, look, you're not asking us new stuff.

01:27:16 - 01:27:19

Worthington Town Hall

We need, you need to, you need to start making a decision.

01:27:20 - 01:27:21

Worthington Town Hall

When that happens, I don't know.

01:27:22 - 01:27:26

Worthington Town Hall

It sort of depends on how quickly we can ask the questions and how responsive they are and how much of back and forth.

01:27:27 - 01:27:31

Worthington Town Hall

As long as we're having a productive back and forth, it will carry on.

01:27:32 - 01:27:34

Worthington Town Hall

So hopefully that's helpful.

01:27:34 - 01:27:36

Worthington Town Hall

It's not super clear, but.

01:27:39 - 01:27:43

Worthington Town Hall

So we've got a couple of boards that are represented online here.

01:27:43 - 01:27:46

Worthington Town Hall

I just want to make sure everybody gets a chance here.

01:27:47 - 01:27:57

Worthington Town Hall

Concom, I know there's been a lot of conversation back and forth anyway, but Mary,

Anna, I think you guys are good for the conservation commission.

01:27:57 - 01:28:02

Worthington Town Hall

Anything you need to speak to tonight or want to speak to?

01:28:09 - 01:28:11

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, I guess it's a no.

01:28:12 - 01:28:14

Worthington Town Hall

Put your hand up if something changes.

01:28:15 - 01:28:23

Worthington Town Hall

Chief Scobie, do you have anything from a law enforcement standpoint that is concerning you about this at this point?

01:28:27 - 01:28:28

Chief Scobie

Not at this point.

01:28:28 - 01:28:31

Chief Scobie

There's not really anything that I would be too concerned with.

01:28:31 - 01:28:48

Chief Scobie

I heard some of the concerns of the people and you know it's the stuff that we're gonna have to deal with as a whole like me to you know Chief Don Diego, emergency management and kind of come up with some plans and you know just plan for what we can plan for and just hope for the best.

01:28:48 - 01:28:53

Chief Scobie

It's kind of the way we're looking at it but there's nothing really I'd be too concerned

with is right now.

01:28:54 - 01:28:56

Worthington Town Hall

Can I ask you a question?

01:28:57 - 01:29:06

Worthington Town Hall

There's a fence and it's, you can just decide what kind of fence it is, but to me, it's a security fence.

01:29:06 - 01:29:08

Worthington Town Hall

It's trying to keep people out on some level.

01:29:08 - 01:29:11

Worthington Town Hall

I think it is required by the electrical code.

01:29:11 - 01:29:14

Worthington Town Hall

It's eight feet tall and has fairly small holes.

01:29:14 - 01:29:15

Worthington Town Hall

It's woven wire.

01:29:17 - 01:29:21

Worthington Town Hall

I think it's been one of the things that bugs me since the beginning.

01:29:21 - 01:29:32

Worthington Town Hall

But I don't know from your sort of perspective, I would like it, you know, they're saying it's farming.

01:29:33 - 01:29:38

Worthington Town Hall

I'm like, my fields are fenced with three strands of high tensile, 42 inches tall.

01:29:39 - 01:29:42

Worthington Town Hall

It's not going to keep a lot of people out, but it keeps the cows in.

01:29:43 - 01:29:43

Worthington Town Hall

Is.

01:29:49 - 01:30:02

Worthington Town Hall

You know, is a four-foot fence, I guess I'm just trying to see if you have any thoughts on what is the role of that fence from your, or what level of threat is there to that site?

01:30:04 - 01:30:10

Worthington Town Hall

This is agrovoltaics, they're all 10 feet high, everything is fully enclosed so you cows or sheep or goats.

01:30:12 - 01:30:16

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know I'll stop and let you see if you have anything to say.

01:30:18 - 01:30:31

Chief Scobie

Well I'd hope they would put something higher than a four foot fence but I mean you could get privacy slats that go into it you know the kind of kind of stops people from climbing it and it also keeps people from seeing inside of it.

01:30:31 - 01:30:34

Chief Scobie

I know we have several solar fields in Agawam.

01:30:35 - 01:30:36

Chief Scobie

There's one pretty close to my house.

01:30:37 - 01:30:46

Chief Scobie

I think it has a five foot fence or five and a half foot fence, it's a chain link, just like you're describing, it's sort of off into the middle of nowhere.

01:30:46 - 01:30:50

Chief Scobie

So really, there's not a whole lot of people that kind of go in that area.

01:30:50 - 01:30:51

Chief Scobie

They do have cameras up.

01:30:53 - 01:30:56

Chief Scobie

So I mean, if they have cameras up, we have security.

01:30:56 - 01:31:07

Chief Scobie

And you know, something obviously happens, then, you know, the security company should be calling the police or calling 911 or going right to Northampton dispatch to have an officer dispatched.

01:31:07 - 01:31:09

Chief Scobie

Is that going to be a guarantee that no one's going to get in there?

01:31:10 - 01:31:24

Chief Scobie

It's not a guarantee that no one's going to get in there But they're out mitigating things that you can do to make it a little bit more difficult and a little bit You know, obviously there'll be trespass signs and people have to be prosecuted for violating it It's just kind of the way it is.

01:31:25 - 01:31:37

Chief Scobie

I've never seen anything higher than I said The two I know of in Aguam, there's only five-foot fences jingling fences around them They're two very large fields, too Great.

01:31:37 - 01:31:38

Chief Scobie

Thank you.

01:31:49 - 01:31:51

Worthington Town Hall

Let's see how to ask this.

01:31:52 - 01:31:55

Worthington Town Hall

Maybe this is just more something for the chief to hear.

01:31:56 - 01:31:56

Worthington Town Hall

Let's see.

01:31:56 - 01:32:02

Worthington Town Hall

After the first meeting I attended, I spoke up against the project.

01:32:03 - 01:32:07

Worthington Town Hall

After that meeting, I was approached by a representative from the solar company.

01:32:08 - 01:32:10

Worthington Town Hall

I believe his name was Aaron Sims.

01:32:10 - 01:32:14

Worthington Town Hall

And he shook my hand and he quietly said, I think you made a mistake.

01:32:14 - 01:32:23

Worthington Town Hall

Well it gave me the heebie-jeebies and I followed the state police report with the Russell State Police for what it was worth.

01:32:24 - 01:32:26

Worthington Town Hall

It's alright so you got that.

01:32:27 - 01:32:54

Worthington Town Hall

I guess the biggest thing is just when you strip home rule and you take away the locals ability to you know choose what what is best for their health and safety It creates a lot of tension, and it was brought up that maybe the property owners could plant some trees to make us happy.

01:32:54 - 01:32:56

Worthington Town Hall

Because they haven't felt the love.

01:32:56 - 01:32:59

Worthington Town Hall

Well, I don't know if we've all felt the love either.

01:32:59 - 01:33:08

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, after speaking just concerns about water, you get shouted at saying you made a huge mistake.

01:33:09 - 01:33:09

Worthington Town Hall

Why?

01:33:09 - 01:33:11

Worthington Town Hall

Because we're concerned about water.

01:33:12 - 01:33:13

Worthington Town Hall

Everyone says this project is a done deal.

01:33:14 - 01:33:19

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know why the applicants feel the need to chase people out of meetings.

01:33:19 - 01:33:26

Worthington Town Hall

I've heard a lady from town was chased out of a meeting by the property owners and had her daughters escort her out.

01:33:27 - 01:33:51

Worthington Town Hall

I know this is going on in Plainfield as well where applicants are hearing people's concerns and then they go and threaten them shoot firecrackers off over their house and you know I think in this situation planting trees won't do it as Dave Pollard said I think we have to.

01:33:53 - 01:34:58

Worthington Town Hall

Investigate land trust buying the piece of property and including it in the water district you know how that will make the scene is right however the township never told them this project was okay because it by our current existing bylaws since there's a zone two in that property the whole property is considered a water district so that aside until we straighten out our bylaws and go to a town have it go to a town meeting with the new consider everyone's concerns that have come up since the first town meeting in 2017 you know it's going to just create a lot of tension because we were stripped of our ability to vote on it as a town the state says it has to go through and it just creates a lot of tension so I don't know if Chief Scobie has any input on that and You know.

01:34:58 - 01:35:17

Worthington Town Hall

I wouldn't say they're yeah, I don't know and There's also hearsay of you know death threats around the property owners want Want this whole group of people that are objecting to go hang themselves and yeah, it's not credible death threats but it's just example of What these projects are bringing to our town?

01:35:18 - 01:35:24

Worthington Town Hall

On another level that Law enforcement should be kind of aware of thank you.

01:35:27 - 01:35:34

Worthington Town Hall

Um, so I think the only other board represented here is, um, Alison, the school committee.

01:35:34 - 01:35:38

Worthington Town Hall

I don't sure if you want to speak to this at all, or if you're mostly here for.

01:35:38 - 01:35:39

Chief Scobie

The.

01:35:39 - 01:35:40

Worthington Town Hall

Later.

01:35:41 - 01:35:42

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, go ahead.

01:35:42 - 01:35:45

Chief Scobie

Can I just address, uh, Mr. Shaw's concerns?

01:35:46 - 01:35:46

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, of course.

01:35:47 - 01:35:47

Worthington Town Hall

Please.

01:35:48 - 01:35:52

Chief Scobie

So I did speak with you about this and, uh, I did look into it.

01:35:53 - 01:35:58

Chief Scobie

Uh, I talked to actually several members that are right there at the right now about that.

01:35:58 - 01:36:02

Chief Scobie

Now one of the things that you guys got to understand is I understand that everyone gets heated.

01:36:02 - 01:36:12

Chief Scobie

I mean this is you guys' home, you know, so you guys take it personal which I would expect, you know, just hoping that like it could be some sort of decorum.

01:36:12 - 01:36:21

Chief Scobie

Now if you feel threatened and you feel like something, you know, someone has stepped over the line, I expect you and I implore you that you would come and report it to me.

01:36:21 - 01:36:24

Chief Scobie

I can't do anything about something that happens unless I'm.

01:36:24 - 01:36:24

Chief Scobie

Told.

01:36:25 - 01:36:29

Chief Scobie

I have to have a complaint for me to go and look into things.

01:36:29 - 01:36:32

Chief Scobie

Now, I can't guarantee that I could prosecute somebody for something.

01:36:32 - 01:36:36

Chief Scobie

I can't guarantee that it would turn into something of, you know, a criminal case.

01:36:37 - 01:36:38

Chief Scobie

But I can obviously look into it.

01:36:39 - 01:36:45

Chief Scobie

And then we can have a written record of what I transpired just in case anything follow on goes on.

01:36:46 - 01:36:54

Chief Scobie

And I can advise you of your rights, your rights the citizen, your rights as the victim, you know and tell you hey these are some of the things you can do.

01:36:54 - 01:36:56

Chief Scobie

I mean you can you can proceed to the.

01:36:56 - 01:37:06

Chief Scobie

Courts and get protection orders if that's what you feel like you need but unless I know about it I can't help you and I'm willing to help.

01:37:07 - 01:37:13

Chief Scobie

You guys could always if you need to you can email me, you could stop by the station, you could call 911.

01:37:13 - 01:37:24

Chief Scobie

Calling 911 would probably be the quickest way but I don't want you guys to feel like you shouldn't be able to freely voice your opinions, you just have to remember that

you have to be civil on both sides.

01:37:26 - 01:37:32

Chief Scobie

I know when we talked, what you had voiced could have been perceived as a threat.

01:37:33 - 01:37:38

Chief Scobie

You did stand up later and apologize in the same meeting, saying that it wasn't a threat.

01:37:38 - 01:37:39

Chief Scobie

It wasn't anything of violence.

01:37:40 - 01:37:42

Chief Scobie

But you understand it could have been there either way.

01:37:43 - 01:37:54

Chief Scobie

So as long as it goes both ways, and we kind of act a little bit, you know, civil, people are gonna be hot on both sides, keep it civil.

01:37:55 - 01:38:05

Chief Scobie

And if you feel that someone's stepping over the line, then you would notify me, you know, and that goes for anybody there at the meeting, notify me and I will look into it.

01:38:05 - 01:38:11

Chief Scobie

I can't promise you what can happen, but I will definitely look into it and you will have an outcome, it will be reported.

01:38:13 - 01:38:13

Chief Scobie

All right, thank you.

01:38:15 - 01:38:16

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, thanks.

01:38:16 - 01:38:30

Worthington Town Hall

And I mean, it can just say in my experience, as a town and elected official and a lot of public meetings were surprisingly civil with each other and I would hate to see that change.

01:38:31 - 01:38:35

Worthington Town Hall

So including, you know, all pretty much everybody at the recent meeting.

01:38:36 - 01:38:39

Worthington Town Hall

So, um, Deb, sorry, I missed you entirely that you're there, but.

01:38:39 - 01:38:40

Deb Clapp

Please.

01:38:40 - 01:38:40

Deb Clapp

Oh, that's okay.

01:38:41 - 01:38:44

Deb Clapp

No, I don't think that's Alison Todd, who you're seeing there on the.

01:38:44 - 01:38:44

Worthington Town Hall

Oh.

01:38:45 - 01:38:45

Deb Clapp

Okay.

01:38:45 - 01:38:45

Deb Clapp

That makes.

01:38:45 - 01:38:47

Worthington Town Hall

Sense because she said she wasn't going to be here.

01:38:48 - 01:38:48

Worthington Town Hall

Right.

01:38:49 - 01:39:02

Deb Clapp

So yeah, just to say we share the concerns of all of our neighbors, naturally, but there are no specific concerns for the school at this time, other than what everyone's already shared.

01:39:03 - 01:39:10

Deb Clapp

So, but thanks for having this meeting to everybody, you and planning committee, all of you.

01:39:13 - 01:39:22

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, so before we go to anything else, for anybody else's concerns in the rooms, you know, have you guys want to speak?

01:39:25 - 01:39:27

Worthington Town Hall

So I wanted to make a couple of comments.

01:39:27 - 01:39:45

Worthington Town Hall

So I was hoping that now that you have the consultant, that we can rely on the

consultant to give us the, you know, what I consider to be good information about turning distances, radius is for the vehicles, emergency vehicles, the roads.

01:39:46 - 01:39:53

Worthington Town Hall

And I will say that obviously blue wave is, as somebody put it, very tight-lipped.

01:39:54 - 01:39:56

Worthington Town Hall

But there's a lot of things that they're not saying.

01:39:56 - 01:40:05

Worthington Town Hall

So for instance, the containers, they talked about how they can have venting in case of noxious gases or potentially flammable gases.

01:40:06 - 01:40:08

Worthington Town Hall

Now, what are the wind patterns up there?

01:40:08 - 01:40:12

Worthington Town Hall

Are those really gonna dissipate Or are they just going to rise and be there?

01:40:13 - 01:40:22

Worthington Town Hall

In which case, that's not really a good situation, not for the immediate area and not for anybody living in that area.

01:40:22 - 01:40:23

Worthington Town Hall

So I have a question about that.

01:40:24 - 01:40:37

Worthington Town Hall

And then the other thing is there was a comment made by the fellow who is doing the fire report, which I found him fascinating because he talked about his conversations with Mike, but he never recognized that Mike was leaning against that

wall.

01:40:37 - 01:40:39

Worthington Town Hall

And it was like, hmm, you know.

01:40:40 - 01:40:46

Worthington Town Hall

But some of the things, he was saying things along the lines of, I don't want to bury you in a lot of information.

01:40:47 - 01:40:54

Worthington Town Hall

And if there's a way for you to encourage them to do that, we are not just a bunch of hicks hanging out up here.

01:40:54 - 01:40:56

Worthington Town Hall

We're some very intelligent people.

01:40:57 - 01:41:08

Worthington Town Hall

And their reluctance to talk to us in real detail, even just to say, battery technology changes, So I don't want to tell you now.

01:41:08 - 01:41:10

Worthington Town Hall

I don't want to lock ourselves into something now.

01:41:10 - 01:41:13

Worthington Town Hall

I understand that well, because we discussed that.

01:41:14 - 01:41:17

Worthington Town Hall

Similar things, we were talking about lighting on the roads in Worthington.

01:41:17 - 01:41:25

Worthington Town Hall

We don't want to say, you must have this type of lamp in case there's a much better, more economical, brighter solution.

01:41:25 - 01:41:28

Worthington Town Hall

But now we've locked ourselves into this old technology.

01:41:28 - 01:41:29

Worthington Town Hall

So we can understand that.

01:41:30 - 01:41:34

Worthington Town Hall

But as you have said to them, you can give us a ballpark.

01:41:34 - 01:41:43

Worthington Town Hall

They're so reluctant to do that, but they really need to because right now it's just too vague and I don't appreciate that.

01:41:43 - 01:41:47

Worthington Town Hall

I know you don't appreciate that The town deserves better than that.

01:41:47 - 01:42:07

Worthington Town Hall

So if there's any way you can convince them don't try and Undersell this to us There are conservative estimates of a 12-hour fire for instance 12 hours, you can say, well, you know, it can be anywhere from six hours to three days, but in this size battery, more typically.

01:42:08 - 01:42:10

Worthington Town Hall

It might be 12 hours, 12 to 20 hours.

01:42:11 - 01:42:26

Worthington Town Hall

You've got to have better ideas, because they're giving us all the global estimates on everything and I don't, I think that's a disservice to us and it makes me feel that they're not being forthcoming.

01:42:27 - 01:42:30

Worthington Town Hall

So if there's anything you can do to encourage them, thank you.

01:42:31 - 01:42:33

Diane Brenner

I have also one more comment.

01:42:33 - 01:42:34

Worthington Town Hall

On this.

01:42:35 - 01:42:35

Worthington Town Hall

Go ahead.

01:42:37 - 01:42:46

Diane Brenner

What is speck, dovetailing on what Amy is saying, what is spectacularly lacking in this proposal is anything about maintenance.

01:42:46 - 01:43:04

Diane Brenner

And everything I've read about these projects say that their success and their viability and their lack of danger to either health or safety is dependent first on how well it's constructed, but secondly on how well they are maintained.

01:43:05 - 01:43:13

Diane Brenner

And the absence of anything in this proposal about maintenance to me is a red flag and one that needs to really be seriously addressed.

01:43:15 - 01:43:16

Diane Brenner

That's it.

01:43:20 - 01:43:26

Worthington Town Hall

So, um, this is obviously this is not a hearing.

01:43:26 - 01:43:33

Worthington Town Hall

And the point of this meeting is, you know, to get input from all the relevant boards and committees in town.

01:43:34 - 01:43:52

Worthington Town Hall

That said, certainly if, if the audience has comments or questions that are relevant directly relevant to essentially encouraging particular boards to explore particular things or comment on particular board issues, then, you know, I certainly want to open it up to that.

01:43:52 - 01:43:56

Worthington Town Hall

But this is not a general hearing about your feelings about the project.

01:43:56 - 01:43:58

Worthington Town Hall

There's going to be plenty of opportunity for that.

01:43:58 - 01:43:59

Worthington Town Hall

So Annie, go ahead.

01:44:00 - 01:44:01

Worthington Town Hall

We could hand to the mic.

01:44:05 - 01:44:11

Worthington Town Hall

So I've mentioned a couple things that I wanted to be looked at for assessments.

01:44:12 - 01:44:40

Worthington Town Hall

I'm wondering if those are being looked at seriously first one is a glint and glare study just to get an idea of and I'm looking at my property as well as the rest of the town I'm not sure if anyone's gonna see what I'm gonna see but I think And that's very important.

01:44:41 - 01:44:48

Worthington Town Hall

So also with all the fire that's going on, the wind up there is really crazy.

01:44:49 - 01:44:53

Worthington Town Hall

I think a wind assessment would be something really important.

01:44:54 - 01:44:57

Worthington Town Hall

It can change in a matter of seconds.

01:44:58 - 01:45:05

Worthington Town Hall

I know when I was burning brush when I first moved here, there was no wind and everything was fine.

01:45:05 - 01:45:11

Worthington Town Hall

And then the wind started coming from the southwest, and my fire went up.

01:45:11 - 01:45:19

Worthington Town Hall

And then the wind came from the northeast, and my flame came down and caught everything on fire.

01:45:19 - 01:45:20

Worthington Town Hall

We had to call the fire department.

01:45:20 - 01:45:23

Worthington Town Hall

That was just a tiny, tiny brush fire.

01:45:24 - 01:45:26

Worthington Town Hall

They put it out in minutes, so that was good.

01:45:27 - 01:45:30

Worthington Town Hall

But anyway, not just a noise study.

01:45:30 - 01:45:32

Worthington Town Hall

I'm interested in noise and vibration.

01:45:32 - 01:45:39

Worthington Town Hall

Some noise, well, noise actually is vibration.

01:45:39 - 01:45:41

Worthington Town Hall

Some people can hear and some people can't.

01:45:41 - 01:45:50

Worthington Town Hall

If you ever heard of young kids, you do a study with them and they can hear like these really high pitched noises that nobody else can.

01:45:51 - 01:46:01

Worthington Town Hall

You lose your hearing as you get older and it's different from everybody or for everybody but the vibration is still there whether you hear it or not.

01:46:01 - 01:46:23

Worthington Town Hall

Um, so both noise and vibration, um, a sightline assessment is extremely important for mitigation, um, and I'm, I would like it to, for my personal, um, satisfaction to look at my house, my property to see exactly how.

01:46:23 - 01:46:35

Worthington Town Hall

What it is that I'm going to see from the mountain of the hill with solar panels behind my house especially so we can mitigate it properly.

01:46:37 - 01:46:37

[speaker unknown]

And.

01:46:41 - 01:46:44

Worthington Town Hall

I thought there was one more.

01:46:47 - 01:46:49

Worthington Town Hall

I guess I don't have that.

01:46:49 - 01:46:51

Worthington Town Hall

So I'll bring it up at another time.

01:46:52 - 01:46:54

Worthington Town Hall

Plenty more opportunities, I think.

01:46:55 - 01:46:57

Worthington Town Hall

There are plenty more opportunities.

01:46:58 - 01:47:04

Worthington Town Hall

And we do have all those written down because, yeah, that's, it's all.

01:47:07 - 01:47:11

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, yeah, that's why we're hiring the technical reviewer we just hired tonight.

01:47:13 - 01:47:23

Worthington Town Hall

Well, I can't guarantee anything, but the glare study we already asked the applicant about, I think the thing to remember is it just takes so long.

01:47:23 - 01:47:25

Worthington Town Hall

We asked them for it in November.

01:47:25 - 01:47:26

Worthington Town Hall

They got back to us in January.

01:47:27 - 01:47:29

Worthington Town Hall

It really wasn't a sufficient response.

01:47:29 - 01:47:31

Worthington Town Hall

Now we have to do some pushing back on that.

01:47:32 - 01:47:35

Worthington Town Hall

It's just plodding through it.

01:47:35 - 01:47:39

Worthington Town Hall

So, but, oh yeah, it's definitely, it's in process.

01:47:42 - 01:47:45

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, Michael, and then back to Eli.

01:47:48 - 01:47:50

Worthington Town Hall

Bart, just a question.

01:47:50 - 01:48:00

Worthington Town Hall

So you're engaging a technical review consultant and I'm thrilled that FHIR review is part of that.

01:48:00 - 01:48:07

Worthington Town Hall

Did you say when you think you might actually have them under contract and starting to review material?

01:48:08 - 01:48:37

Worthington Town Hall

We decided tonight who I'll email him tomorrow when I asked last week how long it would take him to do the initial review he said two weeks so I'm thinking in a couple weeks we'll have I'm thinking he'll be hired the next this week and then in a few weeks we'll have something to talk to him about okay so so from my perspective fire department perspective if I have my at least initial draft of inputs to you folks.

01:48:37 - 01:48:39

Worthington Town Hall

The planning board, in like a week.

01:48:40 - 01:48:44

Worthington Town Hall

That's decent timing to get it in front of the consultant.

01:48:45 - 01:48:48

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, I don't know how this process is going to really work.

01:48:48 - 01:48:51

Worthington Town Hall

We'll have to work with him to figure out.

01:48:51 - 01:48:59

Worthington Town Hall

But I think that we'll give it to him and he'll get back to it.

01:48:59 - 01:49:01

Worthington Town Hall

And it is a different company, so maybe that one will go.

01:49:01 - 01:49:15

Worthington Town Hall

He can do them in parallel I don't know but if you need two weeks then take two weeks there's plenty for them to do well note that I said initial set of feedback thank you.

01:49:20 - 01:50:06

Worthington Town Hall

I'm just trying to keep on topic with my questions here so I think my I'll just include it and then you could have me stop talking after not dear it so I'm just wondering if we've gotten input from the building inspector on their availability I'm just my concern is that there's so much going into this project and that they won't have the capacity to properly look after it especially I think they're also the building inspector for Plainfield to is that correct so I spoke with the building commissioner whatever last week he would like to have help.

01:50:07 - 01:50:12

Worthington Town Hall

And so I need to look at how that works legally.

01:50:13 - 01:50:21

Worthington Town Hall

I know I'm pretty confident that the same engineering term we just hired for technical review can provide that kind of help through construction.

01:50:22 - 01:50:27

Worthington Town Hall

I just don't know who pays for it and how does it work?

01:50:27 - 01:50:28

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know, I need to ask.

01:50:28 - 01:50:40

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, I think that what kind of leads into my next question is just something that I think any anyone that monitors this project should be independent.

01:50:40 - 01:50:51

Worthington Town Hall

So any sort of safety or maintenance personnel should be paid for by Blue Wave, but retained by our town.

01:50:52 - 01:50:57

Worthington Town Hall

So in particular, I know maintenance was touched on today.

01:50:57 - 01:50:58

Worthington Town Hall

I think that's a huge thing.

01:50:59 - 01:51:06

Worthington Town Hall

So having somebody retained by the town for maintenance and then safety.

01:51:06 - 01:51:07

Worthington Town Hall

Maintenance of what?

01:51:09 - 01:51:11

Worthington Town Hall

Whatever maintenance is related to the battery.

01:51:11 - 01:51:21

Worthington Town Hall

I know there's, oh, maybe it would actually be fall under our fire chief, but there is

maintenance related to the battery.

01:51:21 - 01:51:51

Worthington Town Hall

They actually have it in the proposal and it's very overwhelming maintenance in terms of inspection that's the town as far as maintaining actual equipment that would not be the town's responsibility i cannot let's see how it would be okay so so whatever the outline is if it's going to cost the town more money to do the inspections and then also I think whatever maintenance should be through the town.

01:51:52 - 01:51:56

Worthington Town Hall

But I guess it would be inspections through the town.

01:51:56 - 01:51:58

Worthington Town Hall

So I guess nevermind on that, but yeah, okay.

01:51:58 - 01:52:00

Worthington Town Hall

I'll be quiet now.

01:52:00 - 01:52:16

Worthington Town Hall

Just so that I am clear, I think what you're saying is really the town should have an oversight role in the long-term, over time, so that we have some way of knowing that their maintenance is being done appropriately.

01:52:17 - 01:52:20

Worthington Town Hall

And I don't think that's the cutting of the grass.

01:52:20 - 01:52:25

Worthington Town Hall

I think that's the replacing the battery cells or some, I don't know what maintenance is really involved.

01:52:26 - 01:52:32

Worthington Town Hall

Exactly, so monitoring, pretty much safety monitoring and then making sure that their maintenance is appropriate.

01:52:32 - 01:52:34

Worthington Town Hall

So that's kind of why I was trying to divide the two.

01:52:35 - 01:52:42

Worthington Town Hall

I think I'll just take this as a moment to talk about the Fire Chief.

01:52:42 - 01:52:55

Worthington Town Hall

And we've talked with the Fire Chief about the fire, and I keep forgetting the guy, James Caulfield talked about that the new fire code requires annual inspections of these things.

01:52:55 - 01:52:57

Worthington Town Hall

Don't really know what that entails or what it is.

01:52:58 - 01:52:59

Worthington Town Hall

But it appears to be an annual inspection.

01:53:00 - 01:53:04

Worthington Town Hall

I think there's probably inspections around when they're doing some level of maintenance on the batteries.

01:53:07 - 01:53:08

Worthington Town Hall

So there's costs.

01:53:09 - 01:53:10

Worthington Town Hall

There's time, at least.

01:53:10 - 01:53:18

Worthington Town Hall

And there is definitely the town has the capability to have fees to cover those costs.

01:53:19 - 01:53:35

Worthington Town Hall

We talked to the select board about how you can come up with fees to cover all these sort of, they're not very big, any of them, but there may be a lot of small things that the town needs to be looking at.

01:53:35 - 01:53:41

Worthington Town Hall

According to town council, the difference between a fee and a tax is that a fee has to be revenue neutral.

01:53:41 - 01:53:50

Worthington Town Hall

So you have to demonstrate at least some what that the town is paying those costs and you're recouping those costs, a reimbursement on some level.

01:53:50 - 01:53:59

Worthington Town Hall

But it's definitely something within the select boards purview and according to council, they don't have to pick it today.

01:54:00 - 01:54:04

Worthington Town Hall

If they do it five years from now, they're like, oh, you know, we really need a fee.

01:54:04 - 01:54:07

Worthington Town Hall

They can instigate it then and it will apply.

01:54:07 - 01:54:10

Worthington Town Hall

It's not like it's grandfathered in some way, the project's been.

01:54:12 - 01:54:16

Worthington Town Hall

I just want to get back to the process and fees.

01:54:17 - 01:54:27

Worthington Town Hall

So when it does come time for a building permit, there will be a building permit fee, which is going to be based on our current rate, which has been discussed as going higher.

01:54:27 - 01:54:29

Worthington Town Hall

Right now it's \$7 per thousand.

01:54:30 - 01:54:39

Worthington Town Hall

So we would need a very concise estimate of the construction value of what's going into to the field.

01:54:39 - 01:54:42

Worthington Town Hall

So I assume that's going to be substantial.

01:54:43 - 01:54:50

Worthington Town Hall

So there will be that nest egg for typically that goes back to the building department to cover their expenses and their budget.

01:54:51 - 01:55:05

Worthington Town Hall

And the other part of maintenance, under Massachusetts General Law, the building inspector, if the building inspector sees or understands there is any kind of safety hazard, they have the right to go into the property.

01:55:05 - 01:55:14

Worthington Town Hall

So, as things progress, they will have that ability to go into the property to answer questions or if they see danger.

01:55:19 - 01:55:27

Worthington Town Hall

We certainly, I'm sure, will consider whether we need to make changes to the building department budget when the time.

01:55:30 - 01:55:30

Worthington Town Hall

Comes.

01:55:32 - 01:55:32

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, go ahead.

01:55:36 - 01:55:37

Worthington Town Hall

I remembered.

01:55:37 - 01:56:32

Worthington Town Hall

So this I don't think this has been brought up but it's my understanding that these solar panels can produce a lot of heat and can make that a heat island and I'm concerned about the maple trees in the area they were very sensitive to the change that's happening now and the heat waves that we're so having excessive heat from that could damage the environment too and I don't think we've talked about that or maybe even looked into it or thought of it but I think it's really important that maybe it be studied because that it's 27 acres of panels is a lot and maybe we just don't get a Let us on up there.

01:56:32 - 01:56:33

Worthington Town Hall

But we'll see.

01:56:35 - 01:56:36

Worthington Town Hall

Thank you.

01:56:38 - 01:56:45

Worthington Town Hall

I just had a couple of things that I wanted to bring up tonight too, that I thought were pertinent to the discussion.

01:56:46 - 01:56:50

Worthington Town Hall

One being the pilot and the tax rate.

01:56:50 - 01:56:55

Worthington Town Hall

We don't have an industrial tax rate in Worthington because we don't have an industrial zone.

01:56:55 - 01:57:01

Worthington Town Hall

But I was researching what other towns around Massachusetts did to set a tax rate.

01:57:01 - 01:57:08

Worthington Town Hall

I'd seen \$20 per thousand at the low end and \$38, \$39 at the high end.

01:57:08 - 01:57:14

Worthington Town Hall

And I didn't know since the assessors weren't in here tonight if this had been a discussion.

01:57:14 - 01:57:17

Worthington Town Hall

It doesn't have to be tonight, I'm just bringing it up.

01:57:17 - 01:57:59

Worthington Town Hall

I heard \$37 ,000 for pilot funding, which there's just so much that we would need to do as a to support this where this to go through that that seems ridiculous to me I think the value of the property once it is fully it were to be fully installed with the 7 ,000 panels etc the properties are worth about five million dollars and you know I

think are if we're going to have this here we're going to I know that they're going to be people in town asking for tax abatements on their property and that money has got to come from somewhere because we're already under water.

01:57:59 - 01:58:06

Worthington Town Hall

So that's one pilot program and the tax rate and what level of discussion that we need to have there.

01:58:07 - 01:58:11

Worthington Town Hall

The other thing along those lines is the site suitability study.

01:58:12 - 01:58:17

Worthington Town Hall

Massachusetts is coming out, I believe, at the end of March, beginning of April with site suitability.

01:58:17 - 01:58:21

Worthington Town Hall

I do believe the town of Worthington scores fairly low on that.

01:58:21 - 01:58:28

Worthington Town Hall

I believe we have to proactively ask whether or not we want to be included in that process.

01:58:28 - 01:58:34

Worthington Town Hall

And I don't know really if that's good or bad, but I think that it's something that we should take a look at.

01:58:34 - 01:58:41

Worthington Town Hall

And I'm happy to do that if there's a correct board to talk to about it would be great.

01:58:41 - 01:58:55

Worthington Town Hall

And then the other question that I have that would be great to have answered tonight is just, you know, I'm really concerned about the boards having the appropriate time to be able to ask questions and then to give a finding.

01:58:56 - 01:59:06

Worthington Town Hall

And this is a clarification and then, so that we can be helpful to some boards that have questions where we might be able to provide rapid fire turnaround, because we have so much detail.

01:59:07 - 01:59:12

Worthington Town Hall

But the 35 days started, I believe on December 22nd.

01:59:14 - 01:59:20

Worthington Town Hall

The Board of Health came back with a list of questions, but I don't believe that was a formal response back.

01:59:20 - 01:59:30

Worthington Town Hall

And since the fire department or the highway department have questions, what's the clock look like for them as far as being able to come back with a response?

01:59:30 - 01:59:33

Worthington Town Hall

And are you expecting a yes, we think this is great?

01:59:34 - 01:59:36

Worthington Town Hall

No, no, not at all.

01:59:37 - 01:59:49

Worthington Town Hall

There's not, we can't possibly mitigate conditions or somewhere in between where we have these questions that should be part of our conditions and we can only go forward if these conditions are mitigated.

01:59:49 - 01:59:49

Worthington Town Hall

Thank you.

01:59:53 - 02:00:06

Worthington Town Hall

So I've tried to be pretty clear that the 35-day clock that lives in our bylaws doesn't really apply from my perspective to this project because the project is just too big.

02:00:06 - 02:00:19

Worthington Town Hall

The point of that is a residential project where most departments don't really care, they don't have concerns, and at some point we need to be able to move forward without going and finding everybody and making sure that they're happy here.

02:00:19 - 02:00:22

Worthington Town Hall

I think we go find everybody and make sure that they're, well, happy isn't probably the right word.

02:00:25 - 02:00:33

Worthington Town Hall

So I don't think the 35, it's not something we're gonna, well, I'm not expecting to stick to it.

02:00:33 - 02:00:40

Worthington Town Hall

The hearing will go on for however long it goes on and people bring their concerns as they come up.

02:00:41 - 02:00:45

Worthington Town Hall

Now, I think I've forgotten your second question.

02:00:45 - 02:00:47

Worthington Town Hall

Oh, what kind of response are we looking for?

02:00:47 - 02:00:55

Worthington Town Hall

I think that I've not been very articulate about it, but we're looking for their concerns.

02:00:57 - 02:01:00

Worthington Town Hall

The Board of Health, I think that is their official response.

02:01:00 - 02:01:02

Worthington Town Hall

I think they've added to it.

02:01:02 - 02:01:23

Worthington Town Hall

So, and that's a great response because we can take that to our engineer and we can try to see, understand those questions and see if, how we come to a resolution I can't think of any of them right now off the top of my head, but some of them will be questions that we ask the applicant.

02:01:23 - 02:01:31

Worthington Town Hall

But we can frame it in an engineering, ask it from an engineering perspective.

02:01:32 - 02:01:36

Worthington Town Hall

Others, maybe they can help us sort of tease out some of the details.

02:01:36 - 02:01:37

Worthington Town Hall

Like what's the role.

02:01:39 - 02:01:40

Worthington Town Hall

Of DEP.

02:01:42 - 02:01:44

Worthington Town Hall

So I think their response is good.

02:01:44 - 02:01:47

Worthington Town Hall

I think I find this useful tonight.

02:01:48 - 02:02:00

Worthington Town Hall

But my goal tonight was actually to help the departments understand that they should come talk to us and try to give us their concerns so that we can develop conditions that try to mitigate.

02:02:01 - 02:02:03

Worthington Town Hall

And it's a conversation that's ongoing.

02:02:07 - 02:02:10

Worthington Town Hall

I got a question in regards to the clock.

02:02:11 - 02:02:19

Worthington Town Hall

It was mentioned earlier on in this process that Blue Wave or the applicant agreed to stop the clock.

02:02:20 - 02:02:23

Worthington Town Hall

I'm just kind of wondering why they agreed to do that.

02:02:23 - 02:02:26

Worthington Town Hall

Because I have a feeling it wasn't out of the goodness of their heart.

02:02:26 - 02:02:33

Worthington Town Hall

I'm just wondering if they were on a clock, would they then not be able to satisfy our

concerns in a timely manner?

02:02:33 - 02:02:35

Worthington Town Hall

And we would just say, nope.

02:02:36 - 02:02:41

Worthington Town Hall

Or I'm just trying to get understanding of why the applicant agreed to stop the clock.

02:02:41 - 02:03:10

Worthington Town Hall

To me that just just looking for some clarity thank you I don't know that I can really confidently say why they what their motivation was but I can tell you from my perspective the these special permit that's required because they're overlapping the water supply district has no clock and so the decision the timing of that decision is is quite open-ended the site plan review because of our bylaws does have a clock.

02:03:12 - 02:03:28

Worthington Town Hall

And so if they had insisted on us issuing a decision on the site plan review within 65 days of deeming it complete, we would have been pretty close to issuing that decision on the site plan review now while still considering the special permit application.

02:03:30 - 02:03:37

Worthington Town Hall

It doesn't make a lot of sense to separate them, and I think that they saw that.

02:03:37 - 02:03:42

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, and they're gonna have to wait for that one anyway, so you might as well put them together.

02:03:43 - 02:03:45

Worthington Town Hall

Was it trying to curry favor with us?

02:03:45 - 02:03:45

Worthington Town Hall

Maybe.

02:03:46 - 02:03:47

Worthington Town Hall

It certainly helps us.

02:03:48 - 02:03:55

Worthington Town Hall

The thing about that 65 day clock is if we missed it, they get constructive approval of what was submitted and that is definitely not what we want.

02:03:56 - 02:03:57

Worthington Town Hall

Thank you.

02:03:59 - 02:04:03

Worthington Town Hall

So I'm Steve Strahm and then Steve, that's my guy.

02:04:09 - 02:04:10

Worthington Town Hall

Happy birthday.

02:04:13 - 02:04:15

Worthington Town Hall

Just, yeah, it's working.

02:04:15 - 02:04:26

Worthington Town Hall

Bart and Diane, are you familiar with Mike Hugo from the NASA Association of Health Boards?

02:04:33 - 02:04:34

Diane Brenner

I am.

02:04:34 - 02:04:34

Diane Brenner

Can I.

02:04:34 - 02:04:34

Worthington Town Hall

Bring that up?

02:04:34 - 02:04:36

Diane Brenner

I am familiar with him.

02:04:39 - 02:04:42

Diane Brenner

I saw his presentation to Plainfield.

02:04:44 - 02:04:45

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

02:04:46 - 02:04:54

Worthington Town Hall

The reason I bring it up is he's the president or chair of the Mass Association Health Boards.

02:04:55 - 02:05:18

Worthington Town Hall

He recently was brought into the town of Plainfield who was dealing with the same issues and gave a very thorough presentation of this very situation that we're going through about the legality of who has authority to.

02:05:18 - 02:05:18

Diane Brenner

Do what.

02:05:18 - 02:05:42

Worthington Town Hall

And his presentation he concludes that the board of health is going to be the ultimate arbitrator of this whole situation and why all this other discussion is going on when really someone should look more into this mass association of health boards.

02:05:43 - 02:06:07

Worthington Town Hall

Because what he said is that in communities where there has been opposition by the locals, that the health board is going to be the ultimate determiner of what happens in that town.

02:06:07 - 02:06:14

Worthington Town Hall

They supersede all authority for the planning board, zoning boards.

02:06:15 - 02:06:15

Diane Brenner

State.

02:06:15 - 02:06:20

Worthington Town Hall

A particular state law that everybody's been discussing.

02:06:23 - 02:06:30

Worthington Town Hall

I suggest that if you're not familiar with it, Bart, you especially, Diane, you are familiar with it.

02:06:30 - 02:06:44

Worthington Town Hall

You should take the time to either Google it or get Diane to give you the link and review that presentation because it's going to change the way you think about this whole thing.

02:06:47 - 02:06:48

Worthington Town Hall

Thank you.

02:06:51 - 02:06:54

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, just a weird ethics question.

02:06:54 - 02:07:01

Worthington Town Hall

At a previous meeting, a select board member disclosed that his ground mounted project solar was partly financed by Blue Way.

02:07:01 - 02:07:34

Worthington Town Hall

Is that a conflict of interest or no I mean I it's me and I stated it and I have a hard time seeing how it is if it is someone please point it out to me and plus I'm really not involved in this project until as a select board member the very end of the process is negotiate is whether we negotiate a pilot deal or And I'm certainly more than happy to check with state ethics to see if there's a conflict on that.

02:07:35 - 02:07:37

Worthington Town Hall

It's hard for me to see, but maybe.

02:07:38 - 02:07:44

Worthington Town Hall

Just on paper, it sounds kind of different from the select board.

02:07:47 - 02:07:49

Worthington Town Hall

I just want to make sure every key fits for us and all the.

02:07:54 - 02:07:54

[speaker unknown]

Others.

02:07:55 - 02:08:02

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, because at the last select board meeting, it said the select board may have a role in negotiating or approving any payment in lieu of taxes agreement.

02:08:02 - 02:08:04

Worthington Town Hall

Could that be clarified?

02:08:04 - 02:08:05

Worthington Town Hall

That's what I just said.

02:08:05 - 02:08:32

Worthington Town Hall

Well what you didn't say what your role would be in negotiating that and um and if you do have a role in that do you intend to recuse yourself from discussions or decisions related to this project or any pilot negotiations to avoid any potential conflict of interests with the company blue wave because i know they're kind of in this area so you should be recused from any and all matters involving Blue Wave.

02:08:32 - 02:08:33

Worthington Town Hall

Thank you.

02:08:36 - 02:08:39

Worthington Town Hall

I will talk to state ethics and get their opinion.

02:08:43 - 02:08:47

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, so I'm not seeing any other hands.

02:08:50 - 02:08:53

Worthington Town Hall

All right, we got a couple more people here, so go ahead.

02:08:57 - 02:08:58

Worthington Town Hall

It's me again, Charlie Ryan.

02:08:59 - 02:09:17

Worthington Town Hall

I was just looking at online before I came in here and just did a quick Google search or whatnot And it said that starting, I think, March 1 or March 6, the whole process is going to be streamlined.

02:09:20 - 02:09:24

Worthington Town Hall

To be taken out of the local planning boards.

02:09:25 - 02:09:28

Worthington Town Hall

And this whole process will basically be obsolete.

02:09:28 - 02:09:31

Worthington Town Hall

And it will be a state and regional thing.

02:09:31 - 02:09:34

Worthington Town Hall

Is that something that you guys are aware of?

02:09:34 - 02:09:55

Worthington Town Hall

So, the Department of Energy Resources, DOER, is in the process of changing the regulations and the procedures around the local permitting and site selection of, what do they call them, clean energy resources.

02:09:55 - 02:09:57

Worthington Town Hall

Something like that, which includes solar.

02:09:59 - 02:10:00

Worthington Town Hall

It's complicated.

02:10:00 - 02:10:01

Worthington Town Hall

It has a bunch of stuff.

02:10:01 - 02:10:04

Worthington Town Hall

But one of the things they've done is split.

02:10:10 - 02:10:13

Worthington Town Hall

So there's real small-scale solar, like rooftop solar.

02:10:14 - 02:10:18

Worthington Town Hall

I don't think they have any interest in changing the procedures there.

02:10:19 - 02:10:23

Worthington Town Hall

There's, I'm going to say, medium-sized solar, which is the kind of stuff we're talking about.

02:10:24 - 02:10:27

Worthington Town Hall

And they have a little bit of interest in changing how that's permitted.

02:10:28 - 02:10:33

Worthington Town Hall

But they've also defined this large-scale solar or clean energy.

02:10:34 - 02:10:37

Worthington Town Hall

And I can't remember the cutoff, but it's quite large.

02:10:40 - 02:10:42

Worthington Town Hall

Maybe 25 megawatts, something like that.

02:10:42 - 02:10:47

Worthington Town Hall

So big projects, bigger than what we're talking about by a factor of five or something.

02:10:48 - 02:10:53

Worthington Town Hall

And those, yeah, the state is going to do the permitting, the site selection and permitting on those.

02:10:53 - 02:10:57

Worthington Town Hall

The localities won't be terribly involved, if at all.

02:11:00 - 02:11:02

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know the history here.

02:11:02 - 02:11:17

Worthington Town Hall

But I think that that actually follows existing procedures for what used to be natural gas and coal plants or other sort of large utility projects.

02:11:18 - 02:11:27

Worthington Town Hall

I don't think they're actually inventing this whole cloth for clean energy, but it does stand out as they're getting rid of local control around these really big ones.

02:11:28 - 02:11:32

Worthington Town Hall

I don't think that any really big ones are looking at or ever will look at Worthington.

02:11:32 - 02:11:35

Worthington Town Hall

We're just too far from the electrical infrastructure.

02:11:36 - 02:11:41

Worthington Town Hall

But in terms of the middle ones, the stuff that we might see.

02:11:45 - 02:11:50

Worthington Town Hall

I've been pretty focused on just doing this one right by the book legally.

02:11:52 - 02:11:56

Worthington Town Hall

Those regulations haven't been, they were in public comment this fall.

02:11:57 - 02:11:59

Worthington Town Hall

They're under review now.

02:11:59 - 02:12:03

Worthington Town Hall

And sometime in 2026, they might put them out.

02:12:03 - 02:12:06

Worthington Town Hall

And then we'll know what they decided on.

02:12:06 - 02:12:12

Worthington Town Hall

I think what they're trying to do is maybe it might be helpful.

02:12:13 - 02:12:17

Worthington Town Hall

It's trying to say all the boards need to consider the application.

02:12:18 - 02:12:25

Worthington Town Hall

I think they make the applicants change how they apply, so that they present perhaps more complete information, hopefully.

02:12:25 - 02:12:27

Worthington Town Hall

And they present it to all boards at the same time.

02:12:27 - 02:12:36

Worthington Town Hall

And all boards have to do their processes sort of in parallel, so that the Board of Health's role, which right now is a little weird, becomes clearer.

02:12:37 - 02:12:39

Worthington Town Hall

They do cap the timeline.

02:12:39 - 02:12:49

Worthington Town Hall

That's the only thing that I can really remember is you have a year for the local permitting decisions to be made, but I think they are trying to make it just work better.

02:12:51 - 02:12:52

Worthington Town Hall

Steve, you brought up the role of the Board of Health.

02:12:55 - 02:13:00

Worthington Town Hall

Honestly, I don't know how they get involved, So I'll be interested to see what he says.

02:13:02 - 02:13:05

Worthington Town Hall

But it's like, we receive a special permit application.

02:13:05 - 02:13:07

Worthington Town Hall

We have to give it to the Board of Health.

02:13:07 - 02:13:08

Worthington Town Hall

That's all the bylaws say.

02:13:08 - 02:13:10

Worthington Town Hall

We don't know why.

02:13:10 - 02:13:12

Worthington Town Hall

Do they give us something?

02:13:12 - 02:13:12

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know.

02:13:16 - 02:13:17

Worthington Town Hall

So great.

02:13:17 - 02:13:22

Worthington Town Hall

But I think that what the state is trying to do is clarify all those roles, which seems like a good thing.

02:13:24 - 02:13:28

Worthington Town Hall

The site suitability, I think Helen, you brought up site suitability.

02:13:28 - 02:13:31

Worthington Town Hall

And they've made it really complicated.

02:13:33 - 02:13:43

Worthington Town Hall

There's just a tremendous amount of criteria, and they're supposed to be somebody who sort of manages it all, but you can't hire those people.

02:13:43 - 02:13:48

Worthington Town Hall

They need to be licensed by the state, and there's not even the idea of what that

would be.

02:13:49 - 02:14:01

Worthington Town Hall

So it's really unclear what that's going to look like, and it's also really clear to me when they're actually gonna put those regulations in place.

02:14:01 - 02:14:07

Worthington Town Hall

They say March 2026 but I'm not sure that's reasonable.

02:14:08 - 02:14:13

Worthington Town Hall

And also for the medium scale projects we the towns could still have a say.

02:14:13 - 02:14:19

Worthington Town Hall

It's elective, like we can choose to do it or not, but we would choose to do it.

02:14:33 - 02:14:46

Worthington Town Hall

So here's what I mean about, oh sorry, Tripp's question was, I think what you're asking is, is the state trying to say we're going to put solar in state forests?

02:14:53 - 02:15:01

Worthington Town Hall

So the reason it's complicated is I think there are seven different categories of criteria that are evaluated when you're looking at a specific site.

02:15:02 - 02:15:06

Worthington Town Hall

And I'm not going to do a great job because I can't quite remember it.

02:15:07 - 02:15:10

Worthington Town Hall

One of them is sort of environmental impact.

02:15:10 - 02:15:15

Worthington Town Hall

There's some notion of social impact, it's not quite the right word.

02:15:16 - 02:15:19

Worthington Town Hall

There's sort of agriculture is rolled in there.

02:15:19 - 02:15:22

Worthington Town Hall

There's whether the site was disturbed in the past or not.

02:15:23 - 02:15:26

Worthington Town Hall

I'm sure I'm missing stuff and I'm sure I'm not expressing it quite right.

02:15:27 - 02:15:32

Worthington Town Hall

The one that I got interested in was the environmental, oh, and there's land protection status.

02:15:33 - 02:15:34

Worthington Town Hall

That's also a component.

02:15:34 - 02:15:39

Worthington Town Hall

All these things, you analyze the impact of this project.

02:15:39 - 02:15:46

Worthington Town Hall

You have to look at a specific parcel and you understand how this project is going to impact this parcel and all these different criteria.

02:15:47 - 02:15:48

Worthington Town Hall

You add them up and it gives you a score.

02:15:49 - 02:15:52

Worthington Town Hall

And that score is used to determine a mitigation fee.

02:15:52 - 02:15:57

Worthington Town Hall

I don't have any clue what the mitigation fee is, but it also helps to determine the incentives that they get for that project.

02:15:57 - 02:15:58

Worthington Town Hall

So that's what I mean.

02:15:58 - 02:15:59

Worthington Town Hall

It's complicated.

02:15:59 - 02:16:00

Worthington Town Hall

I don't understand it.

02:16:00 - 02:16:04

Worthington Town Hall

But I am interested that there is this section that's environmental.

02:16:04 - 02:16:23

Worthington Town Hall

And it appears to be that any site that is in the Biomap 3 is a project that the Nature Conservancy and the state did together to map sensitive habitats in the Commonwealth.

02:16:23 - 02:16:25

Worthington Town Hall

And they define two different areas.

02:16:26 - 02:16:28

Worthington Town Hall

There's core and there's critical.

02:16:28 - 02:16:29

Worthington Town Hall

Critical is bigger than Core.

02:16:31 - 02:16:36

Worthington Town Hall

But basically, you get a really bad score if your project touches Core.

02:16:37 - 02:16:46

Worthington Town Hall

And you get a little bit less bad score if it touches Critical, and you get a fine score in that department if you don't touch any of it.

02:16:46 - 02:16:52

Worthington Town Hall

So there's some interest in protecting environmental or habitat resources.

02:16:53 - 02:16:55

Worthington Town Hall

But what's hard is knowing how they all add up.

02:16:55 - 02:17:04

Worthington Town Hall

Um, the old system, it was all sort of controlled through incentives and it was much simpler because you, it's like only three things.

02:17:04 - 02:17:07

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, if you touch core, you don't get incentives, it was pretty clear.

02:17:08 - 02:17:10

Worthington Town Hall

But this one is, it's really hard to break it apart.

02:17:17 - 02:17:26

Worthington Town Hall

So our bylaws that we're going to put forth to protect a portion of our town, would those still protect our town or would the state.

02:17:26 - 02:17:31

Worthington Town Hall

As asked with the state on March 1st, be able to override those protections as well?

02:17:32 - 02:17:37

Worthington Town Hall

I don't think it's an overriding as much as a.

02:17:41 - 02:17:43

Worthington Town Hall

Maybe I should say I don't know.

02:17:43 - 02:17:56

Worthington Town Hall

I don't, I think that, let's say those regulations go into effect and next year we get another application that's going to have to come with this site suitability study that's done by somebody, not the applicant.

02:17:56 - 02:18:00

Worthington Town Hall

They have to hire a certified person.

02:18:01 - 02:18:07

Worthington Town Hall

And that'll help us understand whether that site is suitable according to the state or not.

02:18:10 - 02:18:24

Worthington Town Hall

What we're using to sort of come up with this moratorium is those environmental, the Biomap 3 core and critical, and saying, look, we're going to prohibit solar in at

least the core batteries and the critical.

02:18:24 - 02:18:25

Worthington Town Hall

We've got to talk about it.

02:18:25 - 02:18:35

Worthington Town Hall

But Worthington, 69% of the town is considered a critical natural resource by the Biomap 3.

02:18:36 - 02:18:39

Worthington Town Hall

So that's, did I say 69%?

02:18:39 - 02:18:40

Worthington Town Hall

It's a big number.

02:18:41 - 02:18:43

Worthington Town Hall

The core is like 42%.

02:18:43 - 02:18:44

Worthington Town Hall

I can't, I may be wrong on that one.

02:18:44 - 02:18:47

Worthington Town Hall

But it's in that kind of maybe 30%.

02:18:47 - 02:18:52

Worthington Town Hall

So it's a big chunk of the town that the state is recognized as being important habitat.

02:18:54 - 02:18:57

Worthington Town Hall

Interestingly, this field isn't right next to it.

02:18:57 - 02:19:00

Worthington Town Hall

The woods are, but not the field.

02:19:00 - 02:19:03

Worthington Town Hall

And a lot of that's because it's an agricultural field, and they.

02:19:03 - 02:19:04

Diane Brenner

Are.

02:19:04 - 02:19:05

Worthington Town Hall

Disturbed habitat.

02:19:05 - 02:19:08

Worthington Town Hall

And so they're often not included.

02:19:09 - 02:19:10

Worthington Town Hall

But I.

02:19:10 - 02:19:11

Diane Brenner

Don't.

02:19:11 - 02:19:15

Worthington Town Hall

See it as the state coming in and saying, oh, now you have to build it this way.

02:19:16 - 02:19:28

Worthington Town Hall

It's more a way of trying to, I think their goal was to try to push solar into places that make sense on a bunch of different categories.

02:19:28 - 02:19:35

Worthington Town Hall

My hope is it pushes it onto parking lots and rooftop, but that's a whole other set of issues.

02:19:36 - 02:19:50

Worthington Town Hall

But I am hoping to talk to Pioneer Valley Panning Commission and their environmental people to maybe they'll have dug through this and can have an intuition for it because it doesn't make sense to me yet whether it's going to make Worthington more attractive less attractive.

02:19:55 - 02:19:57

Worthington Town Hall

Anna, did you want to comment on any of this?

02:19:58 - 02:19:59

Worthington Town Hall

You got your hand up.

02:20:00 - 02:20:07

Anna Maunz

Yeah, I just wanted, I believe it was Steve Strom who mentioned the presentation by Mike Hugo.

02:20:08 - 02:20:12

Anna Maunz

And Diane, I just was wondering if either of you, because I did try to Google it and did not.

02:20:12 - 02:20:13

Anna Maunz

Come up with anything.

02:20:13 - 02:20:15

Anna Maunz

So if you guys could forward that to us, I.

02:20:15 - 02:20:15

Diane Brenner

Would love.

02:20:16 - 02:20:17

Diane Brenner

Thank you.

02:20:18 - 02:20:21

Diane Brenner

I'd like to speak to that presentation too.

02:20:22 - 02:20:27

Diane Brenner

I think everybody is, I don't know how to say this, slightly overexcited.

02:20:27 - 02:20:30

Diane Brenner

The Mass Association of Health Boards is a nonprofit.

02:20:31 - 02:20:39

Diane Brenner

It has no real authority, except as it's sort of a support to the Boards of Health.

02:20:42 - 02:20:54

Diane Brenner

And that presentation, which I had many important details, focused on a proposed best firm in Plainfield.

02:20:54 - 02:20:58

Diane Brenner

It had really relatively little relevance.

02:21:00 - 02:21:02

Diane Brenner

Board of Health does have a lot of authority.

02:21:02 - 02:21:04

Diane Brenner

However, it is not.

02:21:07 - 02:21:08

Diane Brenner

As Bart said, it's complicated.

02:21:09 - 02:21:15

Diane Brenner

It isn't something that we can just say, oh, you have to have hearings, you have to go to the courts.

02:21:15 - 02:21:20

Diane Brenner

There's a whole bunch of requirements.

02:21:23 - 02:21:38

Diane Brenner

And the town bylaws have applicability here as well, so we can't just, despite what he said, go in like the house of fire, so to speak.

02:21:39 - 02:21:40

Diane Brenner

It's appropriate for today's discussions.

02:21:42 - 02:21:45

Diane Brenner

So we are giving it consideration.

02:21:45 - 02:21:49

Diane Brenner

I would like to talk to the planning board more about this concern.

02:21:50 - 02:22:10

Diane Brenner

I will certainly forward you his presentation, but I would caution everybody to recognize that it is in many ways his private opinion, and although he has a lot of slides to support him, so he is.

02:22:12 - 02:22:26

Diane Brenner

To me, it was a mixed bag, frankly, and so everybody should look at it, but I don't think it prescribes what necessarily can happen legally.

02:22:29 - 02:22:30

[speaker unknown]

Jim?

02:22:30 - 02:22:32

Worthington Town Hall

You've been patiently waiting like that.

02:22:36 - 02:22:38

Worthington Town Hall

Jim Downey, 7 Comington Road.

02:22:39 - 02:22:49

Worthington Town Hall

So this Mr. Caulfield, who was the consultant that presented on Thursday, he kept focusing on water is the sort of sole way to extinguish these fires.

02:22:49 - 02:22:53

Worthington Town Hall

And I think it's very clear that we simply do not have those water resources.

02:22:53 - 02:22:56

Worthington Town Hall

Michael's going to address that probably in his question.

02:22:57 - 02:23:10

Worthington Town Hall

And I asked what then we do when we have a summer like last summer when we have 38 days with absolutely no rain and you have a fire burning and the fire consultant is saying, just let the fire burn.

02:23:11 - 02:23:24

Worthington Town Hall

So, with respect to embers that could escape and immediately ignite a neighboring forest, a field, which we've all lived through, what does happen?

02:23:24 - 02:23:30

Worthington Town Hall

How are those fires put out in a very, very dry period of time, and we're facing more and more and more of those?

02:23:30 - 02:23:33

Worthington Town Hall

And are they going to be using chemicals?

02:23:33 - 02:23:42

Worthington Town Hall

If that is the preferred way to extinguish the fire, what are the chemicals and what are the properties of these chemicals.

02:23:42 - 02:23:47

Worthington Town Hall

And it seems that many of them are terribly toxic.

02:23:48 - 02:23:51

Worthington Town Hall

And that is where the water overlap comes into play.

02:23:51 - 02:23:53

Worthington Town Hall

Because if there is runoff, then we are sunk.

02:23:55 - 02:24:01

Worthington Town Hall

So I hope the consultant, Bart, are you at liberty to disclose who you guys have retained?

02:24:03 - 02:24:05

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, we haven't hired them yet.

02:24:05 - 02:24:06

Worthington Town Hall

It was an open meeting.

02:24:06 - 02:24:12

Worthington Town Hall

We voted to go with either Pair Corporation or Pairé Corporation.

02:24:12 - 02:24:14

Worthington Town Hall

Don't know how to pronounce it, P-A-R-E.

02:24:15 - 02:24:20

Worthington Town Hall

They're out of Rhode Island, but they lead engineers in Holyoke.

02:24:21 - 02:24:24

Worthington Town Hall

So will that be something they can address?

02:24:25 - 02:24:27

Worthington Town Hall

Will you be directing them to respond on that point?

02:24:31 - 02:24:34

Worthington Town Hall

I hope to understand how these fires are fought.

02:24:36 - 02:24:41

Worthington Town Hall

I hope, I mean, James Caulfield said they don't release embers.

02:24:41 - 02:24:42

Worthington Town Hall

I'm interested in that.

02:24:42 - 02:24:46

Worthington Town Hall

But I certainly think that, yeah, we need to, it's in the middle of a hayfield.

02:24:46 - 02:24:48

Worthington Town Hall

If that's a dry hayfield, what's going to happen?

02:24:49 - 02:24:50

Worthington Town Hall

So, yeah, thank you.

02:24:57 - 02:25:03

Worthington Town Hall

All right, so I think we can move on to, yeah, I don't see any other hands.

02:25:04 - 02:25:04

Worthington Town Hall

Great.

02:25:05 - 02:25:09

Worthington Town Hall

Talking about, do you want to talk about a date for a site visit?

02:25:09 - 02:25:10

Worthington Town Hall

Or do you want to put that off?

02:25:13 - 02:25:16

Worthington Town Hall

It's your baby now.

02:25:18 - 02:25:25

Worthington Town Hall

So this is a site visit for the planning board plus any town departments who feel like they'd like to see the.

02:25:31 - 02:25:31

[speaker unknown]

Site.

02:25:34 - 02:25:35

Worthington Town Hall

Use the mic.

02:25:39 - 02:25:43

Worthington Town Hall

So many of the department heads and boards have limited hours.

02:25:45 - 02:25:46

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know when Chief Scogie's available.

02:25:46 - 02:25:47

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know when Mike's available.

02:25:54 - 02:26:00

Worthington Town Hall

No, we put it on the agenda, but if you, it's really your call here, It's not, it's not our, so.

02:26:03 - 02:26:13

Worthington Town Hall

Maybe the, I don't know, is it, should we do a survey of them and send an email to the town departments to see who wants to come and see weekday versus weekend and.

02:26:16 - 02:26:19

Worthington Town Hall

Do you want to get a sense who wants to come from who's here tonight?

02:26:20 - 02:26:24

Worthington Town Hall

Sure, if people want to, we raise hands for everyone who wants to come.

02:26:26 - 02:26:26

Worthington Town Hall

Great.

02:26:29 - 02:26:30

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, well there you go.

02:26:33 - 02:26:34

Worthington Town Hall

It's just, just Diane online, right?

02:26:34 - 02:26:35

Worthington Town Hall

I can't.

02:26:35 - 02:26:35

Worthington Town Hall

Yes.

02:26:38 - 02:26:43

Worthington Town Hall

And, I guess, folks in the room, weekday versus weekend?

02:26:44 - 02:26:45

Worthington Town Hall

Weekday?

02:26:45 - 02:26:47

Worthington Town Hall

Or Diane, too, but weekday?

02:26:48 - 02:26:50

Worthington Town Hall

Not a lot of weekday support.

02:26:51 - 02:26:52

Worthington Town Hall

Weekend?

02:26:55 - 02:26:56

Worthington Town Hall

Not as...

02:26:58 - 02:27:01

Worthington Town Hall

All right, maybe I will...

02:27:01 - 02:27:10

Worthington Town Hall

I'm still waiting for Peg to send me a full list of all the contacts, so I will try to Hopefully get that this week so I can, the department and board contact.

02:27:10 - 02:27:15

Worthington Town Hall

So if you look at the agenda she sent out Friday, everybody's on that email.

02:27:15 - 02:27:16

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, great.

02:27:17 - 02:27:23

Worthington Town Hall

I will send an email to everyone and try to basically ask for.

02:27:25 - 02:27:27

Worthington Town Hall

If you wanna come, let us know a date.

02:27:27 - 02:27:36

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know if I'll put together whatever, pick a day web thing, or if I'll suggest some number, we'll see.

02:27:36 - 02:27:43

Worthington Town Hall

But we'll try to do that this week of giving you a way to indicate what date will work well for you.

02:27:44 - 02:27:45

Worthington Town Hall

See what we can come up with.

02:27:49 - 02:27:52

Worthington Town Hall

I think I also need to coordinate with the applicant, so I'll include them.

02:27:53 - 02:27:54

Worthington Town Hall

And then it would get posted, right?

02:27:55 - 02:27:57

Worthington Town Hall

That would be a posted open meeting, I assume.

02:27:58 - 02:28:00

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, thank you.

02:28:01 - 02:28:05

Worthington Town Hall

All right, we can move on to our other agenda items here, I think.

02:28:10 - 02:28:12

Worthington Town Hall

As I think most people know, but maybe not.

02:28:12 - 02:28:22

Worthington Town Hall

That we have a new heating system at the fire slash police department slash emergency with wood pallet system, mostly grant funded.

02:28:23 - 02:28:27

Worthington Town Hall

There's a good chance we may be able to get another grant to do the same thing in this building.

02:28:29 - 02:28:52

Worthington Town Hall

And one of the requirements both of that grant and for a new grant is to essentially do an open house, which is a good idea anyway, we certainly want to give folks in town a chance to see the new system if they're interested and then we would open this up to surrounding towns as well because the grant funders are certainly interested in getting other municipalities interested in the process.

02:28:53 - 02:28:54

Worthington Town Hall

So if.

02:28:56 - 02:29:03

Worthington Town Hall

No one has an objection or we could have a motion, we're kind of, it needs to be a Saturday.

02:29:05 - 02:29:07

Worthington Town Hall

This coming Saturday didn't seem like a great idea.

02:29:07 - 02:29:10

Worthington Town Hall

So we're talking about the 24th.

02:29:10 - 02:29:15

Worthington Town Hall

And it would be 10 o 'clock to probably 11 or maybe noon.

02:29:16 - 02:29:19

Worthington Town Hall

And Mike, certainly some input from you would be helpful here too.

02:29:20 - 02:29:21

Worthington Town Hall

Why don't you go first?

02:29:21 - 02:29:25

Worthington Town Hall

Is that even doable for you, Mike?

02:29:27 - 02:29:27

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

02:29:29 - 02:29:31

Worthington Town Hall

That was your mass mocha day, right?

02:29:32 - 02:29:33

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah.

02:29:35 - 02:29:37

Worthington Town Hall

You wouldn't have to necessarily be there yourself.

02:29:41 - 02:29:42

Worthington Town Hall

We were thinking 10-ish.

02:29:45 - 02:29:45

[speaker unknown]

Yeah.

02:29:52 - 02:29:54

Worthington Town Hall

Anybody else have thoughts.

02:29:59 - 02:30:07

Worthington Town Hall

Right I wouldn't expect sure.

02:30:10 - 02:30:22

Worthington Town Hall

I mean given how many people showed up to see the highway department when we had that open house it wasn't huge I'd be surprised if we had a huge crowd unless we're serving good food.

02:30:25 - 02:30:28

Worthington Town Hall

We probably will have like you know Outlook farm doughnuts.

02:30:30 - 02:30:32

Worthington Town Hall

You guys Are you okay with that?

02:30:51 - 02:30:51

Worthington Town Hall

No, no.

02:30:51 - 02:30:54

Worthington Town Hall

Well, first of all, Trip, if you have a question.

02:30:55 - 02:30:55

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

02:30:56 - 02:31:07

Worthington Town Hall

So no, we have a contract with, in fact, it's the same people that do our oil burner service and he installed it and he's maintaining it.

02:31:08 - 02:31:16

Worthington Town Hall

There was an issue in another town, I think it was at the school in Chesterfield.

02:31:17 - 02:31:18

Worthington Town Hall

I'm not sure.

02:31:18 - 02:31:23

Worthington Town Hall

There's another school around that has a similar system and there were some maintenance issues.

02:31:23 - 02:31:34

Worthington Town Hall

And my understanding is it had to do with the fact that they kind of put this on the existing maintenance staff of the building who weren't really that enthused about it.

02:31:34 - 02:31:40

Worthington Town Hall

So it just was sort of an invitation to a problem, but we don't anticipate that.

02:31:42 - 02:31:45

Worthington Town Hall

I guess Charlie, I can clarify a little bit more.

02:31:46 - 02:31:47

Worthington Town Hall

Sure, yeah, please.

02:31:47 - 02:31:56

Worthington Town Hall

So the town has a three-year maintenance contract with the person who installed that system in the fire station.

02:32:01 - 02:32:05

Worthington Town Hall

And that involves periodic clean out of the ash residue.

02:32:06 - 02:32:18

Worthington Town Hall

My understanding is every six or eight weeks, he'll come through and clear out the ash trays, basically, and do whatever other periodic maintenance is needed.

02:32:18 - 02:32:24

Worthington Town Hall

And my other understanding here is that the system is fully redundant.

02:32:24 - 02:32:26

Worthington Town Hall

There are two furnaces there.

02:32:27 - 02:32:33

Worthington Town Hall

One is capable of running the entire building heat load, including the truck bay.

02:32:34 - 02:32:36

Worthington Town Hall

So I hope that helps.

02:32:37 - 02:32:38

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah.

02:32:38 - 02:32:43

Worthington Town Hall

And Dave is, like I said, he's the guy that services all of the town's heating systems.

02:32:44 - 02:32:46

Worthington Town Hall

So he's been a pretty reliable, a very reliable guy.

02:32:48 - 02:32:54

Worthington Town Hall

Charlie can I jump in with a question about the site visit just real quick before people leave?

02:32:55 - 02:33:03

Worthington Town Hall

I'm sorry to go back I just realized that we're in the middle of winter and things well, we're snowy Do people care if there's snow on the ground?

02:33:03 - 02:33:06

Worthington Town Hall

Is that going to be an issue or?

02:33:07 - 02:33:10

Worthington Town Hall

Is the site visit still useful now.

02:33:15 - 02:33:16

Worthington Town Hall

It depends on what people want to see.

02:33:16 - 02:33:19

Worthington Town Hall

I mean the pellet silo is on the sorry.

02:33:19 - 02:33:20

Worthington Town Hall

This is on the.

02:33:23 - 02:33:25

Worthington Town Hall

I know I'm confusing.

02:33:26 - 02:33:33

Worthington Town Hall

And then I will say that the Conservation Commission has taken care of their own site visit and has scheduled that already.

02:33:33 - 02:33:35

Worthington Town Hall

So obviously they're concerned with the wetlands.

02:33:36 - 02:33:38

Worthington Town Hall

So this would not be concerned with wetlands, presumably.

02:33:43 - 02:33:52

Worthington Town Hall

I think from my perspective, it's really just getting an understanding if I can see the access road, the access road from Ridge Road onto the property.

02:33:55 - 02:34:07

Worthington Town Hall

Potential landing sites for the big pads for the equipment, that kind of thing, which I think we can probably manage even if we do have a decent amount of snow on the ground.

02:34:15 - 02:34:19

Worthington Town Hall

I would expect so, because we need questions answered.

02:34:20 - 02:34:21

Worthington Town Hall

Where are we?

02:34:22 - 02:34:26

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, you got them to commit to a site visit at your last meeting.

02:34:28 - 02:34:28

[speaker unknown]

So.

02:34:29 - 02:34:29

[speaker unknown]

Okay.

02:34:29 - 02:34:38

Worthington Town Hall

So, so you, we, I think we're back to talking about the pellet burner, and a motion to open an open house.

02:34:41 - 02:34:56

Worthington Town Hall

I make a motion to have an informational meeting at the fire station for the wood pellet system for surrounding towns and Worthington residents on the 24th of January at 10am.

02:34:56 - 02:34:57

Worthington Town Hall

Second.

02:34:58 - 02:35:00

Worthington Town Hall

Any other discussion?

02:35:01 - 02:35:01

Worthington Town Hall

All in favor?

02:35:02 - 02:35:02

Worthington Town Hall

Aye.

02:35:03 - 02:35:03

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

02:35:04 - 02:35:04

Worthington Town Hall

All right.

02:35:04 - 02:35:12

Worthington Town Hall

So next up, finally, our online building inspection system.

02:35:13 - 02:35:20

Worthington Town Hall

We already voted to go ahead with Permodize, but it was dependent on our being able to afford it.

02:35:20 - 02:35:27

Worthington Town Hall

And the way it was structured, we didn't have enough money appropriated to pay for it this first year.

02:35:27 - 02:35:51

Worthington Town Hall

So I did negotiate with them and essentially they've structured it to stretch out the payments over the course of three years which allows us to stay with pretty close to six thousand dollars that we appropriated so they're actually asking for sixty three seventy five I Need to see if maybe there's another three seventy five.

02:35:51 - 02:36:01

Worthington Town Hall

But I guess I'd like to just get a motion to approve this proposal and then I can go ahead and sign it and we can move forward you.

02:36:05 - 02:36:49

Worthington Town Hall

Know and also we've talked about there's people here that haven't been privy to all

the conversations of that this is actually over time to save us money and I think and so even though there's upfront costs it's going to end up saving money which is why I'm going to make a motion to approve the permit eyes contract second discussion all in favor all right okay good thank you so it's gonna be at least a several month process but I'll get that moving and Bob certainly on board next is just a letter I don't think we really need to get a motion since we're here but essentially Pleasant Street bridge project has been ongoing.

02:36:49 - 02:36:52

Worthington Town Hall

We have a substantial grant to replace that bridge.

02:36:52 - 02:37:02

Worthington Town Hall

But then the state changed the rules as usual, and we need an extra 50 ,000 to cover for additional consulting.

02:37:02 - 02:37:13

Worthington Town Hall

So we're essentially sending a letter to Francesca at the DOT asking if there's some extra money in the small bridge program.

02:37:13 - 02:37:18

Worthington Town Hall

So I move we sign and send a letter to Francesca.

02:37:18 - 02:37:20

Worthington Town Hall

I second discussion.

02:37:21 - 02:37:22

Worthington Town Hall

All in favor.

02:37:23 - 02:37:23

Worthington Town Hall

Hi.

02:37:23 - 02:37:23

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

02:37:26 - 02:37:26

[speaker unknown]

Great.

02:37:26 - 02:37:28

Worthington Town Hall

Charlie, I'm sorry, just a follow up question.

02:37:28 - 02:37:29

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, please.

02:37:29 - 02:37:35

Worthington Town Hall

Do we have any sense of timing as to when that Pleasant Street bridge project will actually be underway?

02:37:36 - 02:37:38

Worthington Town Hall

I don't think so.

02:37:38 - 02:37:48

Worthington Town Hall

I think it really depends on whether the DOT has this extra money, whether we can get back on track for this coming summer, but I don't I honestly know.

02:37:49 - 02:37:54

Worthington Town Hall

So it's a better question for Peggy and she's not feeling well, otherwise she would have been here tonight.

02:37:55 - 02:37:56

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, thank you.

02:37:56 - 02:37:57

Worthington Town Hall

So I'll try to follow up with her.

02:38:13 - 02:38:16

Worthington Town Hall

So the next item on the agenda, I think we're gonna skip for now.

02:38:16 - 02:38:26

Worthington Town Hall

It's talking about purchasing or essentially getting an option to purchase Alex Lack's piece of property as a potential site for a new highway department.

02:38:31 - 02:39:04

Worthington Town Hall

I'm still waiting on some on a I've talked to Kirsten about what in I only backup I talked to legal console time console about whether we could essentially structure an agreement with Alex to pay his first quarter taxes in exchange for him hold giving us an option to purchase the property pending town meeting approval at annual town meeting.

02:39:04 - 02:39:08

Worthington Town Hall

So in other words, he would sit on the property and not sell it in the meantime.

02:39:11 - 02:39:22

Worthington Town Hall

And the suggestion from Alex's realtor actually was why don't we just waive his taxes for that period of time, which seemed like a very logical thing.

02:39:22 - 02:39:26

Worthington Town Hall

It'd be a lot easier than having to go to a special town meeting and raise the money to do it.

02:39:26 - 02:39:34

Worthington Town Hall

So, I've asked Kristen and she's asked DOR and we're waiting for an answer on that to see whether that's something we can consider.

02:39:34 - 02:39:43

Worthington Town Hall

So we're just trying to essentially keep this land from getting sold out before we come to town meeting and ask the town to consider purchasing it.

02:39:44 - 02:39:46

Worthington Town Hall

So there's nothing really to decide tonight.

02:39:50 - 02:39:53

Worthington Town Hall

Is that the piece of land on Masons Hill?

02:39:54 - 02:39:56

Worthington Town Hall

Just down Williamsburg Road.

02:39:56 - 02:39:57

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, thank you.

02:39:59 - 02:40:00

Worthington Town Hall

Do you know where it is?

02:40:07 - 02:40:17

Worthington Town Hall

Dan, did you guys look at this thing from the PVC about coaching, a coaching program for heat pumps?

02:40:21 - 02:40:24

Worthington Town Hall

Well, so they're asking whether we want to do this or not.

02:40:24 - 02:40:39

Worthington Town Hall

It's kind of similar in a lot of ways to what the solar thing was that we ended up doing the sun bug where it's a no cost thing for the most part to the town and it's to encourage people to put in heat pumps.

02:40:48 - 02:40:52

Worthington Town Hall

I nominate Bart to be a heat pump coach.

02:40:54 - 02:40:57

Worthington Town Hall

It's really a question of whether we want to participate in the program as a town.

02:40:57 - 02:40:59

Worthington Town Hall

It's not whether you want to be a coach.

02:41:00 - 02:41:02

Worthington Town Hall

Do you want to study it some more?

02:41:08 - 02:41:11

Worthington Town Hall

I don't think I need to study it any further.

02:41:11 - 02:41:36

Worthington Town Hall

I just don't remember how much of a commitment they were looking for from us other than to offer a space you know like have a meeting people free to come here and your contact folks I mean it's not a bad idea to have things available for people to look at but I have no idea what the response is going to be from the town how many people are gonna pick up on it because you know I just I have no clue.

02:41:39 - 02:41:47

Worthington Town Hall

So it's a green communities program we did indicate we were interested.

02:41:48 - 02:41:50

Worthington Town Hall

It's a pilot regional heat pump coaching program.

02:41:51 - 02:41:59

Worthington Town Hall

Pvpc will partner with HeatSmart Alliance to run the trainings and with MassEnergize to provide a web platform and outreach to communities.

02:42:01 - 02:42:04

Worthington Town Hall

Heat pump coaches meet with residents so they come to people's houses.

02:42:05 - 02:42:07

Worthington Town Hall

People volunteer to be these heat pump coaches.

02:42:07 - 02:42:10

Worthington Town Hall

The town really has no cost to us.

02:42:10 - 02:42:21

Worthington Town Hall

We just sort of provide, I guess, our blessing and probably the use of this room for a meeting and that sort of thing.

02:42:22 - 02:42:24

Worthington Town Hall

I don't know, it seems like a reasonable idea.

02:42:29 - 02:42:33

Worthington Town Hall

I could ask Mimi to come into a meeting to talk more about it.

02:42:34 - 02:42:35

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, Mike, I see you.

02:42:37 - 02:42:39

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, there's no real downside.

02:42:40 - 02:42:47

Worthington Town Hall

I mean, if you have solar and you get heat pumps, it saves you a ton of money.

02:42:47 - 02:42:51

Worthington Town Hall

And so it's something, I mean, we did it.

02:42:51 - 02:43:00

Worthington Town Hall

I like the heat pumps, they're, doesn't make it as cozy, but maybe people would like to give it a try and we could, yeah.

02:43:00 - 02:43:02

Worthington Town Hall

So Mike and then.

02:43:04 - 02:43:06

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, just a quick question.

02:43:07 - 02:43:13

Worthington Town Hall

Is this like some Massachusetts incentive program tied to this training coaching kind of thing?

02:43:13 - 02:43:20

Worthington Town Hall

It's part of green communities together with this HeatSmart Alliance, which I think is a non-profit.

02:43:29 - 02:43:40

Worthington Town Hall

The only reason I'm asking the question, right, so I have a residential solar installation and we did heat pumps just a year ago and we got a 30% rebate on our installation cost.

02:43:40 - 02:43:59

Worthington Town Hall

So I would assume there'd be interest in the town if this is that kind, well, even if this is not necessarily that specific kind of program, But I think if there's incentives involved in terms of tax credits or otherwise, I would imagine that folks in town would be interested.

02:44:00 - 02:44:07

Worthington Town Hall

I think all that went away at the end of the calendar year, Mike, for mass-save incentives.

02:44:07 - 02:44:18

Worthington Town Hall

No, actually, because I just bought a heat pump water heater, and because I was worried I was going to miss the incentive, turns out it's still going through this year.

02:44:18 - 02:44:22

Worthington Town Hall

The federal tax credits have all gone away, I think.

02:44:22 - 02:44:23

Worthington Town Hall

Kevin?

02:44:23 - 02:44:40

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, I just wanted to add for Solarize Mass, it was state-sponsored, I can't remember which department, but we were given, it was four towns, we were given, each town was giving \$2 ,500 for their effort, which we spent mostly on pizza, as did the other towns.

02:44:40 - 02:44:47

Worthington Town Hall

And the four towns expected to get 30 sign-ups for solar in that effort, and we got 90.

02:44:47 - 02:45:04

Worthington Town Hall

So, I don't know, there's the incentives for the product, but we had these incentives of we spent the \$2 ,500, we got another \$2 ,500, and I got to tell you, we spent it pretty much all on pizza and the creamery and had this room buzzing with people.

02:45:05 - 02:45:11

Worthington Town Hall

So if this is similar, if there's some reason to bring people in, we found food did it.

02:45:12 - 02:45:15

Worthington Town Hall

It is, except I don't think there's any money for the town.

02:45:17 - 02:45:19

Worthington Town Hall

All right, so we can pursue it.

02:45:21 - 02:45:24

Worthington Town Hall

All right, so last thing on the agenda.

02:45:25 - 02:45:26

Worthington Town Hall

And Deb, have you lasted this?

02:45:26 - 02:45:27

Worthington Town Hall

Is she still here?

02:45:28 - 02:45:28

Worthington Town Hall

Okay.

02:45:30 - 02:45:31

Worthington Town Hall

I'm not sure if you can say more.

02:45:32 - 02:45:32

Deb Clapp

I'm still there, Charlie.

02:45:33 - 02:45:33

Deb Clapp

All right.

02:45:33 - 02:45:41

Worthington Town Hall

So we wanna talk about Alex's resignation from the school committee and what the school committee is thinking at this point.

02:45:43 - 02:45:46

Deb Clapp

Yeah, so we're sorry to see Alex go.

02:45:46 - 02:46:02

Deb Clapp

So we do have an opening and if anyone is interested, the term will end in May and then the person, while they could not run, but then they would be expected to run again.

02:46:02 - 02:46:17

Deb Clapp

So we would love to hear from anybody who is interested in serving and would ask after our next school committee meeting in February, if we do have some interest, who would then ask the select board to appoint someone.

02:46:19 - 02:46:27

Deb Clapp

I have, Alex was working on the committee to negotiate a new contract with

Hampshire Regional.

02:46:27 - 02:46:31

Deb Clapp

And I have joined that committee in Alex's place.

02:46:31 - 02:46:37

Deb Clapp

We did meet with Hampshire Regional and we have an agreement with them.

02:46:37 - 02:46:39

Deb Clapp

We met with them earlier this week.

02:46:39 - 02:46:52

Deb Clapp

We have an agreement with Hampshire Regional for next year that will be including in our school budget and of course for approval at town meeting.

02:46:54 - 02:46:58

Worthington Town Hall

So was that pretty much along the lines of what we discussed at our last meeting?

02:46:58 - 02:47:10

Deb Clapp

It is, it's \$15 ,000 per student for one year and then we are actually going to start negotiating a longer term contract in April.

02:47:12 - 02:47:16

Worthington Town Hall

So should I go ahead and post something that there's a vacancy on the school committee?

02:47:17 - 02:47:18

Deb Clapp

Please, Charlie, if you would.

02:47:18 - 02:47:18

Deb Clapp

Yes.

02:47:19 - 02:47:24

Worthington Town Hall

And then my understanding is Alex's term was actually up in May.

02:47:24 - 02:47:30

Worthington Town Hall

So if somebody decides to run or whoever does run for the seat, it'll be a full term, right?

02:47:30 - 02:47:33

Deb Clapp

Yeah, if they decide to run in May, it will be for a full term.

02:47:34 - 02:47:34

Deb Clapp

Yes.

02:47:34 - 02:47:35

Worthington Town Hall

Yeah, okay.

02:47:40 - 02:47:49

Worthington Town Hall

I think that's it Yeah Now well does anybody else have anything they wanted to state before we adjourn here?

02:47:50 - 02:47:51

Worthington Town Hall

Okay, good.

02:47:51 - 02:47:55

Worthington Town Hall

Thanks everybody for being here and for your patience Thank you.