

**TOWN OF ANCRAM
Planning Board Meeting
October 29, 2025**

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6017878873?pwd=YVA1K0xGejdNdWkzVHRPUmE2cCtUUT09&omn=82810250487>

Meeting ID: 601 787 8873

Passcode: 247210

1. Call to Order:

The November 6, 2025, meeting of the Town of Ancram Planning Board was called to order at 7:00pm by Joe Crocco, Chairman.

2. Attendance:

Board Members Present: Joe Crocco, Chairman; Erin Robertson; Phil Hack; Tom Brondolo; Palmer Irving

Board Members Present on Zoom:

Board Members Absent: Jessica Lovelace; Don Tasch; Sara Porter; Christine Brown

3. Correspondence:

Letters were received from the Ancram Fire Company regarding both the Ancram Solar PV LLC and Homeland Towers / Verizon Wireless applications. Additional correspondence from members of the public were also received regarding the two applications. All have been filed in Dropbox, and the paper file.

4. Conflicts Check:

The chairman checked for conflicts, Donald Tasch is recusing himself from the Ancram Solar PV LLC project, and is not in attendance tonight.

5. Minutes

A motion was made to approved the October 9, 2025 minutes by Tom Brondolo, seconded by Phil Hack, and carried. A motion was made to approve the October 29th minutes by Tom Brondolo, seconded by Phil Hack, and carried.

6. Old Business

a. Ancram PV LLC SUP-24-005

Special Use Permit and Site Plan Review

3333 State Route 82

214.-1-25.4

Chairman Crocco reported that to date additional escrow funds have not been received from RIC Energy to fund visual impact assessment and landscape architect consultants. Until that is received no contract can be signed with either consultant per Town of Ancram attorneys.

Ciara Hopkins from RIC Energy spoke on behalf of the application, also in attend Robert Queirolo RIC Energy; and their attorney Jim Muscato of Young Sommer as well as Nick Formanowicz from Wendell on Zoom.

Ms. Hopkins made a presentation to the board

- Review of Application Timeline
 - A Pre application meeting was held on June 24, 2024
 - The application was submitted on November 24, 2024
 - A meeting was held with Ed Ferrato the with ZEO in December of 2024
 - Updated application materials were submitted based on ZEO comments January of 2025
 - In February 2025 Nan Stolzenberg submitted her comments from her initial review

- In March of 2025 a recommendation for approval was received from the Columbia County Planning Board.
- In April of 2025 the Public Hearing was opened, and comments were received from the Town Engineer George Schmidt.
- In May of 2025 the Public Hearing continued.
- In May of 2025 updated application materials and a formal response to Planner and Engineer were submitted.
- There was a Community Meeting in July of 2025
- There was a meeting was a meeting with the Chairman, and town's counsel in September of 2025
- A formal response to the public letter and Visual Impact Assessment was submitted by October 23, 2025
- There was a Planning Board workshop meeting on October 29, 2025
- A letter of approval from Fire Chief was received on October 31, 2025
- Written comments and questions from the Planning Board was received on November 4, 2025
- Application Materials
 - Review of submitted materials
 - FEAF Part 1 & Supplement
 - SEQR
 - Equipment Specification Sheets
 - Electrical Three Line Diagram
 - Explains the interconnection agreement with the utility
 - Site Plans
 - Help show code compliance
 - Landscape Plans
 - Viewshed Map and Additional Visual Impact
 - Decommissioning Plan
 - O&M Plan
 - ZEO Verification
 - County Planning Board
 - Planner
 - Engineer
 - Fire Chief response

Board Questions

- Erin Robertson asked if the applicant is pursuing pad mounted interconnection equipment as they reported was possible and in town zoning.
 - Ms. Hopkins responded that the utility (Central Hudson) has not responded to outreach regarding the connection, as they have already agreed to the poles
 - Robert Queirolo reported that utility line is driven by the utility company, RIC has requested to the utility if pad mounted is acceptable, the utility has not given an answer. The grade at the entrance, is currently at 25% grade, he is unsure if it is feasible for pads at that location.
 - Mr. Queirolo will provide samples of what pad mounted equipment will look like, which is more substantial than pole mounted equipment.
 - He went on to further state that the Town of Ancram's Zoning Code requires that any wiring needs to be underground from array to interconnection. If the town's code had said all equipment must be pad mounted, they would have started there. The electrical interconnection equipment must be above ground, whether its pole mounted or pad mounted.
- Ms. Robertson asked about the plan to provide screening.
 - Mr. Queirolo reported that it would be significantly harder to screen pad mounted equipment rather than pole mounted equipment due to the size of the pads and equipment required.
- Some further discussion was had around screening; there is a plan for a landscape architect to review the project once additional escrow funds are received.
- Ms. Robertson asked how residents can obtain credits towards their utility bills from this project.

- Mr. Queirolo replied: Residents can apply through a subscription program through the community solar project online through the utility. The subscription will provide the discount on their utility bill. The utility generally contracts with 3rd parties to do outreach to residents who are qualified to participate in the program, which generally happens during the first part of construction.

Public Comment & Questions

- Matthew Tuck of Cottontail Rd read a letter to the board and RIC Energy, this letter can be found in the correspondence folder of the Ancram Solar projects file in Dropbox.
- Rhea Mallet of McCarthy Fingar LLP
- Doreen O'Sullivan – 3299 Rt 82; Ms. Sullivan read a letter a copy of which can be found in the correspondence folder of the Ancram Solar projects file in Dropbox.
- Andrea Gaschke of Woods Ct. read a letter which can be found in the correspondence folder of the Ancram Solar projects file in Dropbox.
- Dan Haas Co-Founder and Co-Chair Friends of Columbia Solar spoke about their support of the proposed project.
- Lawrence Goldberg
- Jeff Baker of Poole Hill Rd

Full commentary and questions can be seen in the video recording of the meeting which is located on the Town of Ancram's website at the following link: <https://www.ancramny.org/videos-planning-board-meetings/>

Chairman Crocco asked if Chief David Boice of the Ancram Fire Company could comment on his response to the Planning Board. Chief Boice reported that he met with the Zoning Enforcement Officer Ed Ferrato in April of 2025 to discuss this project and the Homeland Towers application. Chief Boice reported that his answer is and will always be that as long as the projects meet the requirements of NYS Fire Code, he will have no further response. The board asked that his opinion be submitted in writing for each application as it is relevant.

A motion was made to continue the public hearing by Phil Hack, seconded by Tom Brondolo and carried.

Chairman Crocco reported that if the escrow check is not received timely, and the contracts for the consultants cannot be signed and comments returned Solar will not appear on the December Planning Board agenda.

7. Discussion:

a. Training Hours

1. The clerk reviewed training hours with board members and asked that they send the clerk records of any training attended this year.
2. Colleen Lutz will be providing Wetland Training at the Town Hall and via Zoom on November 25th at 7pm

8. Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Palmer Irving, seconded by Erin Robertson, carried.