

TOWN OF SWEDEN
Planning Board Minutes
April 13, 2026

A regular meeting of the Town of Sweden Planning Board was held on Monday, April 13, 2026, at the Sweden Town Offices, 18 State Street, Brockport, New York, commencing at 7 p.m.

Members Present

- Richard Dollard
- David Hale
- Mark Horschel
- Craig McAllister
- Matthew Minor
- Peter Sharpe

Members Absent

- Wayne Rickman

Also Present

- James Oberst, P.E., MRB, Town Engineer
- Marcus VanMeter, MRB
- Terry Ekwel, BCM, Sweden Commercial Inspector
- Jeremy Arrington, PowerSecure
- Ed Martin, Passero Associates
- Elie Schecter, Brockport Community Solar
- Jacob Lewis, Passero Associates
- Pat Lloyd
- Brian Perkins
- Tim Trostle
- Mike McCann
- Marla Dudley
- Mike Cunningham Sr.
- Pat Cliff
- Kimberly Drew
- Others (didn't sign in)

Also Absent

- Nat O. Lester, III, Planning Counsel - Recused

Call to Order

Chairperson McAllister called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Correspondence was distributed to Board members for review.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Moved by Mr. Dollard, seconded by Mr. Horschel, that the minutes of March 23, 2026, be approved.

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Discussion: Mr. Hale asked what the term “back title” means found on the top of page two. The Clerk explained property ownership history. Mr. Minor added the term “back title” is correct referring to the history of the property, i.e., past ownership, deeds, and encumbrances. After discussion, Mr. Hale agreed to retain the term.

Vote: Unanimous – Aye (6-0)

Motion carried.

Public Hearings

Chairperson McAllister stated there are two public hearings tonight, Johnson Subdivision and Site Plan and Brockport Community Solar Subdivision, Site Plan, and Special Use Permit.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Hale, seconded by Mr. Dollard, to adjourn the regular meeting to the public hearing at 7:03 p.m.

Vote: Unanimous – Aye (6-0)

Motion carried.

Chairperson McAllister waived the reading of the legal notice.

Johnson Subdivision and Site Plan. Eisenhower Drive. 084.04-1-25.006.

Jacob Lewis, Passero Associates, addressed the Board. Mr. Lewis stated the application is a simple and straightforward subdivision of approximately 30 acres into two lots, including a proposed single-family home on Lot 1B. Access will be via an existing driveway from Shumway Road. Utilities include public water and private septic.

Currently, engineering comments from MRB and various other agency comments are under review. Mr. Lewis is happy to answer any questions.

Chairperson McAllister asked if there was anyone present with questions, comments or concerns related to this project.

Patrick Lloyd, 10 Eisenhower Drive, Lloyd Mechanical – Mr. Lloyd stopped at the Town to review the plans earlier today and saw that there is no proposed driveway from the proposed residence to Eisenhower Drive for which he was relieved. He doesn’t want to see a driveway from Shumway Road to Eisenhower Drive, which is a very busy road. He is concerned that will happen after the project is approved. Mr. Lloyd requested a note be added to the plan that states an access from Shumway Road to Eisenhower Drive isn’t acceptable unless it is a Town road constructed by the Town.

Mr. Lloyd added a pre-existing; nonconforming access is on his property from Eisenhower Drive to Shumway Road which he blocked. His neighbor approved because vehicles get stuck using it and it provides security.

Chairperson McAllister asked if there were any other questions, comments, or concerns. There were none. He moved to the Brockport Community Solar public hearing.

Brockport Community Solar Subdivision, Site Plan, Special Use Permit. 3995 Sweden-Walker Road. 069.02-2-11.1.

Kris Schultz, Schultz Associates, addressed the Board. He distributed updated plans and renderings to the Board.

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Mr. Schultz' clients have met with the Town Board to begin the rezoning process. Rezoning by the Town Board is required prior to Planning Board approval.

Mr. Schultz stated the public hearing is an opportunity to address any concerns ahead of time. The renderings distributed are important in showing how the solar farm will look driving down the road. The biggest challenge is to show that the visibility of the solar farm is blocked from all roadways. Looking at the level of Sweden-Walker Road, it was easy to shield the solar farm as shown. On top of the hill, it's impossible to shield the solar farm; however, visibility is for a limited stretch of the road.

Mr. Schultz stated site plans have been sent to Monroe County Development Review Committee for review and the responses will be split between his company and his client's. A thorough review was completed and nothing listed appears to be an issue. The SEQRA form was updated and he can provide a copy to the Board. Mr. Schultz confirmed with Chairperson McAllister that the Town Board will serve as Lead Agency and complete the SEQRA review.

Chairperson McAllister addressed the public and stated that the Planning Board deals with subdivision and site plan applications. He emphasized rezoning decisions fall under the Town Board. Anyone not in favor of solar farms should attend the Town Board's public hearing to voice their opinions.

Mr. Schultz stated a number of perimeter views were distributed to the Planning Board showing the solar farm. In particular, the entrance view at Sweden-Walker shows six to eight feet high pines at first behind a six-foot person, then the same with five years, and then the same with 15 years. At 15 years, going south up the hill, the solar farm wouldn't be seen at all. At the top of the hill, going northbound, to the left, the field of solar panels can be seen but look like they are resting on the ground. There will also be existing shielding from the canal path.

The owner chose this particular location because it was a low-yielding portion of the farm with soybeans and corn grown in the past. He believes the land was uncultivated last year. The wetland tucked up close to the canal has been delineated and addressed by the Town Engineer.

Chairperson McAllister asked if there were any comments, questions, or concerns from the public.

Brian Perkins, 3943 Sweden-Walker Road – Mr. Perkins and other neighbors are concerned with construction noise due to working a later shift and sleeping part of the day. They are also very worried with water drainage as there are already flooding issues. What is the longevity of solar panels? When do they start breaking down and maintenance is required and by who?

Greg Avery, 7469 Ridge Road W – He lives about three quarters of a mile from the project site. He is concerned with the lack of maintenance on the landscaping he has seen with other solar farms. Dead trees are not replaced. The property becomes a mess. Mr. Avery would like to see the low yield stats on the farmland; otherwise it's a guess. He doesn't want to drive by the property five times a day and see a solar farm; it's an eyesore.

Chairperson McAllister stated Mr. Avery's comments need to be shared with the Town Board. The vegetation comments are appropriate for this Board. He continued that code enforcement completes inspections and if trees are dead, they are replaced.

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Mr. Avery continued that he doesn't think the solar farm can be stopped, but wants to see as little of the solar farm as possible. He is very concerned with the maintenance of the solar farm. Are the trees going to be watered, maintained, and replaced? Is there a 10-year warranty on the trees?

Mike Cunningham, 1091 White Road – Mr. Cunningham asked for clarification that this Board is approving a site plan for a solar farm that hasn't been approved yet, the cart before the horse. Chairperson McAllister stated the Planning Board will not grant site plan approval until the rezoning of the property is granted by the Town Board. He confirmed with Chairman McAllister if the rezoning is turned down, then this project goes away.

Mike McCann, 3949 Sweden-Walker Road – Mr. McCann was curious if there was a date set for the mechanical completion of the solar farm. Mr. Schultz stated it's too soon because the Town Board hasn't scheduled a public hearing date. Public hearings are important because they give the client what concerns there are so they can be addressed prior to formalizing the plans.

Mr. Avery stated the hard part is that there is a solar farm under construction behind Byrne Dairy, about a half mile from this proposed solar farm. They are relatively close together. He was always under the impression that solar farms are located away from the public eye and not located on tillable farmland.

Chairperson McAllister stated he has not seen a solar farm in New York State yet that is out of sight because they have to be located along a grid line and accepted by National Grid.

Mr. Cunningham asked if there were any other solar farms approved for Sweden-Walker Road. Chairperson McAllister stated that he is not aware of any; only the one behind Byrne Dairy.

Tim Trostle, 3939 Sweden-Walker Road – Mr. Trostle referenced the stretch of land from the canal to East Avenue; where the properties are all on wells and probably will never have access to public water. He is concerned with the quantity and quality of water, both very important. He has to frequently obtain water from the Town Highway. During the summer, this happens too many times. He also has a large water system to keep his water clean. Mr. Trostle's concern with the change of use of property and change in the water runoff. Are studies being done to make sure the water will not be contaminated or depleted?

Chairperson McAllister stated water runoff should not be entering his well water, if so, there may be a problem. Mr. Trostle stated at some point surface water is going into the ground and coming into his well. He would like to find out if any research has been done to see what impact this project has on surface water that may enter his well. There will be a big problem, if after two years of the solar farm installed, the wells go bad. Water is important!

Chairperson McAllister asked how deep the posts go in the ground. Mr. Schultz stated eight feet. He is required to make sure the runoff is not more than what it is already; it should be less because it won't be an open field. There also won't be pesticides that are used to treat crops running off onto the property.

Mr. Schultz acknowledged that a drainage plan is designed for the solar farm. Currently, a lot of run off exists with what little the farmer plants. Farm fields do take quite a bit of water. The solar panels and pine trees take less water.

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Chairperson McAllister stated that since the land has sat barren any change in drainage will be noticed, which should be less. He stated nothing has been planted and the land will be seeded with the solar farm. Mr. Schultz added that there are usually maintenance issues with keeping the brush and grass down. There is a person who rents his goats out to solar farms to maintain the grass.

Mr. Schultz understood the drainage concerns and noted that the Town Engineer is very thorough at reviewing drainage, stormwater, and State requirements to make sure the quantity and quality of water are taken care of. Drainage and stormwater (SWPPP) reports are submitted to the Town for viewing, including a permit from NYSDEC before any construction may begin.

Kimberly Drew, 1186 Ladue Road – Ms. Drew stated she doesn't like that it seems more and more solar farms are being constructed and it's setting a precedent. She loves the farm fields by which she is surrounded. She respects that other people own the land and they can do what they want with it, but on the other hand, it is heartbreaking as a member of the community. Ms. Drew feels the town is becoming a dumping place for solar farms more than other communities. The property owner or town may be getting money for it, but it is still heartbreaking as a resident or homeowner. It's like dumping garbage in the fields as opposed to something beautiful, and the reason I chose to live in this town in the first place. Property owners might as well build skyscrapers.

Mr. Avery asked if the plans mentioned how long solar farms last. Chairperson McAllister stated the average solar farm lasts about 15 years. Chairperson McAllister explained that a decommissioning plan ensures that money is available six months prior to when the solar farm becomes inactive to return the land to its original state. The dollar amount is evaluated annually to make sure there is enough money to make that happen. Mr. Avery stated he probably wouldn't be around to see that, but wasn't sure if he would want to eat sweet corn grown on the land after a solar farm existed. How are solar panels cleaned? Will property values be impacted being next to a former solar farm? Mr. Avery agrees with the statement that the town is becoming a dumping ground for solar farms. He doesn't want to see solar farms anymore.

Elie Schecter, Brockport Community Solar – Mr. Schecter would like the opportunity to respond to some of the questions from the public. He explained his firm, Our Generation, was started by him and his partner seven years ago. There are no other partners and the two of them will be involved throughout the project. In the past seven years, they have completed several projects in New York State, two in Potsdam, two in Buffalo, three in Binghamton, and one in Albany. This is the first one proposed in the Town of Sweden.

For all of the projects, Mr. Schecter is receptive to the public's comments. He suggested visiting the ones in Buffalo to see the level of screening and landscaping done. There are no dying trees on the solar farm property and annual inspections are done. The project requires a bond to be posted for the decommissioning.

Mr. Schecter stated the public's comments are very important. The proposed solar farm is set back 250 feet from the road which is one of the largest setbacks he has seen. He agreed with Mr. Schultz that at 250 feet away and with the screening, the panels look like a pond. People have commented after construction that they hardly see the panels.

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Mr. Schecter explained that the solar panels are made of silicone semiconductors similar to fine sand with a glass front and aluminum frame, nothing toxic. From the soil studies done or required, nothing from the panel is going to leak into the water because there are no toxic components. Solar panels have a 25-year limited power warranty and because there are no moving parts, the panels can produce power for up to 40 years. The panels aren't cleaned so there are no cleaning sprays/chemicals used. NYSDEC has requirements that will need to be adhered to. There is very little impervious surface being added.

Mr. Schecter concluded that the goal is to build the solar project in 2027. He would be happy to answer any questions.

Ms. Drew asked why New York cities and towns when the state isn't even that sunny. It seems like New York is being targeted without any benefits coming back to the community. Chairperson McAllister stated that the New York State legislature is doing this, not the solar companies. Mr. Schecter stated this is a community solar project which means that rate payers within the greater Brockport-Sweden area will have the opportunity to buy energy from this community solar project at a lower rate other than buying it from National Grid. There are probably fewer than 10 states in the country that have community solar legislation like New York State does; and why there are more solar farms and a strong community solar program in New York State.

Bill Daly, 21 Brockway Place – Mr. Daly asked how much this project is being subsidized in New York State. Mr. Schecter said less than five percent; it used to be higher. How does the business model work in upstate New York without being subsidized? Mr. Daly stated his company can still be competitive even with smaller subsidies compared to the cost of electricity of National Grid.

Mike McCann, 3949 Sweden-Walker Road – Mr. McCann asked if Mr. Schecter would be working with any energy suppliers. Mr. Schecter stated no, only third-party companies that manage the allocation for a project like this.

Someone asked what study was done, which led you to choose Brockport over Rochester. Mr. Schecter stated it was an interested landowner that contacted him to have community solar power.

Greg Avery – Mr. Avery doesn't see how this project can be properly screened with the elevated roadways. There is no way the solar farm will be invisible even with the 250 ft. setback. This is our community and we live here, Mr. Schecter does not.

Chairperson McAllister understands that Mr. Avery is opposed to the solar farm going in, but his comments are not related to site plan approval and should be expressed to the Town Board. He added that the proposed solar farm is up to 9 ft. high and there are no codes in place to enforce shielding a solar farm up to 9 ft. from every elevation. The only way it won't be seen is if it is not permitted.

Mr. Schecter stated relative to other projects done that are a lot closer to the road than 250 ft., the feedback received from members of the community is that they don't notice the solar farm or think about it. The solar panels are low profile; they do not stand out obtrusively. What other permitted uses are there that would not require site plan approval, setback requirements, and screening that could be built on this property instead of solar panels and what would that look like? Residents stated farmland.

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Marla Dudley, 156 Shumway Road – Ms. Dudley asked what studies have been done on the habitat in that area. Chairperson McAllister stated that it will be addressed with SEQRA approval during the rezoning.

Chairperson McAllister asked if there were any more questions or comments. There were none.

He thanked everyone for their input and acknowledged tonight’s meeting minutes will be forwarded to the Town Board for review in case anyone can’t make the rezoning public hearing.

Ms. Dudley asked how we find out when the Town Board public hearing will be held. The Clerk stated a legal notice will be printed in the Westside News, by checking the Town’s website at www.townofswedenny.gov, or calling the Town office.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Hale, seconded by Mr. Horshel, to adjourn the public hearing to the regular meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Vote: Unanimous – Aye (6-0)

Motion carried.

Accept for Review

Wal-Mart SC Amended Site Plan. 6265 Brockport-Spencerport Road. 084.01-1-14.112.

Jeremy Arrington, Project Manager, PowerSecure, addressed the Board. He is requesting acceptance of review to install a generator at the Wal-Mart Supercenter #1993.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Hale, seconded by Mr. Minor, to accept the Wal-Mart SC Amended Site Plan for review.

Vote: Unanimous – Aye (6-0)

Motion carried.

Mr. Arrington requested expedited approval due to the minimal amount of actual structural change for this project.

Chairperson McAllister is waiting to hear back from legal counsel for determination; the Clerk will let the applicant know when and if there will be a public hearing.

Wysocarski Resubdivision – 3 Lots. 1199/1191 West Sweden Road.097.04-1-8.12, 8.2, 11.

Pat Cliff, property owner, 1199 West Sweden Road, addressed the Board. He is looking to combine three parcels to avoid paying multiple fees for the proposed water district.

Chairperson McAllister clarified that Mr. Cliff is combining two formally subdivided lots and one landlocked parcel through deed. Mr. Hale stated the resubdivision is good as it will correct this.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Hale, seconded by Mr. Sharpe, to accept the Wysocarski Resubdivision-3 Lots for review.

Vote: Unanimous – Aye (6-0)

Motion carried.

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The public hearing will be scheduled for May 11, 2026.

Sweden Corners Plaza Amended Site Plan at Ollie's Store. 6515 Brockport-Spencerport Road. 084.01-1-4.11.

Kris Schultz, Schultz Associates, addressed the Board. He distributed overall site plans to the Board showing the proposed canopy to cover the existing scissor lift and shield the employees from the weather. Trucks are still able to get by. Architectural plans already submitted show the proposed changes to the garage doors. There is no change in grade, only attaching the canopy to the back of the building.

Mr. Horschel asked if the rear setback is an issue being closer to the lot line than the required 25 feet. Chairperson McAllister confirmed with the Board that this is not Ollie's amended site plan but rather for the whole plaza. Mr. Schultz will update the title to Sweden Corners Plaza Amended Site Plan at Ollie's.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Hale, seconded by Mr. Horschel, to accept the Sweden Corners Plaza Amended Site Plan at Ollie's for review.

Vote: Unanimous – Aye (6-0)

Motion carried.

The public hearing date is to be determined.

Mr. Hale asked if this project is a candidate for expedited approval. The Board did not see any elevation drawings in its package to review. Until those are received, approval will have to wait.

Johnson Subdivision and Site Plan. Eisenhower Drive. 084.04-1-25.006.

The Board continued review of this application. Jacob Lewis, Passero Associates, addressed the Board.

Chairperson McAllister asked where the property line is located relative to the airport. Mr. Lewis stated the overall parcel, approximately 30 acres, touches Eisenhower Drive.

Mr. Minor confirmed with Mr. Lewis that the proposed Lot 1A, remaining undeveloped lot, touches Eisenhower Drive at the very southern portion, and Lot 1B will only have access to Shumway Road.

Mr. Oberst stated he hasn't seen revised plans or a written response letter. Mr. Minor confirmed with Mr. Lewis that he is working on language for the two access easements to be reviewed and approved by Planning Counsel Lester.

Mr. Lewis is also working with the Fire Marshal's review comments regarding the required turnaround for the driveway. MCDOH will need to review the site plan for Lot 1B.

Mr. Lewis stated he should be able to submit responses to review comments and revised plans to Mr. Oberst this week. The Board tabled the project until the next meeting.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Hale, seconded by Mr. Horschel, to table the Johnson Subdivision and Site Plan to the next meeting, April 27, 2026.

Vote: Unanimous – Aye (6-0)

Motion carried.

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Motion: Moved by Mr. Hale, seconded by Mr. Dollard, to table the Brockport Community Solar Subdivision, Site Plan, and Special Use Permit.

Vote: Unanimous – Aye (6-0)

Motion carried.

Adjournment

Motion: Moved by Mr. Hale, seconded by Mr. Dollard, to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Vote: Unanimous – Aye (6-0)

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Phyllis Brudz
Planning Board Clerk