PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING **OCTOBER 16, 2025**
VILLAGE OF NORTH SYRACUSE

The Planning Commission of the Village of North Syracuse held a **Planning Commission Meeting** on **Thursday, October 16th, 2025** at **5:30 p.m.** in the Village of North Syracuse Community Center at 700 South Bay Road, North Syracuse, New York 13212.

Planning Board Members: Jeff Bachstein, Acting Chairperson, Lisa Lioto, Member, Connie Irick, Member, Michael Beckett, Member, and Darlene Piper, Alternate.

Personnel Present: Fred Wilmer (Liaison), Larry Nestell, Codes Enforcement Officer (Excused), Ben Harrell, Engineering, and Neil Germain, Atty., and Pearl Fuller (Secretary).

Personnel Absent: Greg Lancette, Chair (Excused), Vera Desimone, Member, (Excused), and Sam Mondello, Alternate (Excused).

Agenda:

- Approval: 07/17/2025 Planning Commission Meeting's Minutes **(Approved)**
- Site Plan Review & Approval:413 Church St., North Area Meals On Wheels: Next Generation Solar (Mark French) **(Approved: Conditional: Legal & Engineer: DEC)**

MEETING STARTS

Acting Chairperson Bachstein called meeting to order at 5:30 PM. He took roll call and noted members that were present.

MINUTE APPROVAL

Acting Chairperson Bachstein next we have the approval of minutes for 07/17/25 for Seneca Savings (Joseph Vitale) for 201 N. Main St., and 5624 Bear Rd. (Emerald Management, Bear Rd. (Tim Mahoney). **Mrs. Irick made a motion** to approve the minutes of 07/17/25. **The motion was seconded** by Ms. Lioto. All in favor. 0 Opposed.

LEGALS

Acting Chairperson Bachstein stated next, we have some housekeeping to address for our applicant, North Area Meals On Wheels for Next Generation Solar. He continued we need to verify legals are in order, did the agenda get sent to the paper. Mrs. Fuller stated yes. Acting Chairperson Bachstein added were the surrounding neighbors and towns notified. Mrs. Fuller continued yes. Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked if the referral was sent to OCPB. Mrs. Fuller added yes. Acting Chairperson Bachstein explained all legals appear to be in order.

413 CHURCH ST.-NORTH AREA MEALS ON WHEELS-SOLAR -NEXT GENERATION SOLAR

Applicant: North Area Meals On Wheels (Ron Meyers)
Applicant Representative: Next Generation Solar (Mark French)

PROJECT INTRODUCTION

Acting Chairperson Bachstein stated we are here tonight to consider a request from North Area Meals On Wheels (NAMOW) located at 413 Church St., in a R-9 (Residential) Zone. Mark French from Next Generation Solar is here to represent NAMOW. He is here to discuss the site plan modification proposed to Tax ID # 022.-02-01.2: To add approximately 14,000 ft^2 ground mounted, of 232 Solar Panels in four [4] rows approximately 110 ft. in length, 23 ft. apart, and between eight [8] to ten [10] ft. high surrounded by a six [6'] H. high-tensile, wire mesh fence to be installed in the empty ball field behind their building between Rt. 81 and Sleeth Park. This is being funded with a grant which expired by the end of this year.

PUBLIC HEARING

Acting Chairperson Bachstein stated this was not advertised as a Public Hearing.

APPLICANT ADDRESSES BOARD

Mark French introduced himself and stated he was there to represent North Area Meals On Wheels (NAMOW) regarding their solar project with Next Generation Solar. He stated everything in the introduction was accurate.

LETTERS FROM SURROUNDING NEIGHBORS

Acting Chairperson Bachstein stated there were no letters from the neighbors.

DPW/POLICE/FIRE

DPW: Does not impact their operations, no concerns.

Police: No substantive concerns regarding public safety.

Fire: Per Pat Brennan, the Fire Dept. has no concerns with the solar project.

FENCE/LANDSCAPING/MAINTENANCE

Mr. Beckett asked for fencing description: Mr. French stated it is standard agricultural fence, 6" x 6" squares, high tensile wire that are all welded together at the seam, 6' tall used mostly to keep animals out, and people as needed. Ms. Lioto asked what is surrounding the solar panels, is it grass or rock. Mr. French stated they are putting felt down underneath the immediate panels, with gravel underneath the panels, near the fence it will be just grass that is in the field now. Mr. French explained the alley ways and stuff could still have grass which would just be mowing; that would be up to NAMOWs regarding maintenance. Mr. French continued when NAMOWs mow the regular field out there they could mow this. Acting

Chairperson Bachstein asked if there was any landscaping being added. Mr. Meyers stated not for this, there is going to be plants added for the expansion.

GRANTS/COST/SAVINGS

Mrs. Piper asked how much will it alleviate of the cost of National Grid? Mr. Meyers stated all of the bill. Mr. French continued all but $54 fee they pay monthly to be tied to the grid and we cannot do anything about that; the rest is excess and is credited to their bill. He stated they are at 140% offset of their current bill, is projected out and what it is designed for, but the rest of it in excess of what they are currently using, and is projected out with what the new expansion will use as well. He explained this is based on the year, all factored in, most of the electricity produced is from May to October and credited to their bill.

Grants: Mr. Beckett asked if the of the cost for the panels and the project are funded by grants. Mr. French stated there are a few grants: A grant from Assemblyman Stirpe, a NYSERDA Grant from New York State, and Federal Tax Credit as well; and there is the depreciation tax credit as well. Mr. Meyers stated the grants have covered 100% of the cost, so no out-of-pocket costs. Mr. French stated the initial costs will be reimbursed.

Mr. Beckett asked how long of a period will it be getting the grant back. Mr. Meyer explained the grant Mr. Stirpe got for us, we had a three [3]-year window to execute the project which also includes part of the building expansion, if we proceed with where we expect to be; we will be within the window to get the reimbursement through the DASNY organization. He shared obviously our idea is to get it done as quick as possible, because any of that cost that we can take off, that is all money that goes to meals. He explained that was our whole goal to start saving money, using that to turn more meals around.

WARRANTY/CONTRACT/MAINTENANCE

Mrs. Piper asked about the 30 yr. warranty/contract. Mr. French explained it is a manufacture warranty on the panel itself, so if breaks or stops working, the manufacture will warranty them. He explained it is a simple process of 4 bolts, and 2 snap connectors for wiring. He explained if they are no longer in business or have relocated NAMOWs can reach out to manufacture to process the warranty.

Mrs. Piper clarified how will they know if something is not working. Mr. French continued there is actually visibility on every panel on an app; there is a website they can go and see how each panel is doing in the entire system. He explained if something goes bad, it basically shows up as red flags with a code to identify what it is, so is pretty much maintenance free. He continued it is basically a large-scale residential system. He added with your typical solar farms they do not do that, it is all string wires, so if one [1] goes out the entire row could go out, it does not really have that technology. He summed up this is really a residential system, just eight [8] times the size, because obviously it is a large user for the project.

HYDRANTS/FIRE DEPT. ACCESS/LOCK BOX

Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked how many fire hydrants are on the site now. Mr. Meyers stated he did not know, it seems like we covered this the last time. Mrs. Fuller stated we have the minutes from the last project here. Acting Chairperson Bachstein stated are there any additional hydrants proposed with the adding of the solar. Mr. French add no. Mrs. Fuller stated from the minutes of 9/19/24, we asked about the hydrants, when they did their project; and they received approval for the project. She continued it stated they had to add an additional fire hydrant to be in compliance with code. She continued they also spoke of the Fire truck drive aisle toward the back of the building for Fire Code, they were major updates there for access. Mr. French stated they would have the standard parking lot and then it is only 130' to the fence, so they would just have to go with the hose, if they cannot drive directly on it for the array. He added there is not really much out there that is flammable, the panels and stuff are flame-retardant. Everything that would be flammable would be on the building at the inverters, but that all has their own disconnects and shutoff. He explained if there ever was to be a fire, that would be where it would be. Ms. Lioto asked the hydrant that was supposed to be added, was for this project. Mrs. Fuller answered that was for the addition. Ms. Lioto added was the hydrant installed for the renovation. Mr. Meyers stated he does not think it has. Atty. Germain stated meaning not yet. Mr. Meyers continued no yet. Atty. Germain explained if that is part of the project that has been approved and they have not completed the project, then they still have to do; we are not exempting them from that obligation. Ms. Lioto stated O.K. Atty. Germain continued as CNS completes that project, it will be still be required to do. Acting Chairperson Bachstein verified there were no changes to the fire dept access. Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked if NAMOW is planning on keeping that locked and who will have access, is there going to be an access key locked to the building, in a lockbox. Mr. Meyers stated it will be very limited access, with the lockbox kept in the building, obviously the fire dept. would have access; like they already do. He continued we will not have an outside maintenance company coming in. Acting Chairperson Bachstein verified they have a lockbox on the building. Mr. Meyers stated yes. Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked if you will add a key for that gate to that lockbox. Mr. Meyers stated yes.

SNOW

Acting Chairperson Bachstein continued with the addition of the solar, how are you going to handle snow storage. Mr. Meyers stated like he stated there is some other activity going on, we have got a spot off the end of the parking lot for snow storage.

TRAIL ACCESS TO SLEETH PARK

Mrs. Piper asked will people still be able to access trail behind to Sleeth Park. Yes, the solar covers about 1/3 acre inside fence, which is actually at closest area to boundary 40' from fence to itself on either side. Mrs. Piper asked if it will still be allowed. Mr. Meyers stated we are not changing that in anyway. He continued the ballfield property belongs to us, we have not really been encouraging in anyway, for people to go through that property, because they would have to go through our parking lot, to get through to that field. He added it is nothing for children, the fence is going to take care of keeping them out of the area we do not want them. Mrs. Piper continued but they will still be able to hit that path to get to the back of the park. Mr. Meyer added the few that do that, yes.

WETLANDS/BUFFER AREA/DEC

Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked is this in a Wetland or Buffer Area. Mr. French stated no, that is the most recent map we have, we are still waiting for the report from DEC. He continued the most recent report from the delineation report, still shows that everything is outside of the buffer zone. Acting Chairperson Bachstein added do you know how far approximately. Mr. French continued the fence will be right on the edge of the buffer zone, so 100' from the Wetlands.

APROVALS, AUTHORIZATIONS, PERMITS

Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked have all the necessary approvals, authorizations, permits, required by any department, agency, bureau of any other government agency, been taken care of. Mr. French stated according to the emails that he has received, yes that have come directly from Mrs. Fuller. Acting Chairperson Bachstein clarified that it will require a DEC Permit, is that right. Mr. French stated yes.

UTILITIES

Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked are you adding any additional lighting to cover that area. Mr. French stated no. Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked could you briefly explain the changes or additions that are going to affect how the utilities work and how it is tied in. Mr. French stated the actual array itself once it is all assembled and all set up, there is actually just an umbilical that goes from the array underground to a disconnect that is near the building near the meter and that is where it ties into all inverters, so all the electrical and electrical components will be on the corner of the building, on the south west side of the building where the meter is. He explained if there is ever an emergency, there is a jackknife switch right there, where the whole thing can be shut down as well. He shared the Fire Dept. will know the locations as well; that is the emergency shutoff. He explained that is required for the Federal Electrical Code for any solar array, if there is something that goes wrong, let's say the power goes out in general, it will automatically cut out the system, because they do not want to be sending power back to the grid when the electric crews are out there working on the wires or the lines. He went on so they have emergency shutoffs, if they need the ac power, in order to produce the dc power, eventually it gets produced back to ac power. He added it is sort of a closed lip system, so it has to have power going to it, in order for it to work. He explained that is just a required safety feature of the equipment.

SIGNAGE

Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked are you planning on any additional signage. Mr. French stated we will have signage at the meter, there are stickers we have to have on certain components, so they know it is a PV system; so, they know where the disconnect is and things of that nature, so that will all be on the meter.

DUMPSTERS

Acting Chairperson Bachstein stated are the dumpsters being moved at all. Mr. Meyers stated yes. Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked where. Mr. Meyers continued he does not recall exactly where, it is all part, we are modifying the parking lot as well. Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked if that was part of the addition. Mr. Meyers added it is not part of this; it is part of the addition.

ENGINEERING

Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked is there anything else from engineering. Mr. Harrell stated no.

SEQR MOTION

Acting Chairperson Bachstein stated the Onondaga County Planning Board recommendation determination is Unlisted Action with Negative Declaration. He continued he will now move for the adoption of the standard motion in connection with an Unlisted Action with Negative Declaration by this Planning Commission. Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked for a motion to approve the SEQR determination of Unlisted Action, with no Negative Environmental Impacts. **Mrs. Irick made motion** to move for the adoption of the standard motion in connection with a negative declaration by this Planning Commission. **The Motion was seconded** by Ms. Lioto. All in Favor. 0 Opposed.

SUNSET CLAUSE

Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked if they had a timeline for the completion of the project. Mr. French stated yes, it has to be done by the end of the year, once we are approved, it should take us between four [4] and six [6] weeks. Mrs. Fuller asked if they had to wait for part of the other project to be finished before you can start. Mr. French continued there will be just one portion, there is a common tie in; we have the actual disconnect. He added CNS will be coming in from the one [1] side and we will be coming in from the other side, so that is kind of our meeting point from an electrical standpoint. Other than that, we will be out in the field. Mrs. Fuller continued you are going to have to project, when do you think that you are going to be able to start. Mr. French stated within a week of when we receive the permit, everything else is ready, the equipment is in our shop right now ready to go. Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked when do you think you want the sunset clause to be when they are final with their connect. Atty. Germain asked when do you think you are going to have it done, by the end of the year. Mr. French continued yes. Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked what about the connections. Mr. French shared the connections will be as well, CNS is already doing that part, so that will be ready. Acting Chairperson Bachstein stated so is February good. Mr. French stated yes.

Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked for a motion for the Sunset Clause to approve the Sunset Clause for 2/28/2026. **Ms. Lioto made the motion** to approve the 2/28/2026 Sunset Clause. **The motion was seconded** by Mrs. Irick. All in favor.

Acting Chairperson Bachstein stated just to let you know, should you not be able to complete the project by the time the Sunset Clause is to expire, you will have to reach back out to the Codes Enforcement Office

prior to that date to request to reappear before the Planning Commission for an extension. Mr. French stated yes.

SITE PLAN MOTION

Acting Chairperson Bachstein continued so the other thing that you are waiting on is the final from the DEC. He continued do you want to go for the motion.

Atty. Germain stated yes, so what will happen, is any motion would have to be contingent on that you obtain that final approval from the DEC. He continued submitting it to engineering and legal for approval; that would be a condition of approval. Mr. French responded O.K.

Motion

North Area Meals On Wheels
413 Church Street
Site Plan Modification Approval

Ms. Lioto made a motion to move for the adoption of a resolution recommending the Site Plan Modification Approval for North Area Meals On Wheels, 413 Church Street, in a R-9 zone, be granted to add 232 solar arrays in 14,000 sq. area of 4 rows with a mesh screening surrounding it located behind building between Rt. 81 and Sleeth Park in the old ball field, with SEQR with Unlisted Action with Negative Environmental Impact, as per Site Plan Sheet No. PV-01, Page No. 03 with Revision Date of 9.18.25, Property Layout prepared by Nordic Asia and Site Plan with Utility Details: Sheet No. PV-01, Page No. 01 of 02, Job ID/R: NGs-24-09/10 Revision 10, drawn by PM, on 09/30/25 with conditions listed below:

1) Sunset Clause to expire 2/28/2026
2) Legal & Engineering Approval for final approval from DEC Submittal to Legal & Engineering for final Approval.

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Irick. Beckett-Yes, Irick-Yes, Lioto-Yes, Piper-Yes, Bachstein-Yes. All in Favor. 0 Opposed.

Acting Chairperson Bachstein asked for a motion to adjourn. **Ms. Lioto made a motion** to adjourn at 5:56 PM. **The motion was seconded** by Mrs. Irick. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Pearl Fuller

Pearl Fuller
Secretary