

**SPECIAL MEETING
TOWN OF BOZRAH
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
March 25, 2021**

Chairman Steve Seder called the special meeting of the Town of Bozrah Planning and Zoning Commission to order at 7:02pm, on Thursday, March 25, 2021. The meeting was held via Zoom video/teleconference.

Members present: Stephen Seder (Chairman), Scott Barber (Vice Chairman), Nancy Taylor, Seymour Adelman (alt.), Steve Coit (alt.).

Members absent: Steve Gural, Manny Misarski, Frank Driscoll (alt.).

Others present: Glenn Pianka (Board of Selectmen), Bill Ballenger (Board of Selectmen), William Sweeney (Attorney for GotSpace Data Partners, LLC), Jim Rossman, P.L.S. (Stadia Engineering Associates, Inc., consultant for GotSpace Data Partners, LLC), Chris Regan (Regan Enterprises, consultant for GotSpace Data Partners, LLC), Sam Alexander, AICP (Town Planner/SCCOG), Tom Weber (Building Official), Ray Barber, Evan Hyde, Evelyn Brown, Emma McAvoy, Charlene Lathrop, Scott Taylor, Sally Banning, other residents and members of the public.

1. Call to order:

Chairman Steve Seder called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. Mr. Seder stated that the purpose of the meeting was to hear a pre-application presentation by representatives of GotSpace Data Partners, LLC, regarding a proposal to build a data center campus in Bozrah.

2. Presentation by GotSpace Data Partners, LLC regarding proposal to construct a data center, and proposal for zoning amendments:

William Sweeney, partner at the law offices of Tobin, Carberry, O'Malley, Riley & Selinger, attorney representing GotSpace Data Partners, LLC, began a presentation overviews the proposal to site a "data center" campus at a 148-acre of land on Haughton Road, on lot 024 of Assessor's map 06.

- GotSpace Data Partners, LLC is a firm headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, which is seeking to build "hyperscale" data centers in Connecticut.
- A data center is a building or group of buildings used to house networked computers. A hyperscale data centers are organized in such a way as to allow servers to automatically scale, or respond to, changing demands.
- Newly passed legislation (House Bill 6514) was recently signed by Governor Lamont, and creates a licensing procedure and tax abatements for qualified data centers. The legislation creates a competitive business environment for data centers, which previously faced financial difficulty siting in Connecticut.
- There are no data centers of significant size in Connecticut or New England.

- With the rollout of “5G” having local data centers will be increasingly important.
- One of the siting criteria for data centers is affordable electrical power; GotSpace is considering siting a data center in Bozrah in-part due to the fact that it has a municipal electrical utility.

Jim Rossman, P.L.S., Stadia Engineering Associates, Inc., representing GotSpace Data Partners, LLC presented the technical aspects of envisioned site development. Mr. Rossman presented a conceptual plan for a data center campus with three 156,836 square foot buildings, space for backup power generators, parking, and space for an electrical substation. Mr. Sweeney joined in the discussion.

- The plan is conceptual. Additional work will be required to determine actual site feasibility. Building locations may shift based on conditions.
- Three buildings are proposed, each with a design capacity of 32 megawatts for information technology-critical power. The total power draw of each building would be approximately 45 megawatts.
- The site will be served by a gated, primary access road on Haughton Road, with convenient access to Route 2.
- A secondary means of emergency egress/ingress will be needed. Options are being considered on Hough Road and Bashon Hill Road.
- A connection would be needed to the high-tension electrical transmission line passing to the west of the property.
- A landscaped buffer is proposed around the developed area.
- Relatively little parking is needed. 60 permanent employees, across three shifts, and expected.
- A three-year equipment replacement cycle is expected for serves.

Mr. Sweeney presented on the proposed regulatory process, for consideration by the Planning & Zoning Commission. GotSpace recognizes that zoning regulatory amendments will be needed prior seeking approval of a site plan.

- GotSpace is proposing a “master plan” scheme, requiring sequenced zoning text and map amendments, in order to support approval of the overall concept of the data center campus prior to site plan approval.
- The master plan scheme will first require zoning text amendments to support creation of a new floating zone. The new section to the zoning regulations will define certain zoning of the new floating zone and application requirements. The new floating zone may be applied to a parcel at the discretion of the commission.
- If successful with the first application, GotSpace will apply to place the newly created floating zone on the map at the selected parcel. Concurrently, GotSpace will apply for additional zoning text amendments in the form of a master plan. The master plan will be a graphical plan, not to the exact detail of a site plan, showing the proposed development, and containing sufficient supporting documentation (such as traffic analysis) to support the decision of the Commission to approve the zoning map amendment. The master plan will govern future development of the site.
- At such a time that GotSpace has tenants for the site, it will determine the specific physical plant of the campus, in-line with the master plan, and submit site plans for approval, to the Planning & Zoning and Inland Wetlands & Conservation Commissions.

- If development is phased, more than one site plan may be needed.
- The master plan scheme gives significant discretion to the Commission but provides flexibility and confidence to the applicant.
- The master plan scheme has been successfully used in other, nearby municipalities. Mr. Sweeney shared a sample of a zoning text amendment for a “Technology Park District’ floating zone in the Town of Ledyard, which utilizes this scheme.
- GotSpace’s representatives will work with the Planning & Zoning Commission to develop zoning text amendments prior to submitting an application.

3. Discussion and questions:

Chairman Seder asked Commissioners if they had any questions. Commissioners and members of the Board of Selectmen asked a number of questions, to which Mr. Sweeney and Mr. Rossman responded.

- The buildings will draw up to approximately 45 megawatts, each.
- A security fence will enclose the developed area.
- Generators would be sited longitudinally along each building.
- Administrative space would be provided in each building.
- Each generator would have a belly tank. So fuel storage does not take up additional footprint.
- Buildings will use tilt-wall construction.
- Buildings will use a sprinkler system for fire suppression.
- GotSpace is a new company and has not developed data centers in the past.
- The Commission should consider forming a committee with the Board of Selectmen to discuss the various aspects of this project.
- A municipal host agreement is required by law.
- The municipal host agreement defines a host fee, which will be in lieu of taxes—data centers once licensed by the State are exempt from property tax.
- Although the proposal is to access power from high-tension power lines owned by Eversource, GotSpace would then need to purchase that power from Bozrah Light & Power. GotSpace is responsible for all infrastructure work. GotSpace will also be required to complete an electrical study to demonstrate to ISO New England and the Connecticut Municipal Electrical Energy Cooperative (CMEEC) that drawing power from that line is feasible.
- GotSpace will be responsible for the costs of design and construction of all electrical, water, sewer, and gas extensions necessary for the project.
- A number of questions referred to the host municipal agreement. Mr. Sweeney will seek to get answers from the attorney in charge of contracts.

4. Public comment period:

Chairman Seder asked for comments from the public. Members of the public asked a number of questions, to which Mr. Sweeney and Mr. Rossman responded.

- GotSpace has had preliminary discussions with adjacent landowners in the event that additional land or access rights are needed.
- Wetlands permits will be required for any regulated activities, as determined by the Inland Wetlands & Conservation Commission.

- The parcel is 148 acres.
- GotSpace doesn't intend to maximize development of the site. The current proposal is for three buildings as shown.
- The proposed development is a significant investment. The minimum threshold for a qualified investment under House Bill 6514 is \$200 million.
- Lighting will be downcast type, and dark-sky compliant. Infrared cameras will be used for security.
- If connection to the high-tension transmission line is not feasible, GotSpace will explore deriving power from the power lines on Bozrah Street (Route 163).
- Noise from power generation will be typical of transformers and generators.
- GotSpace has a contract on the Houghton Road property.

Mr. Sweeney stated that GotSpace would like a letter from the Planning & Zoning Commission simply stating that while the use is not allowed currently, the Commission acknowledges that GotSpace will propose zoning map and text applications required to gain approval. The Commission briefly discussed the letter. Staff will draft a letter for the Commission's consideration.

There were no other comments or question. The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:39pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Samuel Alexander
Town Planner/SCCOG