

Solar Committee MINUTES – August 4th , 2022

Members present: Carrie Peabody (Chair/Secretary), Bill Nunan (Zoom Coordinator)

Absent: Al Grignon / Cynthia Beauvais (traveling); Kris Kelesian/Kathy Baader-Howell (sick)

We had a skimpy meeting on August 4th due to sickness and/or member obligations/travel. July 28th minutes were reviewed and approved thru email. The committee page is active on the town website and our work thus far has been published.

Member Updates:

- The Selectboard will be interviewing a new member for the committee due to Paul's resignation. I will have more info on the confirmation and person chosen after this week's Selectboard meeting on August 10.
- Kris Kelesian is still out, but recovering, and hopes to be back with the committee soon. Kris is keeping up on progress via hardcopy distribution of minutes and handouts.

Project Status/Tasks:

- Al Grignon is working to restore his Microsoft Project software for input of project tasks/milestones. I anticipate an update from Al at our meeting this week.

Survey/feedback plan

- The team will be focusing on reaching all town residents for feedback, not just registered voters. We will plan to conduct a Survey of the Public via a saturation mailing, coupled with Local Postings, Email feedback, handouts at town office, and public info sessions.
- Carrie has secured funding from the Town Office for a mailing and is working on obtaining a webmail feedback account for town residents to communicate and send feedback directly to the committee.
- Carrie investigated the possibility of having a University of Maine "studies" intern assist with the survey process. Currently they are not taking on new projects due to the lack of availability of volunteers.
- Bill/Carrie reviewed some of the important components that the ordinance should consider: land use standards, setbacks, surface water runoff, decommissioning plan.
- Bill/Carrie discussed potential survey questions which will be more formally decided upon with the team at the next meeting. Once everyone is in agreement with format/questioning, the survey will be finalized and sent to the public. It will be important to describe the commercial plan for Solar Energy Systems at the beginning of the survey questionnaire. Questions should be simple. Example of format might be (and we can refine/add to as necessary, but limit questions to no more than 6). A yes/no format will be combined with input/feedback questioning. Some draft questions to consider:
 - Do you support solar panels/solar energy systems? Yes/No
 - Are you against solar panels/solar energy systems? Yes/No
 - Are you currently using solar energy in your home? Yes/No
 - What are your general concerns about solar panels/solar farms?

- Under what conditions would you support solar panels/solar farms?

Discovery/Research:

- Bill reviewed the MMA guidelines and State documents on Solar programs. At this time the consensus is to focus on using the Readfield ordinance as a boilerplate and build upon it. Most of the guidelines that would be used at the MMA level are already built into the Land Use / Development ordinance or Shoreland ordinance and therefore could be x-referenced to standards already in place.
- Al provided two documents to the team today July 29th, 1) Model Site Plan Regulations and 2) Municipal Solar Best Practices. Handouts were provided to the team. Feedback may be provided at our next session. For those that did not receive a handout, I will have one for you this week.

Meeting schedule:

- Our next meeting will be held on August 11th at 5PM at the Town Office.

See you on the 11th!

Carrie Peabody