

Wareham Solar By-Law Study Committee
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
Wednesday, November 17, 2021
Place: Room 27
54 Marion Road
Wareham, MA 02571

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson McHale at 3:02 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Nancy McHale (Chairperson)
Jacqui Nichols
Carl Schulz (Clerk)
Linda Rinta

Members Absent: Ronald Besse
Christopher Conti

Also present: Ken Buckland, Director of Planning
Denise Wolk, Candidate for membership

3. MINUTES TO APPROVE

MOTION: Made and seconded to approve the Minutes of the November 10, 2021 meeting of the Solar By-Law Study Committee.

VOTE: (4-0-0)

Action: Mr. Schulz to forward a copy of the approved Minutes to the Town Clerk (meetings@wareham.ma.us).

4. REVIEW OF COLLABORATIVE WORKING GOOGLE DOCUMENT

Throughout this section members of the Committee discussed issues and challenges of using Google Docs. Questions on the process were addressed. No significant barriers to moving forward were identified at this time.

Throughout this section changes and updates were made to the DRAFT in real time.

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The Committee restated its preference to modify the existing by-law rather than start from scratch. It was felt that building from the current by-law was probably easier to understand.

Mr. Buckland projected the working Google Document of the DRAFT by-law revision so that the Committee could view and discuss the suggested changes.

A section containing additional definitions had been added to the document. The Committee felt this was useful. After discussion it was agreed that this content was more appropriate in Article 16 of the Zoning By-Laws.

Action: Mr. Schulz to create a Google Document with a Revised Article 16 and move the Definitions into that DRAFT.

The Committee noted that we will now be submitting two revisions to the Town for consideration. Mr. Buckland recommended that the Section 590 and Article 16 revisions be combined into (1) Warrant Article for submission. It was agreed that this approach might be less confusing for the Town.

The Committee discussed where in Town solar siting should be allowed. Discussion about how to site in the forested residential areas was discussed. No resolution on this topic.

The Committee discussed having only one (1) Board, Planning or Zoning, review all solar proposals. Currently, responsibility is split. No resolution on this topic.

The Committee discussed the need to allow solar siting in order to comply with State Law and with Green Communities requirements.

The Committee discussed using mitigation strategies to offset cutting of trees.

The Committee discussed the status of the June 12th solar by-law changes made at Town meeting. Discussion around how farms in town use timber on their property as a crop. Discussion that the 5-year requirement to have cut trees in the past does not apply to other types of development in Town. This by-law is still under review by the State Attorney General.

The Committee discussed the issues around restricting size of projects and the issues and trade-offs with different sizes.

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The Committee discussed the goal of promoting solar over all Town buildings and properties. We were reminded that Mr. Sullivan had previously spoken to this issue and noted that the Town cannot “support” any additional projects because we have maxed out our ability to re-sell the electricity. The Committee still does not understand this constraint.

Action: Have Mr. Sullivan return and further explain the issue.

The Committee discussed ways to incent behavior ... this is difficult to do with a Town by-law.

5. Review of Work-plan Timeline

A meeting to gather public comment will be scheduled for December 8th.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Motion made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 4:30 PM.

VOTE: (4-0-0)

7. NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, December 1, 2021
Place: Room 24
54 Marion Road
Wareham, MA 02571

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Date Signed

By Carl Schulz, Dec 15, 2021 at 10:13

Date signed: _____

Attest: _____

Carl Schulz

Clerk Wareham Solar Study Committee

Date copy sent to Town Clerk: _____

Date Submitted

By Carl Schulz, Dec 15, 2021 at 10:13