

WAREHAM Solar By-Law Study Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Wednesday, September 15, 2021

Place: Room 27

54 Marion Road

Wareham, MA 02571

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman pro tem Jim Munise at 3:30 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Nancy McHale
Linda Rinta
Christopher Conti
Jacqui Nichols
Carl Schulz

Members Absent: Ronald Besse

Also present: Ken Buckland, Director of Planning
Derek Sullivan, Town Administrator
Jim Munise, Selectman
Jane Gleason
Wendy O'Brian

Chloe Shelford, editor Wareham Week
Frank Mulligan, reporter from the Courier

3. Introductory Meeting

a. Introduction of Members

Each person in attendance introduced themselves and discussed their reasons for coming to the committee.

b. Nomination and Selection of Chair and Clerk

This item was deferred to the end of the meeting at which time:

MOTION: Made and seconded to nominate Ms. McHale as Chair.

VOTE: (5-0-0)

MOTION: Made and seconded to nominate Mr. Schulz as Clerk.

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VOTE: (5-0-0)

c. Goals for Committee

Each attendee offered their ideas for the Goals of the Committee:

- Provide a by-law that addresses the needs of all stakeholders. Balance the competing interests of residents, developers, and landowners.
- Prepare the by-law so that it provides clear guidance to permit granting authorities and zoning enforcement officials, landowners, and residence. Remove ambiguities.
- Make sure that by-law clearly addresses environmental impacts and requires each project to meet those requirements.
- Add a performance condition to site plans and other applications that addresses “mining”, sand and gravel removal as well as other changes to the site (eg. grading).
- Provide clear direction to reduce contentiousness on application reviews.
- Create incentives to position solar arrays in favorable locations (parking lots, roof tops, brown fields); minimize cutting of trees.
- Create a by-law that can adapt to new and changing technologies.
- Inform the Master Plan such that it addresses the community vision for Solar.
- Develop a communications plan to generate community support such that the by-laws are understood by the residents and are passed at Town Meeting. Ensure that constraints and trade-offs are communicated.
- Consider consolidating permit granting authorities – currently duties are split between the Zoning and Planning Boards.
- Incorporate new Massachusetts Climate change law.
- Establish balance between growth, protecting the environment, and revenue for the town.
- Identify opportunities to incentivize placing solar in preferred places.
- Address accessory facilities and battery storage on solar sites.
- Create a by-law that works for small farms.
- Consider impacts of alternative renewable energy sources.

d. Presentation by Staff

Mr. Buckland reviewed a presentation of relevant information and laws that will inform how we craft the by-law.

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Action: Mr. Buckland to share copies of the presentation.

Action: Each Board Member to review the Massachusetts Model By-law.

Agreed: That shared material will be posted on the Town Website under the Solar Study Committee Page. Further, it was agreed that Mr. Buckland will post material to that location.

Action: Committee members to forward sample solar by-laws to Mr. Buckland to share.

e. Discussion and questions on the by-law

During the review of the background material Mr. Buckland noted that there is a possibility that the Attorney General may not approve the by-law passed by the Town in July. There was a lot of discussion about the impact of that by-law being rejected and ways to mitigate that impact.

Mr. Sullivan noted that the Town has currently met its net-metering quota and will suffer negative impact if solar is added to Town properties unless an alternative buyer for that power can be obtained.

The Committee discussed “expanding” the scope of the charter to encompass all forms of renewable energy (Wind, Water, etc). It was felt that the addressing the existing scope within the time allowed was significant and that expanding beyond would create a risk to meeting the objective.

4. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. Nichols moves to schedule the next meeting for 3:00 pm Wednesday, September 22nd. Mr. Schulz seconds.

VOTE: (5-0-0)

Action: Mr. Munise agreed to schedule Room 27 for the meeting next week.

Note: Agenda for next meeting must be posted by September 20th.

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MOTION: Ms. Nichols moves to adjourn the meeting at 4:30pm. Mr. Schulz seconds.

VOTE: (5-0-0)

5. NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, September 22, 2021

Place: Room 27

54 Marion Road

Wareham, MA 02571

Date Signed

By Carl Schulz, Sep 23, 2021 at 13:18

Date signed: _____

Attest: _____

Carl Schulz

Clerk Wareham Solar Study Committee

Date Submitted

By Carl Schulz, Sep 23, 2021 at 13:19

Date copy sent to Town Clerk: _____