

SOLAR COMMITTEE MEETING  
2023

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9,

MEMBERS PRESENT: JAMES CAMPBELL (TOWN ATTORNEY), BRIAN GLISE  
(CODE OFFICER, TOWN OF AVON), COUNCILMAN  
MALACHY COYNE, EDWARD FORSYTHE, JACALYN  
EDDY, TED GRISWOLD (LIVINGSTON COUNTY  
PLANNING), CHUCK MORGAN, JIMMY HARRINGTON,  
DAN BROCKAW

CLERK: KIM MCDOWELL

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Jim Campbell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Jim began where we left off on setbacks. Jim read 2 emails from committee members who couldn't be here tonight.

Pat Rio:

I am not going to be able to make it to the solar meeting tonight. Could you please share:

If discussion continues with the setbacks, I just wanted to say I would be in favor of 1000 feet from any structure/ home, 400 from roads, and if possible, side and back setbacks could be as small as possible.

This can follow the idea it is preserving land that could still be large enough to use depending on the property shape. Using the Pole Bridge Rd panels as an example, my property line is almost 2000 feet from my house. It wouldn't really matter if those panels were only ten feet from my property line since it is just a farm field.

Thank you.

-Pat

Katie Smith:

I can't make it again! I am so sorry I have a work event tonight that I must go too. I did talk to Brian in passing and he mentioned the setback was still in discussion and it would be hard to do both a 1,000 ft setback and starting at a property line. My only opinion on that would be that the setback should start from the property line not a structure even if we must keep it at 400 ft (or at least extending to 500ft). I am hoping I can make the next meeting; I am going to be out of town for work the week of August 21st. Unfortunately, my summer hours

consist of a lot of evening work and travel. If you do set up a meeting for that week, I could possibly join virtually if that is an option?

Thank you!  
Katie

There was discussion about where to have the setbacks start either property lines or structures on the property.

Brian Glise stated that farmers said that if you make the setbacks to 1,000 feet the farmers still will not farm that land and that would essentially get rid of more prime farmland.

Chuck Morgan looked at different handouts (maps and site plans), he feels 1,000 foot setback eliminates a lot of parcels. He doesn't see any significant negative impacts on the community with the setbacks as they are.

Jim asked the members present if there was a reasonable change or should we leave it the same and concentrate on the screening and buffering aspect of a solar application.

Jackie Eddy stated 400 feet may be fine and should we be looking at the screening part at the same time.

Dan Brokaw stated he would like to leave the setbacks as is. He feels the larger setback is wasted land and it wouldn't hide the solar panels regardless. He would like to see screening become more important.

Jim stated we are leaving the language we have and revise where the setbacks will begin or leave it the same for both.

There was much discussion about setbacks keeping them the same, making them larger and what the consequences would be if doing that and what the intent is for solar in Avon.

There was discussion about how much authority the Planning Board has over the site plan and screening. Jim stated that you can require screening and buffering but that doesn't guarantee that someone will not be visually impacted.

The current code gives much flexibility to the Planning Board for screening and buffering.

Jim suggested we pause on setbacks and look at the screening language.

Jim feels instead of focusing on blocking the solar farm we soften it by using different kinds of material that gives it depth and texture to make it less offensive. What if there are different kinds of vegetation that will draw the eyes to that instead of the solar farm itself.

Jim suggested that the applicant is required to get a landscape architect to provide a plan that will soften the look of the solar farm. There was much discussion on how that would work and how to implement it into the code.

There was a suggestion that the Town hires the landscape architect to check the design, they can hire their own as well, but it will be checked by ours.

Everyone agreed with incorporating a licensed landscape architect into the code. Jim then polled everyone regarding setbacks and keeping them the same as in the code right now; and everyone agreed.

Jim moved on to the next items in the solar law.

Items (c), (d), (e-glare will possibly include requiring a study to be done), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k-adding a little more language), (l), (m), (n), (o), (p), (q) are all good.

Our next meeting will be Monday, August 28, 2023 at 6:00PM in the Village Hall.