

Joint Meeting of Energy Advisory Committee (EAC) and Municipal Solar Oversight Committee (MSOC)

27 February 2023

In attendance

Dan Rabatsky, Chair EAC
George Aronson, EAC, Chair MSOC
Chris Pimentel, EAC, MSOC
Xander Shapiro, MSOC
Kevin O'Rourke, Middle School Principal
Tony Kopacz, School Department Facilities Director
Allan Giles, Solect Development (Presenter)

Warren and Sandra Smith, 70 Mountain Street (abutters)
Brian Kesselman, 4 Tracey Lane (solar/energy efficiency contractor)
Molli Dernick, 5 Arboro Drive (neighborhood)
Ralph Halpern, 23 Indian Lane (Sustainable Sharon)
Paul Lauenstein, 4 Gavins Pond Road (Sustainable Sharon)

Recorded for replay by Sharon Cable TV

Dan Rabatsky opened the meeting for EAC at 7:05 pm.
George Aronson described the missions and roles of the EAC and MSOC and the status of the Town solar PV installation program to date
Xander Shapiro introduced the presentation
Allan Giles gave the presentation. With the crowd being small, questions were accepted as they arose. Questions included the following:

Q: What happens if the system goes down?

A: Solect monitors the system remotely 7/24/365 from its Hopkinton Network Operating Center and will know if production is below expectations for the season, time and weather conditions. Solect will send out a crew to diagnose the problem and perform repairs. Solect's compensation is driven by production, so they are incentivized to maximize production and minimize downtime.

Q: What if it snows?

A: Production will drop until the snow melts. The projections account for snow and other weather conditions based on 25 years of data. If the production is unusual, Solect will diagnose and repair if needed.

Q: Will there be a battery?

A: Not initially. For a system of under 500 kWDC, a battery would delay the interconnection process without adding much value. A battery can be added at a later date as is being done for the solar PV project at Heights Elementary.

Q: Explain the savings from avoiding an RFP?

A: Sharon is a member of Power Options, which conducted a statewide RFP pursuant to which Solect was awarded, allowing Sharon to contract with Solect under the terms and condition of the standard contract. Sharon has also procured solar PV contractors through separate RFPs in compliance with Chapter 30B of the state procurement law for public entities, which gives the Town two approaches to consider for every project. Contracting with Solect through the Power Options approach has proven to be efficient and cost-effective for the Town, especially for small projects like that proposed for the Middle School. Although other towns in Massachusetts are spending \$30,000 to \$50,000 for consultants to conduct each RFP process, Sharon was able to have the RFP process conducted in its entirety without paying for consulting services by relying on EAC/MSOC volunteer members that are consultants and donated their services.

Q: Will any parking spaces be lost?

A: No. The number of parking spaces will stay the same. Note that the Occupancy Permit sets a minimum number of parking spaces that will need to be maintained, and any lost parking spaces below that minimum would need to be replaced.

Q: Is the design compatible with the practices of delivery trucks, which sometimes back into the driveway?

A: Yes. Indeed, Solect observed delivery trucks backing into the driveway during school pick-up on one of their visits to the Middle School. Solect discussed this issue with the School Department Facilities Director and with the Middle School Principal.

Q: Are there supply chain issues? Are panels available?

A: Solect has possession of sufficient panels. Solect purchased 40,000 kW of panels on spec in advance that are being stored in a warehouse in Mississippi.

Q: Why was the size chosen to provide 44% of electricity consumption? Why not more?

A: The design of the canopies, and capacity for the full facility, was limited by physical factors on the site, including provisions for vehicle access and set-back from Mountain Street. Also, there was a desire to stay under 500 KW of capacity to avoid automatically triggering a System Impact Study from Eversource, which would delay the project and likely add costs.

Comments with unequivocal support for the project were provided by Ralph Halpern of Sustainable Sharon and Paul Lauenstein as a resident.

The public presentation ended at about 8:15 pm.