**Town of Sharon**

**Municipal Solar Oversight Committee**

**Minutes for 10/31/2022 meeting held on Zoom**

**Welcome**

Committee Attendees: George Aronson (Chair), Silas Fyler, Rob Maidman, Chris Pimental, Xander Shapiro (5/6)

Town Staff: David Ruggiero, Town Energy Manager

Guest Attendees: Allen Giles (Solect)

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes for meeting on September 19, 2022, not yet prepared. Vote deferred to next meeting.

**Status of existing projects**

George reported that the Select Board had approved the Committee’s recommendation for site plan approval at the SB meeting on September 29., 2022, by a vote of 3-0.

George reported that DSD had received a final interconnection study for the Mountain Street Landfill solar PV project and had executed the Interconnection Service Agreement (ISA) with Eversource. The project will go forward subject to supply chain issues. Construction might start over summer 2003 with energization targeted by April 2024. DSD anticipated filing for SMART Block 7 as soon as it can confirm equipment delivery times so that the installation can be completed within the time window allotted after the SMART application is submitted.

The Gavins Pond solar PV project is still awaiting start of the Eversource interconnection study.

Allen reported that the High School ISA is within the Eversource review process. Agreements are in final form subject to finalization of the PPA price, but not yet executed.

Construction of the Heights battery energy storage system (BESS) project continues. The pad has been poured, but the BESS has not yet been delivered.

**DPW project Solar PV Project.**

Allen reported on further design refinements. The plan would be to install a canopy at the edge of the site and panels on the roof of the second building across from the DPW main office (the roof of the DPW office is too old, has too much HVAC equipment and not sufficiently structurally sound to support solar panels). The canopy project would involve trenching to the main DPW building after the fuel tanks are removed (spring 2023). David advised that the DPW would like to install EV charging capacity nexr to the second building, with the remainder of the power delivered by trenching to the Public Safety Building.

All agreed that the design requires further refinement before an LOI could be signed. Solect will updated the design, confirm costs and come back to the MSOC for review. George asked for a copy of the LOI in advance of the next meeting, as well as an aerial photo showing the residences nearest to the DPW yard (Google Earth or equivalent) to provide perspective on whether there might be abutter mitigation concerns.

**Middle School solar PV projects (Solect)**

Allen presented a modified design with three areas of solar panels – a large panel over the upper parking lot set back 50 feet from Mountain Street; three canopy areas over the bus parking lot; and a large canopied area over the parking lot closest to the school building itself. Total capacity would be about 480 kW AC, thereby avoiding the need for an Eversource System Impact Study (triggered at 500 kW). With the addition of the canopy over the lower level lot and the limit of 480 kW for the whole site, there would be no need to seek a variance from the 50-foot setback from Mountain Street. This design also reduces visibility to abutters compared to a design that requires such a variance. The Committee members present all acknowledged the advantages of the refined design.

Solect will provide materials to illustrate the new design and will look into providing a streetscape view (their experience is that 2 of their 3 potential vendors provide such renderings). Solect has many pictures of existing facilities with both tee- ands pan-type supporting structures.

The project would be proposed without a BESS (also required for SMART if above 500 kW AC).

George asked if there were any synergies between the new project and rehab of the existing rooftop project, which is out of services due to failure of both inverters. Allen will check internally on this.

Rob noted there are 10 abutters to whom the project would be visible that might raise mitigation concerns. Rob and Xander asked for guidance on whether to begin 1-on-1 conversations with the abutters. The Committee members present all indicated support for beginning the process, which would involve producing final materials on the design, sending letters to each abutter, 1-on-1 meetings, then a noticed public hearing.

It was noted that the Town could enter into an LOI after vote of the Select Board, but that Town Meeting approval would be required to approve a 20-year PPA and/or site lease. The next Town Meeting is scheduled for the first week of May. That would require agreements to be signed by March, development of a warrant article 6-8 weeks before the Town Meeting. Going backwards, the public meeting would be best held by the end of January 2023.

To meet the schedule, the Committee agreed to set its next meeting for Monday, November 21, at which Solect would present an LOI to the Committee for recommended approval.

**Group discussion and topics**

* The Inflation Reduction Act contains additional incentives for solar PV project development that might be helpful to development of additional projects in Sharon.
* Next meeting date set for November 21, 2022, 4:30 pm.

**Adjourn**

**Approved by 5-0 vote of the Committee at meeting held on November 21, 2022.**