

Town of Sharon
Municipal Solar Oversight Committee
Minutes for 04/19/2023 meeting held 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm on Zoom

Welcome

Committee Attendees: George Aronson (Chair), Xander Shapiro, Chris Pimental (late), Rob Maidman (4/5)

Silas Fyler not present

Guest Attendees: Tim Chouinard (DPW), Allen Giles (Solect)

Approval of Minutes

Minutes were reviewed from the Committee meeting on March 27, 2023 and approved by a vote of 3-0. Chris arrived shortly after the vote was taken.

Status of existing projects

George reported the following:

- Heights Elementary School battery energy storage system (BESS). Physical work is done. Awaiting Eversource approval of energization. .
- Mountain Street Landfill project: Per Jackie Bruce, project manager, DSD has experienced additional procurement delays. Construction is targeted to mobilize in late summer 2023. Will coordinate some design details with DPW.
- Gavin's Pond parking lot canopy. Eversource determined that an impact study will be required. Timeline is indefinite.
- High School rooftop project. Recloser/RTEC will be required. First in line for Eversource to complete impact study.
- DPW project. Allen confirmed that the LOIs have been signed. A structural engineer confirmed that the roof is sufficiently sturdy to support the added weight of solar panels without reinforcement. Solect will send agreements, including new language on canopies.

Middle School solar canopy project

Allen reported that the LOI has been signed on the basis of a 250 kW project, with accommodation to add a battery and increase capacity, but the Eversource system now indicates capacity of 200 kW on the feeder. Need to confirm with Eversource if 250 kWAC is acceptable or if project would need either to reduce capacity or fund system improvements. Question of whether project could still be amended to incorporate a BESS and increase capacity to 310 kW depends on Eversource response.

Well #5 project.

Allen presented project design with capacity of 720 kWDC (480 kWAC) based on staying outside of 500-foot wellhead protection area on treeless scrub area north of the well toward Gavins Pond Road.

Discussed basis for 500-foot setback and whether a state or Town requirement (Xander and Rob to investigate). Allen noted that reducing distance to the wellhead might make a behind-the-meter project feasible, because trenching costs are high. Discussed potential for removing trees to increase capacity. Pine trees might be removed due to fall potential. Removed trees could be offset by replants elsewhere in Town.

Project would not be visible to any residences. Nearest residence is across Gavins Pond Road by access road entrance.

Allen does not anticipate need for system impact study based on quick check of Eversource capacity map. George noted that Gavins Pond parking lot canopy has not yet received completed interconnect study though application was submitted in November 2019. Speculation that the feeder being an underground residential distribution (URD) line might reduce its design capacity compared to overhead lines. Allen will do a closer check with Eversource.

Rob M would like notice of next visit of site so he can see it. Also would like confirmation that wetlands are not an issue.

As presented, project would generate AOBC credits for Water Department meter via Schedule Z. Water Department has six meters. Value comes from 1.4 c/kWh fixed discount off invoice rate. Discussion of whether credits could all be applied. Chris noted that electricity consumption by well is predictable and that water/ pumping electricity tracks seasonality of solar production – highest in the summer. The new PFAS system would also use significant electricity when developed and installed. Allen showed that the solar field would offset about 97% of Water Department electricity on an annual basis.

Economics shows Town savings of about \$10,000 per year, \$250k total over 25 years, and PILOT payments (required when output exceeds 125% of on-site load) of about \$4/year or \$100k over life. Note that PILOTs require Town Meeting approval.

Next steps: confirm open issues form above, then move to LOI, with goal of having authority to sign agreements on fall Town Meeting.

- Next meeting date set for Monday, May 22, 2023, 4:30 pm

Meeting adjourned at 6:03 pm