



# Town of Eddington

906 Main Road Eddington, Maine 04428

## PLANNING BOARD

April 6, 2022

6:00 pm

## MINUTES

**CALL TO ORDER:** David Peppard called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**ROLL CALL:** Members present were David Peppard, Craig Knight, Susan Dunham-Shane and Scott Newhart.

Motion to make Scott a voting member for this evening.

**By Susan DS/Craig K 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote 3-0**

Heather Grass arrived at 6:02 for the meeting.

**MINUTES:** Motion that we accept the minutes of March 29, 2022 after correcting the date to March 29, 2022.

**By Susan DS/Scott N 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote 5-0**

**NEW BUSINESS:** David thinks they should present to the Selectmen that they make Scott Newhart a full time voting member. He has been a great resource and he feels they should maximize him to the fullest. If Jeff Argleben comes back that is fine.

Motion to make Scott N a permanent voting member by

**Craig K/Susan DS 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote yes 5 –No 0 - abstained 1**

Everyone discussed that they all have been receiving mail from Community Solar Projects, advertising savings on electric bills. Scott N explained that they are trying to meet their quota to enable them to start selling the power and receive their money and tax breaks. The proposed project in Eddington is not that type of project and will sell their power to ISO New England through their contract with versant.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** The Board will continue their work on the Solar Energy Ordinance tonight. Everyone received the next draft from Scott N with the changes from the April 29, 2022 meeting and a start to the section numbering.

1. Scott N proposed the following wording change for 105.7.2 and the Board agreed to it. In locations where additional screening might be needed to shield a protected location ~~or a highway border~~ a vegetative buffer with growth potential to meet or exceed the overall fence height will be planted to provide screening. As a temporary screening measure, privacy net screen can be added to the agricultural fencing.
2. Scott N proposed adding 105.7.3 and the Board agreed. 105.7.3 To mitigate solar panel glare, solar panels with anti-reflective coatings shall be used. If the results of the Glint and Glare assessment shows an unreasonable off-site impact to abutting property owners established dwellings or established roadways, a mature vegetative buffer will be planted to provide screening. As a temporary screening measure, not to exceed 30 days, privacy net screen can be added to the agricultural fencing.

3. Scott N proposed adding 107.3 and the Board agreed. **107.3 Glint and Glare. The solar energy system owner shall conduct a Glint and Glare assessment to be submitted.**
4. Performance Standards will be part of Section 107, Site Plan Application and Review.
5. Ben Birch will attend the April 12, 2022 meeting to discuss the assessing process for solar projects.
6. Susan DS will work on application fees and annual fees.
7. David P informed the Board that Governor Mills was now going to exempt solar projects from property tax. This will include those projects with battery backup. David P and Craig K feel they need to come up with an operation fee in lieu of property taxes in case there are more changes in the future. Craig K also questioned if they need to contact the Town Attorney regarding overriding Augusta on this issue. Scott N suggested wording like **“If no property tax can be assessed, they will pay a per panel fee.”**, which he said one of the Dirigo Solar representatives had said at a meeting. Susan DS said the State has no say if the town imposes an annual fee and there is already a property tax exemption by the state for solar projects under 5 megawatts.
8. Susan DS reminded everyone that they cannot base the ordinance on a particular project. Heather G said that they have to be prepared for changes to any project in the future. Craig K feels that wetlands and deer habitat areas are not protected any longer from any development.
9. They need to be prepared for projects with battery backup. Susan DS said they usually store them in a bunker, but there are concerns for chemical spills and overheating. It will go in Section 105 and Scott N will add a definition for battery bank.
10. David P asked if the town should restrict where solar projects can go. (The Board would like Denise K to contact Dean Bennett or search for the new Comprehensive Plan to verify any zone changes.) Craig K would like to not allow solar projects in the Rural Agricultural Zone. Susan DS feels solar projects are low impact and could be allowed in Rural Agricultural like Storage Units. Scott N said that studies have shown that someone putting solar panels on their roof can raise their and their neighbor’s property value. Craig K said the state has deemed 4000 parcels of farm land that need to be studied for PFAS and solar companies are approaching farmers for this land. David P does not like that he is in rural agricultural zone and if he wants to subdivide a lot on his property, it has to be 4 acres, but he can put in a 100 acre solar project. Susan DS said that the states rules for Comprehensive Plans regarding zones have changed so their new Comp Plan may have zoning changes making it different than the current Zoning Ordinance. She further explained that the town’s residents will vote on the new ordinance, any changes to current ordinances and changes to the Comprehensive Plan at a Town Meeting or Special Town Meeting.
11. For the next meeting:
  1. Susan DS will work on fees
  2. Scott N will work on wording for battery bank
  3. David P will call the town attorney to see if we can charge fees in lieu of taxes
  4. Section 107 needs to be finished

**AGENDA FOR FUTURE MEETINGS – HOUSEKEEPING:**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 12, 2022.

**PUBLIC ACCESS:**

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn at 7:30 pm.      **By Heather G/Scott N 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote 5-0**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Denise M. Knowles