

Lyme Planning Board Minutes
Public Hearing for Proposed Solar Zoning Amendment.
1/6/2022

Board Members and Staff Present: John Stadler, Chair; Tim Cook, Vice Chair; Eric Furstenberg, Member (Via Zoom); Alternate; Rich Brown, Alternate; Alternate Rich Menge (Via Zoom) David Robbins, Planning and Zoning Administrator.

Board Members Absent: Vicki Smith, Member; Ben Kilham Select Board Representative;

Members of the Public Present: Hebe Quinton, Jane Fant, Mark Bolinger, Robert Thebodo

Members of the public via Zoom: O. Ross McIntyre, Jim Nourse, Sarah Shipton.

Members of the Public via Phone: Mary Helen Bentley,

John Appointed Rich Brown to sit as a regular member as member Smith was not in attendance.

John opened the public hearing by briefly reviewing the proposed amendment.

John then asked if there were any comments from the public.

Jane Fant voiced a concern that there were no regulations on the visual impact especially within the two historic districts. She felt that the historic districts needed special attention to ensure that visual impacts are minimized.

Ross McIntyre suggested that a cap on size could be achieved by limiting the total output of the system. He also suggested that any restrictions on esthetics be reasonable. He also believed that allowing homeowners to sell their excess should be allowed.

Mark Bolinger was concerned about the wording "For the purpose of meeting the electrical needs on the lot." There was a consensus of the members of the public that limiting the electrical production to what can be used on the lot was not practical.

John explained that the statement was to try to differentiate between a solar energy system that provides power to a residence and a system that is commercial in nature. He noted that due to the nature of the systems that there is some overlap and that a homeowner selling excess energy was acceptable to the Board. He suggested that the Board try to reword that section to clarify the intent.

Hebe Quinton suggested that the Board write a goal statement to clarify that intent.

Bob Thebodo recommended that the Board try to ensure that the process of obtaining a permit was not a cumbersome process.

The general consensus of the members of the public was that roof mounted solar energy systems were not as conspicuous as ground mounted systems and felt that very little regulation was needed for them.

Having no further comment from the public, John closed public hearing. The Board then discussed language to address issues brought up at the hearing. No decisions were made and the Board decided to continue the discussions at the January 13th meeting and hold a second public hearing on January 27th, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
David A. Robbins
Lyme Planning and Zoning Administrator.