

Planning Board Draft Minutes for March 23, 2023

Present: All Board Members & Alternates & PZA

Public: Stephen Doig, Marion Cass, Kevin Isett, David Roby (via Zoom)

Item 1: Discussion of Solar Issues

Stephen Doig, an energy policy expert at Dartmouth and a Lyme resident, attended at the invitation of the Board. He supports solar energy in Lyme when allowed in a way that balances with the other provisions in the Master Plan. He felt that Lyme and its Master Plan are unusual and valuable in their long term commitment to a vibrant and functional ecosystem in a world that is rapidly losing ecosystem viability. Stephen believed that a reasonable balance is achievable.

He also discussed the possibility of Lyme enabling systems within the Town that could provide energy during longer term power outages plus a wide range of other pertinent topics.

David Roby believed that, in line with Lyme's goal of reaching all renewable electrical energy by 2030, the Town could actually reach that goal immediately if citizens switched over to Direct Energy or other alternative suppliers that offer cheaper "green" alternatives to Eversource's high carbon supply sources. He wondered why this wasn't being done on a wide scale in Lyme when doing so is easy, cheaper than staying with Eversource and is consistent with Lyme's stated green energy goal. The Board agreed to ask the Energy Committee to get the word out about this.

Rich Brown felt that the provisional Solar Amendment started last year is good in the way it addresses "small" and somewhat larger systems and that the Board could, at the least, put that forward at the next Town Meeting. The remaining question of whether to allow much larger commercial arrays is the main issue left to deal with. And, if allowed, where and how to locate them in a way consistent with the entire Master Plan would be the challenge.

Item 2: Minutes of March 2, 2023

John moved that the amended minutes be adopted.

Rich Brown seconded the motion and the positive vote was unanimous.

Item 3: Next Steps

David Robbins will be away so John will draft the minutes and send them to Jordan.

Tim will speak to Dina about getting an Eversource representative to attend a Planning Board meeting.

All Members & Alternates will send their questions for Revision Energy to John to be forwarded to Revision.

John will contact Mark Bolinger from the Energy Committee about setting up the next joint meeting date that will include Revision Energy.

Respectfully submitted by,
John Stadler