

WEAC MEETING MINUTES- December 2021

**Online meeting, Wednesday, 12/1/21 @ 7:30 PM**

**Members in attendance:** Julie Gervais, Claire Galkowski, Kate La Croix, Brian Bayer, Maria Costantini, Sue McGown, Jen Atkins, Juliana Belding

**Others in attendance:** Ellen Rollings, Steven Olanoff

**Routine business:** None.

**Topics discussed w/next steps:**

**Discussion about Solar By-Law:**

- 1) Concerns expressed that the by-law still contains regulations (requirements for Environmental Impact and Design Reviews- EIDRs, etc.) that are not in the spirit of “right to solar” legislation because they create unnecessary financial and timeline hurdles to people trying to install ground-mounted solar.
- 2) Comments re: bringing Westwood’s by-law into compliance with legislation that does *not* give abutters the right to veto a ground-mounted solar array based on aesthetics.
- 3) Discussion on how the Planning Board would define a ground-mounted solar array (“accessory structure”?), when the Planning Board would require an EIDR (arrays over a certain size?), and how it would assess/approve screening for a proposed project.
- 4) Discussion on whether any EIDR for ground-mounted solar could be administrative vs. a more drawn-out public process, given the fact that neighbors do not actually have any ability to prevent an installation.
- 5) Conclusions: WEAC is not in support of EIDRs for small ground-mounted solar arrays (800 square feet or less); they should be treated the same as other accessory structures; WEAC is open to discussion regarding reasonable screening for such projects.

**Next steps:**

- 1) Planning Board intends to address the wording of the by-law and accompanying issues at its next meeting.

**Discussion about CCE and the DPU:**

- 1) Maria provided a draft of a letter to Rep. McMurtry regarding the DPU’s delays in moving forward with approval of Westwood’s CCE program.
- 2) Discussion regarding the content of the letter, particularly specifying what WEAC is hoping for by way of a response.
- 3) Suggestion to bring the issue to the attention of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and see if they can offer support.

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**Next steps:**

- 1) A sub-group of WEAC members (Maria and Kate) will meet to re-draft the letter to State Rep, then post for other WEAC members to comment on.
- 2) Steve Olanoff will contact MAPC.
- 3) Claire will contact Scituate and Cohasset re: their experience with DPU.
- 4) Maria will try to find the names of contacts in the other towns that have not yet received a response from DPU.

**Adjourned:** 9:10 pm

**Next meeting date:** January 20, 2022 at 7:30 PM