

Town of Sharon
Municipal Solar Oversight Committee
Minutes for 12/20/2023 meeting held 4:30 pm on Zoom

Welcome

Committee Attendees: George Aronson (Chair), Xander Shapiro, Rob Maidman, Chris Pimental

Not attending: Silas Fyler

Guest Attendees: Tim Chouinard (DPW), Jackie Bruce (DSD), Allen Giles (Solect), Paul Lauenstein (Public)

Status of existing projects (from the EAC website, confirmed after the meeting)

- East Elementary School canopy solar PV. Operating. 535.73 MWh generated from commercial operation date to today; 213.45 MWh in 2023 to date.
- Heights Elementary School rooftop solar PV. Operating. 736.02 MWh generated from commercial operation date to today, 202.09 MWh 2023 to date.

Meeting quorum at 4.29 pm

Approval of Minutes

- Minutes from the Committee meeting on October 30, 2023 were approved by a vote of 4-0.

Status of projects under development

- Mountain Street Landfill project: Project will be on Planning Board agenda at hybrid public meeting on January 4 at 7pm. Per Rob M, Planning Board will introduce the agenda item. Next, DSD should present a brief (5 minute) project overview presentation to address what's proposed, design, mitigation factors, construction process and timeline/schedule with milestones, and to confirm prior commitments on mitigation. There would be time for public comment and questions. If questions are answered to the satisfaction of the Board, a vote might occur at the meeting; if not, public hearing might be continued on Jan 18th. Rob noted that DSD had engaged a landscape architect and advised sharing slides that were created. Not an adversarial process: no lawyer is needed. Rob and Xander on the Planning Board are familiar with the project. George will attend, as will Tim Magner of DSD. Jackie will likely attend by Zoom joined by construction manager and others. Jackie can contact Rob or Xander with questions prior to the meeting. Jackie noted that the Planning Board action will determine the schedule for applying for ministerial permits and mobilization.

George noted that DSD and the Town need to finalize amendment to confirm Site Lease Schedules 1 and 2. Project has secured PSOQ for Block 7. Also need to confirm building permit fee amount.

- High School rooftop project. Solect working on Project and Safety Plans for review by Tony Kopacz. Might need Superintendent or School Board approval. Hope to mobilize, complete and energize in 2024.
- DPW projects. Need to confirm whether rooftop and canopy projects are below threshold for Planning Board review. Aiming for Planning Board review on Feb 5. Project revised such that EV chargers would be installed by Power Options vendor. Four Level 2 EV chargers to be installed: two for Public Safety and two for DPW employees and Town vehicles (not accessible to public). If

approved, projects are on track for rooftop project to be installed in spring 20 24, canopies 4Q2024 or 1Q 2025 due to lead time to order/receive system components.

- Middle School project. Rob M raised issues with two waiver requests by Solec that might be addressed in advance of the Planning Board public hearing. Solec had asked for a waiver to delay providing evidence of insurance until after the Planning Board public hearing. Rob advised that the Planning Board policy was to require such evidence prior to the public hearing and for Solec to comply and withdraw the waiver. Solec had also asked for waiver of the bonding requirement. Rob advised that the Planning Board was firm on the bonding requirement in part due to prior bad experience with unbonded development projects, and advised Solec to comply and withdraw the waiver. After discussion, Allen agreed to reconsider the waiver requests internally, although it might mean revisiting the PPA price if the impact is significant. If the bonding requirements affect the current contracted PPA rate, Solec will provide the revised PPA rate to the MSOC for review and approval.
- Well #5 project. Solec reviewed the proposed Bill Credit Agreement Bill Credit Rate program under the PowerOption RFP award and determined that it was not in compliance with the RFP award. This resulted in a change to the proposed Bill Credit Rate previously based on a discount of the Credit applied to the Water Department's invoices to a fixed rate. This will require an agreement language change which is in the approval process and to be made available to the MSOC for review shortly after the New Year. The system size proposed for the Planning Board's Site Plan Review and an Order of Conditions from Conservation Commission is currently 480 kWAC capacity. The Planning Board Site Plan Review is scheduled for February 18th.

This system is forecasted to produce 828,000 kWh/year first year production, with a forecast savings of \$60,000 in the first year based on forecasted Bill Credit Rate from Eversource of \$0.245/kWh to be applied to the Water Department's invoices and a Solec contract rate of \$0.1780/kWh. Solec plans to engage the Assessor shortly after the New Year to negotiate a PILOT currently proposed of \$3600/year declining over project term to be reviewed and approved by the Select Board. Based on the current incentive rate from the SMART program, applying for a SMART award provides no financial incentive. Therefore, this project will be available for Class I RECs.

Project has an Eversource ISA approval with a Notice to Construct, the utility upgrade costs have been identified and included in the cost of the project. An updated proposal with financials based on changes will be provided to the MSOC.

Note: Town Meeting had voted to approve authority to the Select Board and Town Administrator to negotiate and sign agreements on November 30 Town Meeting. Ground-mount project will need Order of Conditions from Conservation Commission.

- Allen noted that, after revisiting the Bill Credit Rate program for the Well 5 project, Solec plans to revisit the proposed canopy project at the Ames Playground parking lot across Pond Street from the High School to see if it is financially viable and will present its finding to the MSOC for the scheduled February MSOC meeting.

- Heights Elementary School battery energy storage system (BESS). Physical work is done. **Allen will confirm status of Eversource Notice to Operate and approve energization and will advise George** regarding next steps if advocacy with Eversource is needed.
- Cottage Street solar and roof replacement project. Allen and Xander have previously met with Tony Kopacz to review the opportunity to install solar at the school knowing that Cottage Street School roof needs replacement and structural support, but not in capital plan until next year. Information on the Mass School Building Authority, Accelerated Repair Program (ARP) grant opportunities is being provided to Dr. Botelho, Ellen Whittemore and Tony Kopacz. In addition, the Cottage Street School is a potential candidate for funding from the state GreenWorks project providing multiple sources of funds for the Town to consider. There will be competition for limited funds. Note that per an agreement with PowerOptions, Solect will provide, design, engineering and application services provided under the terms of the PowerOptions RFP award with the execution of a non-binding Letter of Intent (LOI) as a requirement of the GreenWorks grant application. Solect understands and is willing to incur the costs and take the risk to wait for the grant award, engineering services, RFP for vendor selection and actual installation of the roof repairs, in addition to the possibility that the project might not be available for a grant award with no financial obligation under the LOI to the Town.

Other business

- Chris noted that he is interviewing multiple candidates for the Energy Manager position shared with the Town of Norwood.
- George will draft the MSOC annual report for the Town on behalf of the Committee. Rob will review before submittal.

Next meeting dates set tentatively for 4:30 pm on Mondays, January 20, 2024 and February 5, 2024.

Agendas to be confirmed. Meeting adjourned at 5:34 pm