

York Solar meeting
York Town Hall
1/10/2018

In attendance: Jerry Deming, Amos Smith, Steve Beardsley, Heather Ferrero, Mary Underhill

Discussion Summary:

Abbey solar project

- According to Dan Beady, the project is at a standstill. They are working with a company out of Massachusetts. NY doesn't have the same incentives as Massachusetts.
- Want to expand system to maximize investment
- Can they have a 10-acre system for the Abbey?
- Can a solar project be an accessory project if the property owner is not owner? Can Jim Campbell confirm?
- Moratorium appears to not allow it if there is a 3rd party owns it.
- The 500 acres are will be located behind the Abbey, east of the RR tracks

General

- Consider local laws plus Ag & Markets Guidelines.
- Town of Groveland may be a good foundation.
- Consider siting guidelines that avoid prime agricultural soils.
- Fencing considerations?
- The viewshed map was not adopted or in the Town comprehensive plan.
- NY Sun can be available for technical assistance.
- Taxing: Can tax on panels and equipment.
- Would like information on PILOTs and the difference between opting in vs. option out.
- Discussion on overlay zoning districts similar to the Town's Wind Overlay Districts (floating zone). Can you limit the maximum acreage of a floating zone/can acreage of solar be capped?
- Discussed losing agricultural exemptions and Agricultural District inclusion.
- Discussed how agriculture and solar can work on the same parcel (sheep and bee pollinator habitat)
- Discussed decommissioning and difficulties with bonds, letters of credit – there is no mechanism that will last over the long term (5 years is a long time). If a company folds and property owner walks away, the Town has 100+ acres of solar panels.
- Large scale solar is challenging.
- Get decommissioning clauses from Abbey and Sam (Dennis Vacko is Sam's lawyer).
- NY Sun has guidance on decommissioning protections?
- Runoff from the site could be significant.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, February 28, 2018 @ 6 p.m. at the York Town Hall.