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Large-Scale Solar Arrays

Introduction

By following these guidelines, large-scale solar projects can generate clean energy while protecting neighbors and the environment. Clear planning and responsible design ensure solar developments benefit the whole community. In order to be approved by the Planning Board, a proposed large-scale solar array must demonstrate compliance with the following performance standards:

9.18.1 Visual Impact

- a) **Screening and Buffers:** The large-scale solar array shall not be visible from any surrounding property. The use of trees, shrubs, or berms around the solar array to block views from nearby properties is encouraged.
- b) **Panel Positioning:** Panels within a large-scale solar array shall be operated in a manner that reduces glare on abutting properties and roadways to the greatest practical extent.
- c) **Height Limits:** At maximum tilt, the height of a large-scale solar array may not exceed 24 feet in height.
- d) **Buffer Responsibility:** The current owner must maintain buffers for the life of the project.

9.18.2 Noise Control

- a) **Inverter Placement:** Put inverters away from homes and use soundproofing if needed.
- b) **Other Equipment:** Place transformers, switches and other related equipment in low-noise areas to reduce disturbance.

9.18.3 Protecting Wildlife and the Environment

- a) **Wildlife Corridors:** The operator shall maintain pathways through the site of the large-scale solar array in order to protect existing wildlife and shall take steps to ensure the continued viability of native vegetation.
- b) **Prevent Erosion:** Stormwater shall be effectively managed, consistent with a stormwater management plan submitted to and approved by the Planning Board.

9.18.4 Lighting, security, construction and maintenance

- a) **Minimal Lighting:** Use motion-activated, shielded lights to avoid disturbing neighbors.
- b) **Low-Impact Fencing:** Design perimeter fences to blend with the surroundings.

Maintenance and construction scheduling: Plan any work during times that least disrupt nearby residents.

9.18.5 Decommissioning and Cleanup

- a) **Decommissioning Plan Required:** A decommissioning plan consistent with the requirements of 35-A M.R.S., ch. 34-D shall be submitted to the Planning Board. The decommissioning plan shall include an irrevocable letter of credit from the applicant in an amount equal to 150% of the estimated cost of decommissioning. This letter of credit shall be increased consistent with inflation every 5 years, with an updated letter of credit provided to the Town.

Add to Section 11 DEFINITIONS: where it belongs in alphabetical order.

Solar Array, Small Scale

- A solar array designed for individual use, typically for a single-family home with no restrictions.
- Requires review and approval from the local Code Enforcement Officer using the designated performance standards (9.18.1.b, and 9.18.1.c) and all other building permit requirements.
- Intended to meet the energy needs of the property owner.
- systems under 25 kW.

Solar Array, Medium Scale

- A solar array with a capacity of up to **25.1kW -100 kW**.
- Requires review and approval from the local Code Enforcement Officer using the designated performance standards (9.18.1.b, and 9.18.1.c) and all other building permit requirements.
- Intended to serve multiple properties or larger residential complexes.

Solar Array, Large Scale

- A solar array with a capacity of 100.1 kW or greater.
- Requires a review by the Planning Board.
- Intended for commercial, industrial, or community-scale energy generation.
- Requires more extensive planning and regulatory review due to potential impact on the surrounding area and infrastructure.