

Managing “the Good, the Bad and the Ugly” of Solar Energy

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Goal: Develop guidance material and ordinance framework for solar siting

Completed:

- ❖ Gathered ordinances from around NJ
- ❖ Identified common issue areas
- ❖ Reviewed model ordinances from other states and organizations

Next Steps:

- ❖ Partner with NJLM/NJBPU to create working group
- ❖ Develop background paper for distribution to working group
- ❖ Hold forum with all interested parties
- ❖ Create ordinance framework from forum input with working group
- ❖ Vet framework/ordinance through appropriate state agencies

Background: State Legislation

- ❖ S1303/A3062 (2009)
 - classifies solar technology as “inherently beneficial use”
- ❖ A2550/S1299 (2009)
 - permits renewable energy facilities in industrial zones as a use by right on, "parcels of land comprising 20 or more contiguous acres that are owned by the same person or entity."
- ❖ S921/A2289 (2010)
 - exempts solar panels from calculations of impervious surface cover
- ❖ S1538/A2859 (2009)
 - extends protections of the Right to Farm Act to the generation of solar energy on commercial farms within certain standards.

Solar Siting: Common Issue Areas¹

- ❖ Setback requirements
- ❖ Placement of panels on roofs
- ❖ Height restrictions
- ❖ Minimum lot size for ground mounts
- ❖ Restrictions on portion of lot that can be utilized for solar systems
- ❖ Screening requirements
- ❖ Impervious surface restrictions

¹Comments of the Solar Alliance on the New Jersey 2011 Draft Energy Master Plan. August 25, 2011

Local Regulation Recommendations

- ❖ Consult planning documents:
 - Master plan
 - Open space plan
 - Farmland preservation plans
 - Environmental/natural resource inventory
- ❖ Identify areas to:
 - Encourage solar:
 - Brownfields
 - Large rooftops
 - Protect:
 - Woodlands
 - Agricultural areas
 - Natural resources
- ❖ Update Master Plan
 - include vision and information on solar energy; will support ordinances
- ❖ Develop and adopt ordinances and site design standards

Siting Standards

Considerations:

- ❖ Setback requirements
- ❖ Height restrictions
- ❖ Screening
- ❖ Light reflection/glare
- ❖ Sound levels
- ❖ Signage
- ❖ Siting on historic sites
- ❖ Decommissioning/
Abandonment
- ❖ Enforcement and penalties
- ❖ Mount type (roof vs.
ground)
- ❖ Soil erosion
- ❖ Impervious Coverage
- ❖ Production limits

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