

**Town of Starksboro
Selectboard Special Meeting minutes
December 12, 2017
APPROVED**

PRESENT: Susan Jefferies, Peter Marsh, Keegan Tierney, Koran Cousino
Rebecca Elder (SB assistant)

VISITORS: Sam Carlson (Green Lantern Group)

The meeting convened at 6:30 p.m. at the Robinson Elementary School multi-purpose room.

Proposed Solar Project

The purpose of the meeting was to inform town residents about the current proposal from Green Lantern Group for a solar project on the former town landfill site.

While there were no attendees for the informational meeting, Sam Carlson provided the Selectboard with a summary of the project status to date:

Process for approval by Green Mountain Power (GMP) includes:

- Application for connection (in process)
- 15-day wait period has passed; GMP is completing another solar system impact study for a different project that could affect this one due to proximity and location on the GMP lines
- GMP won't review the Starksboro landfill proposed project until other related study is complete
- GMP has until Feb. 23, 2018 to complete the study
- According to the Green Lantern Group's engineer, the Starksboro landfill area project is at the end of a transmission line making it a more challenging project. The solar power would be fed back up the line—it is better if the solar generation is in/near the center of a line to prevent over-wattage.
- GMP may potentially require a voltage regulator to prevent over-wattage. Potential cost ±\$30K.

K. Cousino asked how often GMP says no to a project. Sam said it has been more often recently than in the past—there used to be a fast-track analysis option that helped keep the projects moving forward.

One possibility: GMP may ask for a feasibility study after the 2/23/18 review date. This could cost ±\$5,000. GMP would then tell the Town what else is needed for the project to move forward.

P. Marsh asked if the solar array would require battery storage capacity. Sam Carlson said no, but there is more progress in the development of solar-powered battery backup. The economics are not yet practical for most applications, but the prices will come down in the next 5+ years. Battery storage can help with overall grid management and frequency regulation, but there is no way to monetize that value. Vermont does not have “peak pricing” (for comparison, Massachusetts does use peak pricing). With GMP, a customer pays the same rate for power at any time. Strategic power use planning requires a lot of time and management. There is a small commercial pilot program.

Green Lantern Group sent an agreement to Dave Russell outlining the steps for implementation of the proposed plan. They are awaiting sign off.

Land swap with Robinson School Board/MAUSD

Selectboard hopes to present for a vote at Town Meeting in March. More information to follow.

Approved 12/19/17