

September 12, 2018

Dear Members of the Durham Planning Board,

We appreciate all the work and thought the Planning Board has put into revising the proposed Solar Ordinance. There are many improvements, with many of what we considered to be the unreasonable items originally proposed being removed. We thank you for listening to our concerns.

Within the revised draft solar ordinance, we ask that you revisit the following items:

1. Our understanding is that freestanding systems shall be placed no closer to the road than the front face of the house if under 10 feet tall and no closer than the back face of the house for those over 10 ft. While these regulations may be adequate for many properties, they do not adequately address circumstances in which historic homes sit close to the road. This is particularly problematic along Designated Scenic Roads and/or our Gateways. Placement of freestanding systems for those properties should have to meet an additional setback and/or screening requirements so that freestanding systems are not so visible from the road. This is particularly an issue where properties have extensive side yards (i.e. open fields that stretch along the road) that create a scenic vista, as is the case in some of our more rural areas of town.
2. In instances where freestanding solar systems will be installed in fields that are visible from the road, whether on a parcel that contains buildings or not, we ask that you consider a graduated setback requirement that considers the height of the system relative to the distance from the road. The taller the system, the further back from the road it should be so as to mitigate its visual impact. We also ask that systems installed in fields be screened from the road. This will be more easily accomplished the further back the system is placed.
3. Solar carports that are attached to homes should rightly be classified as building-mounted systems; carports that are not attached to homes or other existing structures should be classified as "freestanding systems" to accurately reflect their circumstance. This distinction will avoid misuse of carport installations to skirt regulations for freestanding systems. (Note: There is little visual distinction between a carport mounted on two poles and a freestanding device mounted on one or two poles.)
4. Finally, we understand that Enterprise Systems are large, commercial systems in which energy is generated for off-site use. Given the tremendous potential in terms of scale, we ask that as commercial enterprises, "Enterprise Systems" not be permitted in our Residential Zones (RA, RB, RC, & R). They should be permitted *by Conditional Use only* in our Research-Industrial Zones, many of which exist along our gateways.

As you revisit these items, please keep in mind that our Future Land Use Chapter, approved by the Planning Board last January, states:

- "The Durham community deeply values aesthetics and the character of the landscape."
- "When asked about what they love about Durham and what they hope for its future, Durham residents overwhelmingly spoke about the town's character and appearance."
- "The community places high value on Durham's natural beauty and residents consider the viewsapes along major transportation corridors to be important gateways."

Respectfully Submitted,

Name

*Zelda Moore*

Address

*4 Stevens Hwy, Durham 03824*

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Respectfully Submitted,

Name

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