

The Climate Smart Communities Task Force ("CSCTF") for the Town of Yorktown reviewed the proposed changes to the solar law and offers the following comments:

- The CSCTF is in agreement with the changes initially proposed to Section 300-81.4 Solar power generation systems and facilities related to setbacks and screening in Draft law version 1. With proper planning and guidelines, the Town Planning Board has done an excellent job up to now of approving solar farm developments in Yorktown under the current law. The proposed additional setback and screening changes will provide further improvements.
- Additionally, the CSCTF recommends that to mitigate the visual impacts even further, the Town should initiate a two step permitting process. The developer would be required to complete the installation of screening prior to being allowed to commence construction and installation of the solar panels and other equipment at the site.
- The CSCTF disagrees with the proposal in Draft law version 2 to prohibit the development of large scale ground mounted solar farms on residential property. This will effectively outlaw new solar farms in Yorktown, depriving the rights of property owners to use their land in this way. Not all residential parcels are well suited for housing development; installing ground mounted solar in some of those carefully selected locations provides a renewable energy source, with little to no demand or impact on Town infrastructure, school enrollment, traffic, light pollution, etc. while providing wildlife corridors and pollinator plantings.
- While rooftop solar should be encouraged in both residential and commercial zones, the generating power is insufficient to meet our energy needs without the addition of efficient solar farms, preferably on already cleared land rather than forested sites.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Climate Smart Communities Task Force,

Sarah Wilson,