

Z. SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS [January 2017]

A. Authority and Purpose This solar energy systems ordinance is enacted in accordance with RSA 674:17(I)(j), and the purposes outlined in RSA 672:I-III-a as amended. The purpose of this ordinance is to accommodate Solar Energy Systems installations in appropriate locations, while protecting the public's health, safety and welfare. The Town of Sanbornton intends to facilitate the State and National goals of developing clean, safe, and renewable energy resources in accordance with policies outlined within NH RSA 374-G and 362-F that include national security, environmental and economic sustainability.

B. Purposes

The Purposes of this section are:

1. To allow for the use of Solar Energy Systems in the community while maintaining Sanbornton's scenic attractiveness.
2. To preserve the community's rural character, particularly as seen from public roads.
3. To minimize potential adverse impacts of Solar Energy Systems by ensuring that such facilities are properly screened and properly sited within existing topographical features of the property.
4. To ensure consistent maintenance and safety procedures are in place to protect public health and safety.

C. Definitions

Solar Energy System: An arrangement of solar collectors and all other related electrical and mechanical devices whose primary purpose is to transform solar energy into electrical or another form of energy, using mechanical, electrical, or chemical means.

Roof-Mounted Solar Energy System: A rooftop mounted Solar Energy System, not exceeding 50% of the total roof-area, intended to provide power for buildings located on the subject lot; may be of any size.

Ground-Mounted Solar Energy System: Any system that is not Rooftop Solar Energy System which is structurally mounted to the ground.

D. Solar Energy System Application and Review Procedure

1. No Solar Energy Systems, with the exception of Roof-Mounted Systems, shall be erected, constructed, installed or modified without first following the standard Planning Board Site Plan Review and Approval process and requirements as outlined within the Town of Sanbornton's Site Plan Review Regulations. The Planning Board reserves the right to request additional information it considers necessary to carry out the intended purpose of these Regulations.

All Roof-Top Solar Energy Systems shall submit an Application for a Certificate of Zoning Compliance (CZC) to the Zoning Administrator prior to the issuance of said certificate.

All applications for Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Systems must include the following:

- A. Site Plan at a scale of 1"=50' and signed by NH State Licensed Engineer or Land Use Professional. Said Plan shall depict the subject property, existing natural features including wetlands, water courses and water bodies, trees and other vegetation, topographical features

and other site features which the Planning Board requests for consideration during the site design process. Any State of Federal environmental permits shall be submitted to the Town.

- B. Location of all buildings with their type, size, location (setbacks), and elevation.
- C. The location, width, type of paving and curbing for all ingress and egress.
- D. The location, size and design of proposed signs and other advertising or instructional devices.
- E. The location and type of lighting for all outdoor facilities, including direction and area of illumination.
- F. The location, elevation and layout of catch basins, storm drains, and other surface drainage features which provide for retention or slow release or storm water and/or ground water recharge.
- G. The location of areas dedicated to plowed snow storage which do not conflict with pedestrian/vehicular traffic, parking, landscaping and surface drainage.
- H. Existing and proposed contours and finished grade elevation – all contours shall be a minimum of 2 foot contour intervals.
- I. The type, extent and location of existing and proposed landscaping and open areas indicating what existing landscaping and open areas will be retained.
- J. The size and location of all overhead and underground public service connections such as: gas, power, telephone and fire alarm.
- K. If any portion of the property boundary is proposed to be changed, the applicant must provide a boundary survey prepared and stamped by a licensed land surveyor showing surveyed property lines, bearings and, distances along property lines and monument locations, and names and addresses of all abutters.
- L. Any other exhibits or data that the Planning Board may require in order to adequately evaluate the proposed development for site plan review.
- M. Interconnection agreement with the utility
- N. Operation, maintenance, and safety plans;
- O. Mechanical layout and an electrical schematic.

E. Minimum Construction, Design and Operational Standards for Commercial Operations.

1. Solar Energy Systems with a footprint greater than 20% of the lot or a total of more than 43,560 square feet by their nature have a greater burden to complying with the visual impact requirements of this ordinance. The footprint of a system shall include all above ground components, including fencing, and shall be calculated by including the entire area within a single continuous perimeter enclosing all system elements.
2. The proposal shall provide adequate screening to ensure that adjacent property values are not adversely impacted. Such screening shall be maintained during the life of the system.
3. Any stoppage of the total system must be reported to the Planning Office within 5 days.
4. A decommissioning/abandonment plan shall be included with the initial application. At a minimum, said plan shall show, except for temporary breaks in operation for necessary repairs or upgrades, that within 120 days of total stoppage, all above grade structures are to be removed and

remediation of the site to its natural condition will be completed and inspected by the Planning Office to ensure conditions are met. The Planning Board may require, as a condition of approval, bonding or other surety to cover these costs in the event that the Town finds it necessary to remove the system. At the time, the Planning Board may approve a limited extension, or provide other modifications of these decommissioning conditions.

5. The maximum height of any Ground-Mounted Solar Energy System shall be 20 feet off the ground. Roof Mounted Solar Energy Systems shall be considered exempt from height requirements.
6. All Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Systems shall adhere to applicable front, side, and rear setback requirements for the Zoning District in which the system is to be installed. In addition, all required wetland setback and/or buffer areas shall be depicted. Said System shall not be considered an accessory structure when determining required setback provisions.
7. A detailed screening plan, as determined by the Planning Board, may be required to address specific neighborhood characteristics and sensitivities, in order to mitigate visual impacts, and maintain the character of the neighborhood.
8. Copies of all State/Federal land use professional licenses shall be submitted along with all application materials.

F. Permitted Uses

1. Roof-Mounted Solar Energy Systems are permitted in all Zoning Districts, however all proposals in the Historic District shall be subsequently reviewed by the Historic District Commission during the Site Plan and/or CZC review processes. Projects with potential public safety or conservation concerns shall be reviewed by Public Safety Personnel and/or Conservation Commission.
2. Ground-Mounted Solar Energy are permitted in all Zoning Districts, however all proposals in the Historic District shall be subsequently reviewed by the Historic District Commission during the Site Plan and/or CZC review processes. Projects with potential public safety or conservation concerns shall be reviewed by Public Safety Personnel and/or Conservation Commission.
3. All State or Federal permits which may accompany any Solar project proposed within the Town of Sanbornton shall be provided to the Town.