



Williamsburg Planning Board

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Minutes for meeting on **March 29, 2021**

Member	Present	Not Present	Member	Present	Not Present
Amy Bisbee	X		Eric Schmitt	X	
Chris Flory		X	Steve Smith	X	
Holly Hendricks	X		Steve Snow	X	
Jean O'Neil	X				

Note: In addition to the board members above, approximately 25 people attended the meeting, including (partial list) Charles Dudek, Charlotte Merryman, Jay Novak, Jennifer Black, Judy Stinson, Neal Anderson, Osa Flory, Alona & Louis Wilson, Joan Coryat, Karen Kennedy, Diane Merritt, William Sayre, Paul Fenn, Sally Loomis, Paul Jahnige, Darlene Adair

At 7:04 pm Bisbee called the meeting to order.

1. Public listening session was held via zoom; notes and slides attached

At 8:04 pm the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Schmitt

Planning Board Listening Session

March 29 2021 7 PM

General questions and comments allowing attached accessory apartments

Numerous comments on size limit of 900 square feet with 1,000 to 1,200 square feet suggested.

What is considered livable space in the 900 square feet? Porch?

Concern that 900 square feet might not meet special needs.

Osa Flory voiced concerned a builder might build two houses on one lot.

What are the issues that fall under special permit? Which board makes the final decision for approval?

General questions and comments regarding update to solar array bylaws

Why is fencing required?

Is there a maximum acreage allow per array?

Is there a limit to total maximum solar array acreage for the town?

Paul Fenn, Energy Committee asked that community benefit of additional solar array agreements be considered.

Concerns the town might become too industrialized with too many solar arrays.

Steve Smith commented on concerns from both Paul Fenn and Karen Kennedy that this would be a good conversation to have. To give consideration as to what we want our town to be.

Jean O'Neil addressed meadow space which encourages pollinators to thrive vs trees for carbon sequestration.



Planning Board - Public Information Session

March 29, 2021

Topic #1 - Allow accessory apartments in detached structures

Topic #2 - Update commercial solar array bylaws

1

Detached Accessory Apartments

Under current zoning, Accessory Apartments

- Allowed only if attached to (or within) the owner's primary residence
- Not allowed in detached buildings (e.g., garage, barn, etc.)

All Accessory Apartments

- Different than apartments in multi-family buildings
- Meant to be subordinate use of a primary residence
- Owner's primary residence must be main residence, or the apartment

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Detached Accessory Apartments

Why amend bylaw to allow detached accessory apartments?

- **Public feedback.** For example at the 2019 annual town meeting
- **Age-in-place.** Give residents more ways to generate income from the long-term rental of their owner-occupied property
- **More housing options.** Increase the availability of long-term rental units in Williamsburg, particularly for small households

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Accessory Apartments Attached vs. Detached (proposed)

	Attached (current bylaw)	Detached (proposed)
Property owner must live on site	Yes	
Dedicated egress, sleeping, cooking, bathroom	Yes	
Adequate sewer/septic/parking	Yes	
Maximum number of bedrooms	2	
Total floor space (livable area)	Smaller of 1000 sq ft or 1/3 floor area	900 sq ft
Possible on nonconforming lot?	Yes	Subject to special permit review
Zoning Use Table <i>Village Residential, Village Mixed, Rural</i>	Permitted by right in all zones	By special permit in all zones

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Commercial Solar Arrays

Solar array language accepted into town bylaws in 2013

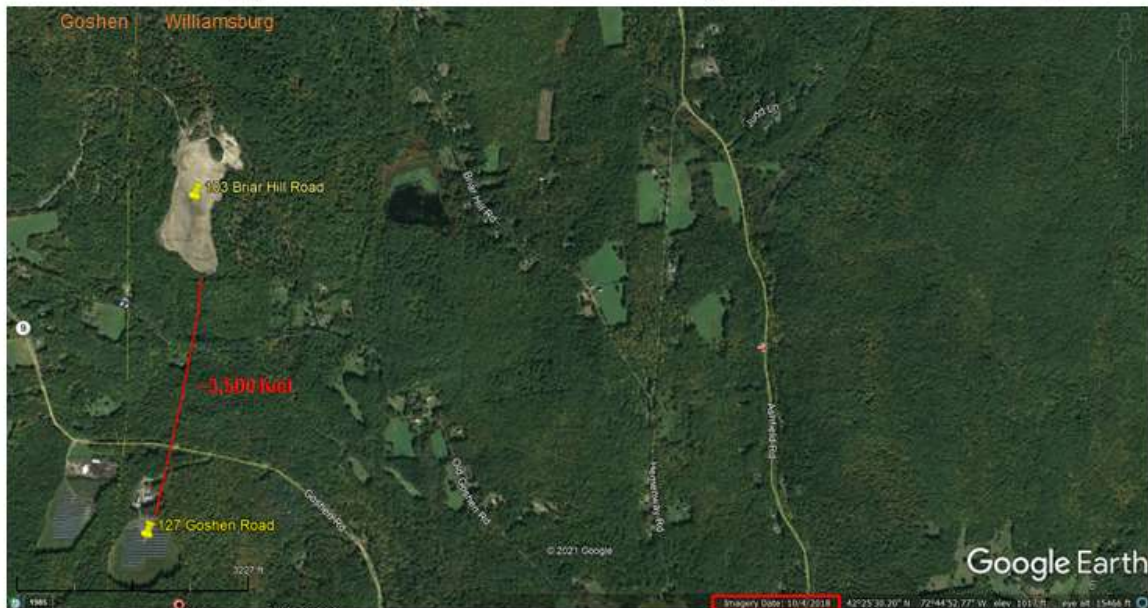
- Allows for ground-mounted solar panel arrays
- 1.25 – 20 acres in size

Why update solar bylaws now?

- Incorporate lessons learned and address new developments
- Minimize environmental impacts and risk

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Two of Burgy's six approved solar arrays (~24 panel acres)



Four of Burgy's six approved solar arrays (~66 panel acres)



Commercial Solar Arrays

Currently 6 arrays have been approved in town

- One array was approved in each of 2013, 2015, 2017, and three in 2019
- In total, the arrays represent ~90 acres
 - 0.55% of town total area of 16,378 acres*
 - 0.65% of town woodland area of 13,794 acres*
- Town payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreements with town
 - **Estimate** \$50,000 in fees per array/year, for a period of 20 years
 - **Estimated** \$300,000/year for six arrays = ~4% of total town budget

* Source: [2011 Williamsburg Open Space & Recreation Plan](#)

Solar Arrays - Proposed Bylaw Updates

We propose bylaw updates in four areas

1

Erosion protection

for wetlands, waterways,
and neighbors

2

Array placement

on the town landscape, and
preservation of free wildlife
movement

3

Invasive plant species control

to mitigate the breakouts
that easily occur when
forest is removed

4

Batteries and energy storage

are expected to be a
common component in new
arrays

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Thank you!

Planning Board - Public Information Session

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