



Williamsburg Planning Board

141 Main Street, P.O. Box 447

Haydenville, Massachusetts 01039-0447

Phone: (413) 268-8400

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Minutes for public hearing on **April 26, 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				
Other attendees:					

At 7:04 pm Bisbee called the Public Hearing to order.

Two items to be addressed regarding zoning bylaw changes:

1. Changing the accessory apartment bylaw to include detached structures
2. Update to the current commercial solar bylaws to include the following: erosion protection, array placement, invasive plant species control, and batteries & energy storage

At 7:09 pm the meeting adjourned.

The next scheduled planning board meeting and tree hearing is scheduled for May 3rd at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Schmitt and Holly Hendricks



Planning Board - Public Hearing

April 26, 2021

Topic #1 - Allow accessory apartments in detached structures

Topic #2 - Update commercial solar array bylaws

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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

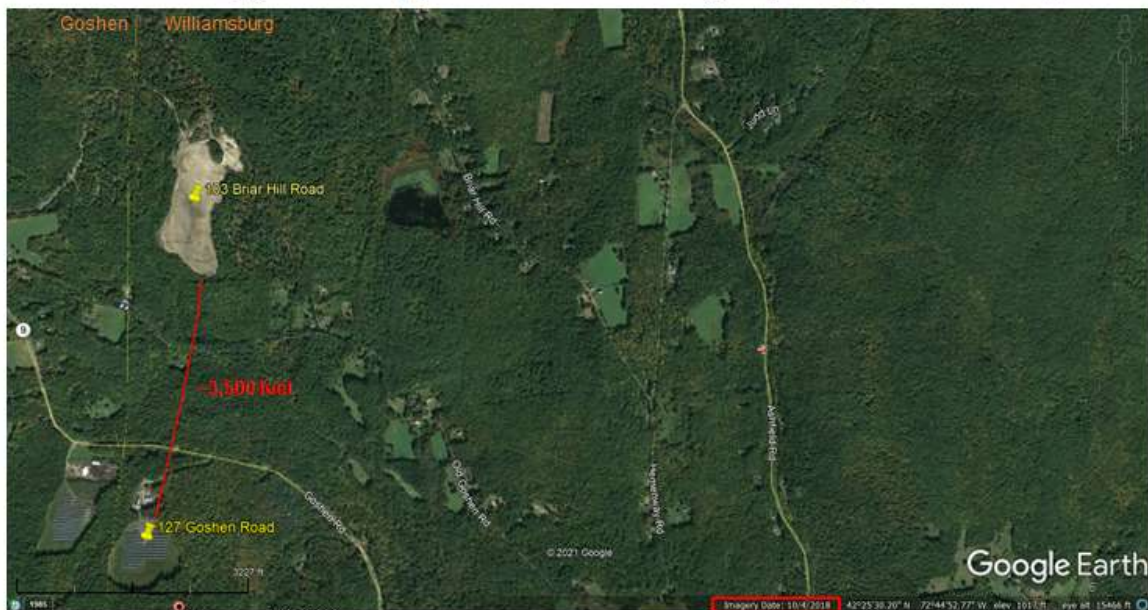
- Allows for ground-mounted solar panel arrays
- 1.25 – 20 acres in size

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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