



Model Solar Ordinance Development – Public Comments

The Office of Energy Resources (OER) and Division of Statewide Planning (Planning) in coordination with the Department of Environmental Management will be collecting public comments and ideas that should be considered in the development model solar ordinance at public meetings scheduled for June 6th and June 20th.

The first draft of the model solar ordinance is scheduled to be released to the public on June 25th. There will be public meetings scheduled on July 18th and August 2nd for the public to provide comments on the first draft of the solar model ordinance.

OER and Planning welcome any information or ideas at the public meetings in June, including suggestions on the following solar siting topics:

- Residential Roof Mounted Systems
- Commercial Roof Mounted Systems
- Solar Canopies for Parking Lots
- Gravel Pits
- Brownfields/Superfund Sites
- Closed Landfills
- Undeveloped and Developed Commercial/Industrial Zones
- Undeveloped and Developed Residential Zones
- Farms and Forests

OER and Planning are also looking for public feedback on the siting/permitting requirements, including the following subjects:

- Vegetative Management Plans

- Environmental Requirements
 - Wetlands
 - Conservation
 - Stormwater Runoff Management Plan
 - Top Soil Protection Plan for Pre- and Post-Construction

- Permitting Process
 - How should projects be permitted?
 - Under what circumstances should they be permitted by right?
 - Should certain locations or zoned areas be subject to an Accessory Use or Special Use permit?
 - How could the local permitting process be used to incentivize project siting in gravel pits, landfills, and commercial or industrial zoned areas?
 - Should commercial roof mounted projects go through the same permitting process as a ground mounted projects?

- Buffers and Setbacks
 - What should be the requirements for commercial ground mounted projects?
 - What should be the differences for commercial and residential zoned areas?
 - Should there be different setbacks for landfills, gravel pits, brownfields or solar parking lot canopies?

- Percentage of Property Allowed for Commercial Ground Mount Solar Installations
 - Should there be one-size-fits all lot coverage restriction for all zoned areas?
 - Should gravel pits, landfills, and commercial/industrial zoned locations have lot size restrictions?
 - Should there be lot restrictions for undeveloped residential or farm/forest lot? If so, what should that lot restriction percentage be?

- Fencing Requirements
 - Types of fencing?
 - Should there be any differences on the type of fencing requirements depending on the project location?

- Height Restrictions
 - Ground mounted solar systems and parking lot solar canopies

If you are unable to attend either of the public meetings scheduled on June 6th or 20th, please email your comments to Chris Kearns Christopher.Kearns@energy.ri.gov and Kevin Nelson kevin.nelson@doa.ri.gov by Thursday, June 21st.