

TOWN OF OSWEGO

LOCAL LAW NO. 2 of 2024*

A LOCAL LAW TO AMEND THE ZONING LAW OF THE TOWN OF OSWEGO (LOCAL LAW NO. 7-2014) TO ADD A NEW ARTICLE REGULATING SOLAR POWER AND ENERGY SYSTEMS IN THE TOWN

***For Introductory Purposes Only**

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the Town of Oswego as follows:

SECTION 1. LEGISLATIVE PURPOSE AND INTENT

The purpose of this Local Law is to permit and regulate the construction of solar energy systems in the Town of Oswego in a manner that preserves the health, safety and welfare of the Town while also facilitating the production of renewable energy.

SECTION 2. AUTHORITY

This local law is enacted pursuant to the New York State Constitution and New York Municipal Home Rule Law § 10.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

Article II, Section 200 (“Definitions”) of the Zoning Law of the Town of Oswego is hereby amended to add the following definitions:

“NET-METERING – A billing arrangement that allows solar customers to receive credit for excess electricity which is generated from the customer’s Solar Energy System and delivered back to the grid so that customers only pay for their net electricity usage for the applicable billing period.

QUALIFIED SOLAR INSTALLER – A person who has skills and knowledge, related to the construction and operation of Solar Energy Systems (and the components thereof) and installations and has received safety training on the hazards involved. Persons who are on the list of eligible photovoltaic installers maintained by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), or who are certified as a solar installer by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) shall be deemed to be qualified solar installers for the purposes of this definition. Persons who are not on NYSEERDA’s list of eligible installers or NABCEP’s list of certified installers may be deemed to be qualified solar installers if the Town Code Enforcement Officer or such other Town officer or employee as the Town Board designates determines such persons have had adequate training to determine the degree and extent of the hazard and the personal protective equipment and job planning necessary to perform the installation safely. Such training shall include the proper use of special precautionary techniques and personal protective equipment, as well as the skills and techniques necessary to distinguish exposed energized parts from other parts of electrical equipment and to determine the nominal voltage of exposed live parts.

SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM – A complete system of Solar Collectors, Panels, controls, energy devices, heat pumps, heat exchangers, and other materials, hardware or equipment necessary to the process by which solar radiation is collected and converted into another form of energy including but not limited to thermal and electrical, stored and protected from dissipation and distributed. A Solar Energy System shall not include any Solar Energy System of four square feet in size or less.

BUILDING-INTEGRATED SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM – A Solar Energy System incorporated into and becoming part of the overall architecture, design and structure of a building in such a manner that the Solar Energy System is a permanent and integral part of the building structure.

FLUSH MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM – A Rooftop- Mounted Solar Energy System with Solar Panels which are installed flush to the surface of a roof, and which cannot be angled or raised.

GROUND MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM – A Solar Energy System that is affixed to the ground either directly or by mounting devices and which is not attached or affixed to a building or structure.

ROOFTOP-MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM – A Solar Energy System in which Solar Collectors/Panels are mounted on the roof of a building or structure either as a flush-mounted system or as panels fixed to frames which can be tilted to maximize solar collection. Rooftop-Mounted Solar Energy Systems shall be wholly contained within the limits of the buildings or structure’s roof surface.

SOLAR ACCESS – Space open to the sun and clear of overhangs or shade including the orientation of streets and lots to the sun to permit the use of active and/or passive Solar Energy Systems on individual properties.

SOLAR COLLECTOR – A solar photovoltaic cell, panel, or array or solar hot air or water collector device, which relies upon solar radiation as an energy source for the generation of electricity or transfer of stored heat.

SOLAR FARMS – A Solar Energy System or collection of Solar Energy Systems or area of land principally used to convert solar energy to electricity, whether by photovoltaics, concentrating solar thermal devices or various experimental solar technologies, with the primary purpose of supplying electricity to a utility grid for wholesale or retail sales of electricity to the public or utility providers.

SOLAR PANEL – A device which converts solar energy into electricity.

SOLAR SKYSPACE – The space between a Solar Energy System and the sun through which solar radiation passes.

SOLAR STORAGE BATTERY – A device that stores energy from the sun and makes it available in an electrical form.”

SECTION 4. REGULATING SOLAR POWER AND ENERGY SYSTEMS

The Zoning Law of the Town of Oswego is hereby amended to add a new Article XI-A entitled, “SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS”, as follows:

ARTICLE XI-A. Solar Energy Systems

Section 1100.1. Purpose and Intent.

The Town of Oswego recognizes that solar energy is a clean, readily available and renewable energy source. Development of solar energy systems offers an energy source that can prevent fossil fuel emissions, reduce the Town’s energy demands and attract and promote green business development within the Town. The Town of Oswego has determined that comprehensive regulations regarding the development of solar energy systems are necessary to protect the interests of the Town, its residents, and businesses. This Article is intended to promote the effective and efficient use of solar energy systems; establish provisions for the placement, design, construction, operation and removal of such systems in order to uphold the public health, safety and welfare; and to ensure that such systems will not have a significant adverse impact on the aesthetic qualities and character of the Town.

Section 1100.2. Applicability.

This Article shall apply to all solar energy systems in the Town of Oswego which are installed or modified after the effective date of this Article. All solar energy systems which are installed or modified after the effective date of this Article shall be in compliance with all of the provisions hereof.

Section 1100.3. Building-Integrated Solar Energy Systems.

- A. Districts where allowed. Building-Integrated Solar Energy Systems shall be permitted in all zoning districts within the Town subject to the submission of, application for and review and issuance of an applicable building permit.
- B. Building-Integrated Solar Energy Systems shall be subject to the general requirements set forth at Section 1100.6.

Section 1100.4. Rooftop-Mounted Solar Energy Systems.

- A. Districts where allowed. Rooftop-Mounted Solar Energy Systems shall be permitted in all zoning districts within the Town subject to the following requirements:
 - (1) A building permit shall be required for installation of all Rooftop-Mounted Solar Energy Systems. An applicant shall submit the following application materials to the Code Enforcement Officer:
 - (a.) A site plan showing the location of major components of the Solar Energy System and other equipment on the roof or legal accessory structure. This plan should represent relative locations of components at

the site, including, but not limited to, location of arrays, existing electrical service locations, utility meters, inverter locations, system orientation and tilt angles. This plan should show access and pathways that are compliant with New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, if applicable.

(b.) One-Line or 3-Line Electrical Diagram detailing the installation, associated components and electrical interconnection methods with all disconnects and over current devices.

(c.) Specification Sheets for all manufactured components. If these sheets are available electronically, a web address will be accepted in place of an attachment, at the discretion of the Town.

(d.) All diagrams and plans must be prepared by a professional engineer or registered architect and contain the applicable professional's stamp, mark, and/or signature as required by New York State law and include the following:

[1] Project address, section, block and lot number of the property;

[2] Owner's name, address and phone number;

[3] Name, address and phone number of the person preparing the plans; and

[4] System capacity in kW-DC. Rooftop Mounted Solar Energy Systems shall not exceed the maximum allowed height of the principal use in the zoning district in which the system is location.

(2) Rooftop-Mounted Solar Energy Systems shall be mounted parallel to the roof plane on which they are mounted. However, in the case of commercial buildings which have a flat roof, a tilted mounted may be allowed provided the panels are not visibly objectionable from the property line.

(3) To ensure firefighter and other emergency responder safety, except in the case of accessory buildings under 1,000 square feet in area, there shall be a minimum perimeter of 4 feet around the edge of the roof and structurally supported pathways to provide space on the roof for walking around all Rooftop-Mounted Solar Energy Systems. Additionally, installations shall provide for adequate access and spacing to:

(a.) Ensure access to the roof;

(b.) Provide pathways to specific areas of the roof;

(c.) Provide smoke ventilation opportunity areas; and

(d.) Provide for emergency egress from the roof.

(e.) Exceptions to these requirements may be requested where access, pathway or ventilation requirements are reduced due to:

- [1] Unique site-specific limitations.
- [2] Alternative access opportunities (such as from adjoining roofs).
- [3] Ground level access to the roof area in question.
- [4] Other adequate ventilation opportunities when approved by the Codes Office.
- [5] Adequate ventilation opportunities afforded by panels setback from other rooftop equipment (for example: shading or structural constraints may leave significant areas open for ventilation near HVAC equipment).
- [6] Automatic ventilation devices; or
- [7] New technology, methods or other innovations that ensure adequate emergency responder access, pathways and ventilation opportunities.

B. In addition to the requirements set forth in this Section 1100.4, Rooftop-Mounted Solar Energy Systems shall be subject to the general requirements set forth at Section 1100.6.

C. Permit Review and Inspection Timeline. Permit determinations will be issued within fourteen (14) days upon receipt of complete and accurate applications.

Section 1100.5. Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Systems.

A. Districts where allowed. Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Systems are permitted as accessory structures in all zoning districts of the Town, **except R1, and only in R2 as part of a Solar Farm as set forth in Section 1100.7**, subject to the following requirements:

- (1) A building permit and site plan review by the Planning Board consistent with Article VI of the Zoning Law of the Town of Oswego shall be required for installation of all Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Systems.
- (2) Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Systems are prohibited in front yards.
- (3) Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Systems shall comply with the most restrictive, setbacks, area, yard and bulk regulations in each applicable zoning district provided in the Zoning Law of the Town of Oswego in which such system is constructed.
- (4) Setbacks. Further setbacks and bulk restrictions may be required by the Planning Board as part of the site plan review and as a condition of approval in addition to those set forth in Section 1100.5(A)(3) in order to protect the public's safety, health and welfare.
- (5) The height of the Solar Collector/Panel and any mounts shall not exceed 15 ~~(10?)~~ feet in height when oriented at maximum tilt measured from the ground and including any base.

- (6) Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Systems shall be screened when possible and practicable from adjoining lots and street rights of way through the use of architectural features, earth berms, landscaping, fencing or other screening which will harmonize with the character of the property and the surrounding area. The proposed screening shall not interfere with the normal operation of the Solar Collectors/Panels.
- (7) The Ground-Mounted Solar Energy System shall be in a manner to reasonably minimize view blockage for surrounding properties and shading of property to the north, while still providing adequate Solar Access for the Solar Energy System.
- (8) Neither the Ground-Mounted Solar Energy System, nor any component thereof, shall be sited within any required buffer area.
- (9) The total surface area of all Ground-Mounted Solar Energy System components shall not exceed the area of the ground covered by the building structure of the largest building on the lot measured from the exterior walls, excluding patios, decks, balconies, screened and open porches, and attached garages.
- (10) The provisions and criteria for site plan review as set forth in Article VI shall be applicable and demonstrated for each application.

B. Districts Where prohibited. Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Systems shall not be permitted in the R1 District, and may be permitted in the R2 District as part of a Solar Farm provided there is sufficient land to accommodate the bulk requirements for such a Solar Farm as further set forth in Section 1100.7 herein.

Section 1100.6. General Requirements Applicable to Building-Integrated, Rooftop-Mounted and Ground-Mounted Solar Energy Systems.

- A. All Solar Energy System installations must be performed by a Qualified Solar Installer.
- B. Solar Energy Systems, unless part of a Solar Farm, shall be permitted only to provide power for use by owners, lessees, tenants, residents or other occupants of the premises on which they are erected, but nothing contained in this provision shall be construed to prohibit the sale of excess power through a net-metering arrangement in accordance with New York Public Service Law § 66-j or similar state or federal statute. However, Solar Energy System applications in a residential setting and serving a residential use on a single parcel or lot shall be limited to 15 kW or less.
- C. Prior to operation, electrical connections must be inspected by a Town Code Enforcement Officer and by an appropriate electrical inspection person or agency, as determined by the Town.
- D. Any connection to the public utility grid must be inspected by the appropriate public utility and proof of inspection shall be provided to the Town.

- E. Solar Energy Systems shall be maintained in good working order.
- F. Solar Energy Systems shall be permitted only if they are determined by the Town to be consistent in size and use with the character of surrounding neighborhood.
- G. Solar Energy Systems shall be permitted only if they are determined by the Town not to present any unreasonable safety risks, including but not limited to:
 - (1) Weight load.
 - (2) Wind resistance; and
 - (3) Ingress or egress in the event of fire or another emergency.
- H. All Solar Energy Systems described in this Article XI-A shall meet and comply with all relevant and applicable provisions of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code Standards and applicable electrical codes. To the extent the provisions of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and applicable electrical codes are more restrictive than the provisions set forth in this Article, the provisions of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and applicable electrical codes shall control and the provisions contained herein shall be deemed to be installation guidelines only.
- I. If solar storage batteries are included as part of the Solar Energy System, they must be placed in a secure container or enclosure meeting the requirements of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention Building Code when in use and when no longer used shall be disposed of in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Town and other applicable laws and regulations.
- J. All utility services and electrical wiring/lines shall be placed underground and otherwise be placed within the walls or unobtrusive conduit. Conduits or fees which are laid on the roof shall be camouflaged to blend in with the roof to reduce aesthetically objectionable impacts. Feeds to the inverter shall run within the building and penetrate the roof at the solar panel location.
- K. If a Solar Energy System ceases to perform its originally intended function for more than 12 consecutive months, the Solar Energy System shall be deemed abandoned and the property owner shall notify the Town of Oswego Code Enforcement Officer of the System's abandonment. Upon abandonment the property owner shall completely remove the System, mount and all other associated equipment and components by no later than 90 days after the end of the 12-month period or within 15 days of written notice from the Town. The Building Inspector, Code Enforcement Officer and/or Town Engineer shall have the right at any reasonable time to enter, in the company of the owner or his agent, to ensure that the Solar Energy System remains operational.
- L. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant/owner shall demonstrate to the Code Enforcement Officer a reliable and safe method for de-energizing the Solar Energy System in the event of an emergency. The method and location to de-energize the Solar Energy System, once approved, shall be provided by the applicant/owner to all applicable emergency services and first responders.

- M. Solar Energy Systems and their components shall be accessible by emergency services vehicles and personnel.
- N. To the extent practicable, Solar Energy Systems shall have neutral paint colors, materials and textures to achieve visual harmony with the surrounding area.
- O. The design, construction, operation and maintenance of the Solar Energy System shall prevent the direction, misdirection and/or reflection of solar rays onto neighboring properties, public roads, public parks and public buildings.
- P. Marking of equipment.
 - (1) Solar Energy Systems and components shall be marked to provide emergency responders with appropriate warning and guidance with respect to isolating the solar electric system. Materials used for marking shall be weather resistant. For residential applications, the marking may be placed within the main service disconnect. If the main service disconnect is operable with the service panel closed, then the marking should be placed on the outside cover.
 - (2) In the event any of the standards in this Section for markings are more stringent than applicable provisions of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code they shall be deemed to be guidelines only and the standards of the State Code shall apply.

Section 1100.7. Solar Farms.

- A. Districts where allowed. Subject to the issuance of site plan approval and a special use permit and other requirements as set forth herein, Solar Farms shall be a permitted use in the Industrial (I) District; Agricultural/Residential (A/R) District and the Commercial/Light Industrial (C/LI) District within the Town, **and may be permitted in the R2 District provided there is sufficient land to accommodate the bulk requirements for such a Solar Farm.** A Solar Farm may be considered a principal use.
- B. Districts where prohibited. Except as stated in Subparagraph (A) of this Section, Solar Farms shall be prohibited in all other zoning districts within the Town. Solar Farms shall be prohibited in the **R1 and R2 Districts, except as noted in Section 1100.7(A).**
- C. Lot Area and Yard Regulations. The following lot area and yard regulations shall apply to Solar Farms located in the Industrial (I) District, Agricultural/Residential (A/R) District, the Commercial/Light Industrial (C/LI) District, **and the Residential 2 (R2)** within the Town.
 - (1) Minimum Street Frontage: 300 feet
 - (2) Minimum Lot Area: 15 acres
 - (3) Minimum Front Yard Setback: 250 feet
 - (4) Minimum Rear Yard Setback: 100 feet
 - (5) Minimum Side Yard Setback: 100 feet

- D. Setbacks. Additional setbacks may be required from those set forth in Section 1100.7(C) by the Planning Board in order to provide for the public's safety, health and welfare.
- E. Permits required. No person, firm or corporation, or other entity being the owner, occupant, or lessee of any land or premises within the Town of Oswego shall use or permit the use of land or premises for the construction or installation of a Solar Farm without obtaining a building permit, a special use permit issued by the Zoning Board of Appeals and a site plan approval issued by the Planning Board as hereinafter provided.
- F. Special Use Permit.

(1) In addition to the criteria established pursuant to Section 1509(C), the following criteria are hereby established for purposes of granting a special use permit for a Solar Farm under this Section:

(a) Scenic viewsheds. A Solar Farm shall not be installed in any location that would substantially detract from or block the view(s) of all or a portion of a recognized scenic viewshed, as viewed from any public road, right-of-way or publicly owned land within the Town of Oswego or that extends beyond the border of the Town of Oswego. For purposes of this subsection, consideration shall be given to any relevant portions of the current, amended and/or future Town of Oswego Comprehensive Plan and/or any other prior, current, amended and/or future officially recognized Town planning document or resource.

~~(b) No Solar Farm shall be installed on Prime Farmland, farmland of statewide importance, farmland of local importance, or unique soils as defined by the US department of Agriculture (USDA), New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, or local governing body.~~

(c) No Solar Farm shall be installed on wetlands as identified/defined/designated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) or local governing body, ***unless authorized by the NYSDEC and USACOE as applicable.***

(d) Emergency shutdown/safety. The applicant shall demonstrate the existence of adequate emergency/safety measures. The applicant shall post an emergency telephone number so that the appropriate entities may be contacted should any Solar Panel or other component of the Solar Farm need immediate repair or attention. This emergency telephone number should be clearly visible and in a location which is convenient and readily noticeable to someone likely to detect a problem.

(e) Security. All Solar Farms shall be secured to the extent practicable to restrict unauthorized access. *See* Section 1100.7 (G)(1)(q).

- (f) Access road. To the greatest extent possible, existing roadways shall be used for access to the site and its improvements. In the case of constructing any roadways necessary to access the Solar Farm, they shall be constructed in a way that allows for the passage of emergency vehicles in the event of an emergency. Each application shall be accompanied by correspondence from the responding fire department and emergency care provider as to the acceptability of the proposed ingress to and egress from the Solar Farm site.
 - (g) The development and operation of the Solar Farm shall not have a significant impact on fish, wildlife, animal or plant species or their critical habitats, or other significant habitats identified by the Town of Oswego or federal or state regulatory agencies.
- (2) Waiver. The Zoning Board of Appeals may, upon exercise of its reasonable discretion, waive one or more of the submission requirements imposed herein. Relief from all other requirements must be made by way of an area or use variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

G. Site Plan Review.

- (1) The following submission requirements must be observed regarding a site plan application for a Solar Farm. The Planning Board may also require any of the requirements of Article IV of the Zoning Law as part of the submission.
- (a) A completed application form as supplied by the Town of Oswego for site plan approval for a Solar Farm.
 - (b) Proof of ownership of the premises involved or proof that the applicant has written permission of the owner to make such application.
 - (c) Plans and drawings of the proposed Solar Farm installation signed, marked and/or stamped by a professional engineer registered in New York State showing the proposed layout of the entire Solar Farm along with a description of all components, whether on site or off site, existing vegetation and proposed clearing and grading of all sites involved. Clearing and/or grading activities are subject to review by the Planning Board and shall not commence until the issuance of site plan approval. The plans and development plan shall be drawn in sufficient detail and shall further described:
 - [1] Property lines and physical dimensions of the proposed site, including contours at five-foot intervals.
 - [2] Location, approximate dimensions and types of all existing structures and uses on the site.

[3] Location and elevation of the proposed Solar Farm and all components thereof.

[4] Location of all existing aboveground utility lines within 1,200 linear feet of the site.

[5] Where applicable, the location of all transmission facilities proposed for installation. All transmission lines and wiring associated with a Solar Farm shall be buried underground and include necessary encasements in accordance with the National Electric Code and Town requirements. The Planning Board may recommend waiving this requirement if sufficient engineering data is submitted by the applicant demonstrating that underground transmission lines are not feasible or practical. The applicant is required to show the locations of all proposed overhead electric utility/transmission lines (if permitted) and underground electric utility/transmission lines, including substations and junction boxes and other electrical components for the project on the site plan. All transmission lines and electrical wiring shall be in compliance with the public utility company's requirements for interconnection. Any connection to the public utility grid must be inspected by the appropriate public utility.

[6] Location of all service structures proposed as part of the installation.

[7] Landscape plan showing all existing natural land features, trees, forest cover and all proposed changes to these features, including size and type of plant material. The plan shall show any trees and/or vegetation which is proposed to be removed for purposes of providing greater Solar Access.

[8] A berm, landscape screen, or any other combination acceptable to the Town capable of screening the site, shall be provided along any property line.

[9] Soil types at the proposed site.

(d) Photographic simulations shall be included showing the proposed Solar Farm along with elevation views and dimensions and manufacturer's specifications and photos of the proposed Solar Energy Systems, Solar Collectors, Solar Panels and all other components comprising the Solar Farm or from other vantage points selected by the Planning Board.

(e) If applicable, certification from a professional engineer or architect registered in New York State indicating that the building or structure to

which a Solar Panel or Solar Energy System is affixed, is capable of managing the loading requirements of the Solar Panel or Solar Energy System and various components.

- (f) One- or three-line electrical diagram detailing the Solar Energy System installation, associated components, and electrical interconnection methods, with all disconnects and over-current devices.
- (g) Documentation of access to the project site(s), including location of all access roads, gates, parking area etc.
- (h) A plan for clearing and/or grading of the site and a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the site.
- (i) Documentation of utility notification, including an electric service order number.
- (j) Sunchart. Where deemed appropriate, the Planning Board may require that the applicant submit a sunchart for the proposed site indicating the sun angle for the southern boundary of the site for a minimum four-hour continuous period during the time of the highest sun angle on December 21, along with the potential for existing buildings, structures, and/or vegetation on the site or on adjacent sites to obstruct the Solar Skyspace of the proposed Solar Farm. The sunchart shall also indicate the potential for obstructions to the Solar Skyspace of the proposed Solar Farm under a scenario where an adjacent site is developed as otherwise permitted by applicable provisions of the Zoning Law of the Town of Oswego with a building/structure built to maximum bulk and height at the minimum setback. Where no standards for setback are established, this scenario shall assume a maximum setback of five feet from the property line. The sunchart shall be kept on file at the Town Code Enforcement Office and determine the minimum setback required for any solar collectors from the south property line as well as the Solar Skyspace that should be considered when development of neighboring properties occurs. This section in no way places responsibility on the Town for guaranteeing the Solar Skyspace of a Solar Energy System in the event setbacks are waived at the applicant's request.
- (k) The manufacturers or installer's identification and appropriate warning signage shall be posted at the site and be clearly visible.
- (l) Solar Energy Systems shall be marked to provide emergency responders with appropriate warning and guidance with respect to isolating the electric systems. Materials used for marking shall be weather resistant. The marking shall be placed adjacent to the main service disconnect location clearly visible from the location where the lever is operated.

- (m) The average height of the solar panel array shall not exceed 20 feet measured from the ground and including any base or supporting materials.
- (n) Color. Neutral paint colors, materials and textures may be required for Solar Farm components, buildings and structures to achieve visual harmony with the surrounding area as approved by the Planning Board.
- (o) The design, construction, operation and maintenance of the solar energy system shall prevent the direction, misdirection and/or reflection of solar rays onto neighboring properties, public roads, public parks and public buildings.
- (p) Artificial lighting of Solar Farms shall be limited to lighting required for safety and operational purposes and shall be shielded from all neighboring properties and public roads.
- (q) Solar Farms shall be enclosed by perimeter fencing to restrict unauthorized access. The height, style and type of fence shall be approved by the Planning Board as part of the site plan review process.
- (r) Only signage used to identify the location of the Solar Farm shall be allowed and such signage shall otherwise comply with the Town's sign regulations and requirements.
- (s) All applications shall be accompanied by a full environmental assessment form for purposes of environmental review under the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), including a visual impact analysis. The following additional material may be required by the Planning Board:

[1] A digital-elevation-model-based project visibility map showing the impact of topography upon visibility of the project from other locations to a distance radius of three miles from the center of the project. Scaled use shall depict a three-mile radius as not smaller than 2.7 inches, and the base map shall be a published topographic map showing cultural features.

[2] No fewer than four color photos taken from locations within a three-mile radius from the proposed location, as selected by the Planning Board and computer-enhanced to simulate the appearance of the as-built aboveground Solar Farm components as they would appear from these locations.

(2) Site plan review criteria. In addition to the above and subject to Article VI of the Zoning Law, no site plan shall be approved unless the Planning Board determines that the proposed Solar Farm complies with the following:

(a) The use is oriented in its location upon the site as to layout, coverage, screening, means of access and aesthetics so that:

[1] The flow control and safety of traffic and human beings shall not be adversely affected to an unreasonable degree.

[2] There is reasonable compatibility in all respects with any structure or use in the surrounding area, actual or permitted, which may be directly substantially affected.

[3] There shall not be any unreasonable detriment to any structure or use, actual or permitted, in the surrounding area.

[4] There is a reasonable provision for open space and yard areas as appropriate to the surrounding area.

H. Public Hearing. No action shall be taken by the Zoning Board of Appeals to issue a special use permit or the Planning Board to issue site plan approval, nor the Zoning Board of Appeals to grant a use or area variance in relation to an application for a Solar Farm until after public notice and a public hearing. Proper notice of a hearing before a board shall be given by legal notice published in the official newspaper of the Town of Oswego at least five days before the date set for such public hearing(s) and written notice mailed to the applicant or his agent at the address given in the application to be considered. The applicant shall be responsible for notifying, by certified mail, all property owners of record within 500 feet of the outside perimeter of the boundary line of the property involved in the application of the time, date and place of such public hearing at least 10 days prior to such hearing. Notice shall be deemed to have been given if mailed to the property owner at the tax billing address listed on the property tax records of the Town Assessor or at the property address. At least seven days prior to such hearing, the applicant shall file with the board his/her affidavit verifying the mailing of such notices. Failure of the property owners to receive such notice shall not be deemed a jurisdictional defect.

I. Compliance with New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code.

(1) Building permit applications shall be accompanied by standard drawings of structural components of the Solar Farm and all its components (including but not limited to Solar Panel, Solar Collector, Solar Energy System etc.). Drawings and any necessary calculations shall be certified, in writing, by a New York State registered professional engineer that the system complies with the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code. This certification would normally be supplied by the manufacturer.

- (2) Where the structure, components or installation vary from the standard design or specification, the proposed modification shall be certified by a New York State registered professional engineer for compliance with the structural design provisions of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code.
- J. Compliance with state, local and national electric codes.
 - (1) Building permit applications shall be accompanied by a line drawing identifying the electrical components of the Solar Farm to be installed in sufficient detail to allow for a determination that the manner of installation conforms with the National Electric Code. The application shall include a statement from a New York State registered professional engineer indicating that the electrical system conforms with good engineering practices and complies with the National Electric Code, as well as applicable state and local electrical codes. This certification would normally be supplied by the manufacturer. All equipment and materials shall be used or installed in accordance with such drawings and diagrams.
 - (2) Where the electrical components of an installation vary from the standard design or specifications, the proposed modifications shall be reviewed and certified by a New York State registered professional engineer for compliance with the requirements of the National Electric Code and good engineering practices.
- K. Following construction/installation of the Solar Farm, all disturbed areas where soil has been exposed shall be reseeded with grass and/or planted with low level vegetation capable of preventing soil erosion and airborne dust.
- L. Post Construction/Installation Certification. Following the construction/installation of the Solar Farm, the applicant shall provide a post-construction/installation certification from a professional engineer registered in New York State that the project complies with any and all applicable codes and industry practices and has been constructed and operating according to the drawings and development plan(s) submitted to the Town.
- M. Insurance. The applicant, owner, lessee or assignee shall maintain a current insurance policy which will cover installation and operation of the Solar Farm at all times. Said policy shall provide a minimum of \$2,000,000 property and personal liability coverage.
- N. Inspections. The Building Inspector, Zoning Enforcement Officer, Code Enforcement Officer and/or Town Engineer shall have the right at any reasonable time to enter, in the company of the owner or his agent, the premises on which a Solar Farm is being or is constructed, to inspect all parts of said Solar Farm installation and require that repairs or alterations be made if, in his judgment, there exists a deficiency in the operation or the structural stability of the Solar Farm or any component thereof. If necessary, the Building Inspector or Town Engineer may order the system secured or to otherwise cease operation. It shall not be required that the owner or agent be present in the event of an emergency situation involving danger to life, limb or property.

O. Power to impose conditions. In granting any site plan approval, special use permit or variance for a Solar Farm, the Zoning Board of Appeals or Planning Board, as the case may be, may impose reasonable conditions to the extent that such board finds that such conditions are necessary to minimize any adverse effect or impacts of the proposed use on neighboring properties and to protect the general health, safety and welfare of the Town and the public.

P. Decommissioning and Removal of Solar Farm Facilities.

- (1) The applicant shall agree, in writing, to remove the entirety of the Solar Farm and all accessory structures and components thereof if the Solar Farm ceases to be used for its intended purpose for twelve (12) consecutive months. Removal of such obsolete and/or unused Solar Farm components shall take place within three (3) months thereafter. The decommissioning plan shall identify the anticipated life of the project, method and process of removing all components of the Solar Farm and accessory structures/components and returning the site to its pre-existing condition and estimated decommissioning costs. Such agreement shall also include a commitment by the applicant to impose a similar obligation to remove any unused and/or obsolete Solar Panels upon any person subsequently securing rights to relocate the Solar Panels.
- (2) Bond/Security. The applicant shall be required to execute and file with the Town Clerk a bond, or other form of security acceptable to the Town Attorney and Engineer, in an amount sufficient for the faithful performance of the terms and conditions of the permit issued under this Section, and to provide the decommissioning removal and restoration of the site subsequent to the removal of the Solar Farm. The amount of the bond or security shall be no less than 150% of the cost of the removal of the Solar Panels and restoration of the site and shall be reviewed and adjusted at five (5) year intervals. In the event of a default upon performance of such condition or any of them, the bond or security shall be forfeited to the Town, which shall be entitled to maintain an action thereon. The bond or security shall remain in full force and effect until the complete removal of the Solar Panels and site restoration is finished.
- (3) If the Solar Farm owner, property owner, or operator of the Solar Farm as the case may be, fails to repair or remove a Solar Farm that ceases to be used for its intended purpose, the Town may enter the property, remove the system and charge the Solar Farm owner, property owner, or operator of the Solar Farm for all costs and expenses of the removal, including reasonable attorneys' fees or pursue other legal action to have the system removed at the Solar Farm owner's, property owner's, or operator's expense.

- (4) In addition to any other available remedies under this Section or the Zoning Law of the Town of Oswego, any unpaid costs resulting from the Town's removal of the Solar Farm shall constitute a lien upon the real property against which costs were charged and shall be assessed against the real property.
- Q. Time Limit on Completion. After the granting of a special permit for a Solar Farm with concurrent site plan approval, the building permit shall be obtained within six months and the project shall be substantially completed within twelve months. If not constructed, the special permit and/or site plan approval shall automatically lapse within twelve months after the date of approval by the Town of Oswego Planning Board.
- R. General Complaint Process. During construction, the Town Code Enforcement Officer may issue a stop order at any time for any violations of a special permit or building permit. After construction is complete, the permit holder of a Solar Farm shall establish a contact person, including name and phone number, for receipt of any complaint concerning any permit or operation of the Solar Farm.
- S. Fees. Fees for applications and permits under this Section 1100.7 shall be established by resolution of the Town Board of the Town of Oswego. It shall be the applicant's responsibility to reimburse the Town for all reasonable and necessary legal, engineering and other professional fees incurred by the Town in reviewing and administering an application for a Solar Farm under this Section 1100.7.
- T. Waiver. The Planning Board or the Zoning Board of Appeals may under appropriate circumstances, waive one or more of the submission requirements contained herein.

Section 1100.8. Host Community Benefit.

- A. Prior to the issuance of a building permit for any Solar Farm contemplated under this local law, the applicant shall enter into a Host Community Agreement with the Town of Oswego, which shall:
- (a) Contractually obligate the Applicant to comply with any terms and conditions of site plan approval of the Town Planning Board;
 - (b) Provide for payment by the Applicant to the Town of an impact fee to be used and applied by the Town to pay for and/or offset the costs and impacts incurred by and/or arising due to the development and/or operation of the solar energy system. The amount of such impact fee shall be established by the Town Board by resolution adopted from time to time, based upon the projected nameplate capacity, amount of energy produced by the project, and such other factors as the Board shall determine;
 - (c) Provide for such other contractual requirements as may be necessary given the specific elements of a particular project; and
 - (d) If the Applicant and/or owner of the project shall enter into an agreement with the County of Oswego Industrial Development Agency to provide for an abatement of real property taxes or other tax exemption or abatement, be cross-

defaulted with the agreements between the Applicant and/or owner and the County of Oswego Industrial Development Agency.

- B. The Town Board shall establish the Host Community Benefit and may base it on criteria to include a fee based on the total nameplate capacity of the Solar Energy System and other criteria determined by the Town Board.

SECTION 5. PERMITTED USES

Upon the effective date of this local law, “Solar Farms” shall be a permitted use in the Industrial (I) District; Agricultural/Residential (A/R) District and the Commercial/Light Industrial (C/LI) District subject to the issuance of a special use permit/site plan approval as more fully set forth herein.

SECTION 6. SEVERABILITY.

If the provisions of any article, section, subsection, paragraph, subdivision or clause of this Local Law shall be judged invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such order of judgment shall not affect or invalidate the remainder of any article, section, subsection, paragraph, subdivision or clause of this Local Law.

SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Local Law shall be effective upon filing with the office of the Secretary of State.