

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
Joint Ordinance and Environmental Committees
Town Hall Council Chambers
October 13, 2015, Tuesday

Ordinance Committee

Present: Kenneth DiFazio, Chairman
Michael Smart, Vice Chairman
Jane Hackett, Councilor
Arthur Mathews, Councilor
Patrick O'Connor, Councilor

Environmental Committee

Brian McDonald, Chairperson
Robert Conlon, Vice Chair
Jane Hackett, Councilor
Kenneth DiFazio, Councilor
Thomas J. Lacey, Councilor

Also Present: Carolyn Murray, Town Solicitor
James Clarke, Director of Planning
Jeff Richards, Director, Building Department
Eric Schneider, Principal Planner

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

Chairman Kenneth DiFazio called the Ordinance Committee meeting to order at 6:45 PM. Vice Chairman Conlon called the Environmental Committee meeting to order at 6:45 PM

15 106-Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Solar Photovoltaic Installation

15 107-Building Construction-Adoption of Massachusetts “Stretch Energy Code”

Chairman DiFazio noted the members received a letter dated October 8, 2015, that addressed the points brought forward at the last meeting. Since the last meeting, they went back and reviewed the areas of concern with the administration and departments, researched the comments, and met with departments to come up with solutions. In the memo, they addressed these areas:

- Potential impact of ground-mounted installations to abutters- the suggestion to add a 6-foot minimum height requirement. They reviewed industry standards and didn't find that a height requirement was the proper way to address the root concern. They reviewed other communities' ordinances that addressed through landscaping- screening with berms or shrubs or fencing to protect abutters.
- Signage for emergency responders-They found that signage is already addressed in the MA Comprehensive Fire Safety Code 527. Signage is required for all solar installations that includes notification and shutoff instructions. Language has been added to the ordinance- reinforcing it.
- Differentiating solar installation for purpose of generating electricity or hot water- those installations for generating hot water are not considered photovoltaic and are regulated by the building department. No change in the language is necessary there.

- Staffing restricted to licensed contractors/installers- this is covered in MGL Ch. 141 (including apprenticeship ratios) and language will be added to the proposed ordinance reinforcing the state mandate be followed. It will be monitored and enforced by the Building Department.
- Protection for Town in event of abandoned installation- language has been added which is already in use in other communities to prevent the town having to bear the cost of removing an installation. Mr. Clarke noted that the language was also reviewed and recommended by the town solicitor.

Mr. Schneider summarized that the ordinance as proposed will be much stronger for the town.

Councilor Mathews asked Mr. Clarke about a constituent's concerns with having panels installed on any town historic buildings. Mr. Clarke responded that he spoke with a member of the Historic Commission who has allayed those concerns. The town has no intention of doing that.

Vice Chairman Smart noted he likes the recommendations that have been made. Mr. Schneider noted that modern panels have less glare. Vice Chairman Conlon concurred with Vice Chairman Smart that the ordinance has been improved with the changes.

Chairman DiFazio noted the Planning Board intends to meet on Thursday to make its recommendation. Chairman DiFazio will schedule an Ordinance Committee following that on October 19, 2015 to recommend action to the Council. He asked for confirmation that this will allow the town sufficient time to file the application prior to the deadline.

At 7:00 PM, during the discussion, Chairman McDonald arrived.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:01PM, there being no further business, a motion was made by Vice Chairman Smart for the Ordinance Committee to adjourn and was seconded by Councilor Mathews. On behalf of the Environmental Committee a motion was made by Councilor Hackett to adjourn and was seconded by Councilor Lacey. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary

Approved by Kenneth DiFazio, Chairman of Ordinance Committee

Approved by Brian McDonald, Chairman of the Environmental Committee
Voted unanimously on 7 December 2015