

Belmont Energy Committee Meeting Minutes – 1/12/12

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Attendees: Jan Kruse  
Anthony Alcorn  
Ian Todreas  
Chris McVay  
Glenn Clancy  
Roger Colton  
Fred Domenici  
Steve Mazzola  
Peter Castanino  
Sami Baghdady

Roger Colton called the meeting to order at 8:09 AM and related that the main issue for this meeting will be the Solar Energy Zoning By-Law which is to come before the next Town Meeting. Roger also noted that Sami Baghdady, Chair of the Belmont Planning Board, was present for the Solar Array By-Law discussion.

Fred Domenici offered to make a presentation to the BEC (Belmont Energy Committee) on the Co-Generation project now being considered in the Belmont High School.

Roger asked Sami to address the Solar Array By-Law from the Planning Board's perspective. Sami responded with several points:

- The planning board is very much in favor of renewable energy and wants to promote its generation and use. However a very visible front yard solar array installation occurred on Washington Street which the neighbors (and other townspeople) viewed as inappropriate. Sami noted that the town had no zoning by-law that would allow the town to have this installation moved to a more suitable location. Only the name of the solar array maker, visible from the street and therefore constituting illegal advertising, was the bases for requiring the solar array be removed from the front yard.
- The matter came to the attention of the BOS (Board of Selectmen) who then requested that the planning board address the issue and to provide a zoning by-law to regulate solar arrays in Belmont.
- Also the BMLD net metering interconnect policy would pave the way for more solar projects in town.
- Jan Kruse asked why we can't wait for the DOER provided model by-law for small scale solar array regulation, as they had recently received a grant to develop one. Sami responded that DOER has not yet produced such a sample by-law and has not

announced a schedule for it. Further, Sami continued, currently the town has no protection from inappropriate solar array installations and we need to put a process in place.

There then followed a lengthy and many pointed discussion on the solar array by-law. The BEC position, generally, was the by-law was too restrictive and flawed in several ways. Sami argued that planning board had made a large investment of time and effort to craft this by-law and did not agree that it was flawed.

In the end Roger and Sami agreed to have a further meeting and to discuss the by-law and to see if the planning board and the BEC could arrive at a position which both could support

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 AM

Submitted by Tony Alcorn, Recording Secretary