

## **Solar Energy Systems Bylaw (Medfiled)**

**DRAFT 12.17.20**

### **§ 300-XX.1 Purpose.**

The purpose of this Article is to promote and regulate the use of residential, commercial and municipal solar energy systems within the Town of Medfield and encourage their location and use in a manner which minimizes negative visual and environmental impacts on scenic, natural and historic resources and to the residents of Medfield. The purpose is also to provide adequate financial assurance for the eventual decommissioning of such installations. The provisions set forth in this section shall take precedence over all other sections of the Medfield Zoning Bylaws when considering applications related to the construction, operation and/or repair of solar energy systems.

### **§ 300-XX.2 Applicability.**

The requirements of this law shall apply for all Solar Energy Systems installed or modified after its effective date, excluding general maintenance and repair.

### **§ 300-XX.3 Definitions.**

As used in this Article, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

#### **AS-OF-RIGHT SITING**

As-of-right siting shall mean that development may proceed without the need for a special permit, variance, amendment, waiver, or other discretionary approval; as-of-right development shall be subject to site plan approval by the Planning Board pursuant to § 300-14.12.

#### **GROUND-MOUNTED SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC INSTALLATION**

A solar photovoltaic system that is structurally mounted on the ground, including a parking canopy.

#### **LARGE-SCALE GROUND-MOUNTED SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC INSTALLATION**

A solar photovoltaic system that is structurally mounted on the ground and is not roof-mounted, and has a minimum nameplate capacity of 250 kW DC.

#### **MEDIUM-SCALE GROUND MOUNTED SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC ARRAY:**

An Solar Energy System that is equivalent to a rated nameplate capacity of between 10 kW - 250 kW DC and is structurally mounted on the ground.

#### **ON-SITE SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC INSTALLATION**

A solar photovoltaic installation that is constructed at a location where other uses of the underlying property occur.

#### **RATED NAMEPLATE CAPACITY**

The maximum rated output of electric power production of the photovoltaic system in direct

current (DC).

### **RELATED EQUIPMENT OR FACILITIES**

Any equipment, building, structure, access way, landscaping or other means used to support the operation, or disguise the appearance, of a solar photovoltaic tower, antenna, or transmitting or receiving equipment of any kind.

### **SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM:**

A device whose primary purpose is to harvest energy for space heating or cooling, electricity generation, or water heating.

### **SOLAR PARKING CANOPY SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC ARRAY :**

A special application of a Ground-mounted Solar Energy System that is installed on top of a functional parking surface (striped, in use) that maintains the function of the area beneath the canopy.

### **ROOF-MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM:**

A Solar Energy System that is structurally mounted to the roof of a building or structure. This is intended to serve as an accessory use to the primary use on the property and may be used to provide electricity, hot water, or space heating and cooling. Intended to be small or medium scale (up to 250 kW).

### **SMALL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM:**

A Solar Energy System either attached to the roof or ground that produced electricity up to 10 kW DC.

### **SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC ARRAY**

An arrangement of solar photovoltaic panels used to create electricity.

### **UTILITY**

A system of wires or conductors and supporting structures that functions in the transmission of electrical energy or communication services (both audio and video) between generating stations, substations, and transmission lines.

### **§ 300- XX.X Use Regulations**

1. Roof-Mounted Solar Energy Systems of any size shall be permitted as a by-right accessory use in all use districts.
2. The installation of Roof-mounted Solar Energy Systems that:
  - A. comply with the regulations provided in this section; and
  - B. are located on properties with nonconforming uses or structures; and
  - C. do not increase the nonconformity of such nonconforming uses or structures except with respect to the dimensions of the Roof- mounted Solar Energy

System in question shall not be considered a change, extension or alteration that requires a finding by the Zoning Board of Appeals per M.G.L. c.40A s.6.

3. Where Solar Energy Systems would be installed in a Historic District, the system shall require approval by the Historic District Commission.

**§ 300-XX.X Dimension, density, and parking requirements.**

A. For roof-mounted solar energy systems dimensional requirements shall be as follows:

- (1) Minimum lot area: None.
- (2) Setbacks: Roof-mounted solar energy systems shall comply with existing setbacks. Setbacks from the roofline shall comply with safety requirements in the State Building, Electrical, and Fire Codes.
- (3) Height: Roof-mounted solar energy systems shall be exempt from underlaying height requirements. Where the pitch of the roof is 15 degrees or greater, solar energy systems shall be mounted parallel to the roof surface.

**§ 300-19.10 Safety and environmental standards.**

- A. Emergency services. The large-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic installation owner or operator shall provide a copy of the project summary, electrical schematic, and site plan to the Fire Chief. The owner or operator shall coordinate and train local emergency services and develop an emergency response plan that includes a twenty-four-hour per day, seven days a week contact. The means to shut down the solar photovoltaic installation will be clearly marked. The owner or operator shall identify a responsible person for public inquiries throughout the life of the installation.

**§ 300-XX.X Municipal Solar Energy Systems**

Notwithstanding the Solar Energy Use Provisions above, solar energy systems, whether ground- mounted or roof-mounted, of any scale, may be installed as of right on municipally-owned or leased property in all zoning districts. Ground-mounted solar energy systems on municipally-owned or leased land require site plan review. The same dimensional, design and general requirements that apply to privately installed and operated solar energy systems shall apply to solar energy systems installed on municipally-owned property.