

The Public Service Department (Department) offers the following concepts to the Solar Siting Task Force with the goal of improving the siting, design, and regulatory review of solar electric generation facilities.

Siting

Planning

- **Expand RPC planning to all regions.** This will allow all regions to undertake a comprehensive analysis of regional energy needs and resources, in consultation with their member towns, and develop plans that include specific strategies for conservation, energy efficiency, and reduced use of fossil fuels along with identification of the most appropriate locations for new renewable (thermal and electric) energy generation projects.
- **Technical assistance, training, and tools for towns to undertake deep energy planning.** This follow-on work to the regional energy planning will allow towns to undertake analysis of their energy needs and resources and chart pathways toward sustainability.

Incentives

Financial

- **Built environment premium and/or set-asides in net metering and Standard Offer,** along the lines of the DPS's comments in the Act 99 workshops. This will encourage projects to be developed in areas that have already been impacted, and discourage projects in greenfields/prime ag lands, by leveling the financial playing field.
- **Allow for NM > 500 kW for projects on built environment with host town support.** This is similar to the provision in Act 99 that allowed for development of net-metered projects up to 5 MW on landfills if towns are the offtakers, which will sunset at the end of 2016. It will encourage early engagement with towns to locate projects in preferred areas by rewarding developers with greater economies of scale and potentially greater incentives.

Regulatory

- **Preferential treatment for net metering projects that include neighbors.** This could take the form of financial or regulatory incentives for projects that benefit neighbors. This will encourage projects to site near the individuals who will experience both the rewards and externalities of the project.
- **Preferential treatment for projects sited in town-designated preferred solar areas.** If towns signal to developers the best sites for solar projects, and solar projects are able to be sited in those areas, those projects should receive favorable regulatory and/or

financial treatment. This will encourage engagement between developers and towns and should result in better-sited projects.

Design

- **Move toward self-generation requirement in commercial building codes** (with a target of Net Zero by 2030). This will build upon incremental, optional steps to encourage solar in the 2015 residential building energy standards and commercial building energy standards and will result in new load being served by on-site generation to the extent possible.

Regulatory Review

Process

- **Provide for post-construction aesthetics compliance review**, with the option for towns to assume authority for inspection and reporting of violations to the Public Service Board should the project owner fail to remedy problems. This will encourage ongoing and constructive dialogue between developers and towns, and give towns recourse to ensure CPG permit conditions are followed.

Criteria

- **Ensure ability of Agency of Agriculture to effectively participate in 248 process**