

Abstract to Local Law #1 of 2021 (Solar Law) for Publishing

Local Law #1 of 2021, adopted by the Town of Ancram Town Board on April 15, 2021, amends the 2020 Zoning Law to establish new regulations pertaining to the development of solar facilities in Ancram:

1. The law adds definitions for all solar-related terms included.
2. The law updates the Use Table and allows solar facilities as follows:
 - a. Allow in all zoning districts small-scale (on-site use and 25 KW or less) use of solar generation facilities (rooftop, flush-mounted, and building-integrated systems) scaled for homes, individual businesses, and farms as a permitted use without Planning Board review. Further, the law allows in all zoning districts ground-mounted and freestanding systems generating 25 KW or less electricity with a site plan/special use permit from the Planning Board. All small systems will need to meet the general design and siting requirements. Storage batteries located on the same site as a small-scale solar energy facilities are also permitted uses, and those associated with a small scale facility on a different parcel will require site plan/special use approval.
 - b. Community-scale systems are allowed in the Ag District with site plan/special use permit approval by the Planning Board. They shall not exceed 10 acres in size, and must meet specific design and siting standards, including development of a decommissioning plan.
 - c. Utility-scale solar energy systems greater than 10 acres that generate <20 megawatts of electricity are prohibited in all zoning districts. Consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan, the many environmental features Ancram seeks to protect through this prohibition include unique habitats, wetlands, steep slopes/ridgelines, hydrogeologically sensitive areas, important stream habitats, floodplains, important animal and plant areas, natural heritage communities, significant biodiversity areas, important forest patches, and areas with prime farmland and soils of statewide importance.
 - d. Utility-scale solar energy systems generating 20 megawatts or more of electricity are prohibited in all zoning districts. The law recognizes the NYS Section 94-c regulations in siting and permitting these large-scale renewable energy projects, and in the case that a 20 megawatt or greater facility were to be proposed and reviewed by the New York State Renewable Energy Siting Office, the law establishes significant siting and design standards expected to be applied for implementation through the State 94-c process.
3. General design and siting requirements serve to minimize impacts of solar development on stormwater runoff; glare; adjacent neighbors (through setbacks); wildlife; and community character. It minimizes impacts through use of screening and buffering, and through careful siting of the facility that protects the many unique natural resources found in Ancram. The Law also promotes use of pollinator friendly vegetation, promotes

agrivoltaic dual uses on the property to allow for agriculture, decreases light pollution, and mitigates impacts on wildlife travel corridors.