

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 5.11.5 AND 5.11.6 OF THE TOWN OF SMITHFIELD ZONING ORDINANCE ENTITLED "PRINCIPAL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS" AND "GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESSORY AND PRINCIPAL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS"

IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED BY THE TOWN OF SMITHFIELD AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Sections 5.11.5 and Sections 5.11.6 of the Town of Smithfield Zoning Ordinance are hereby amended as follows:

5.11 SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

...

5.11.5 Principal Solar Energy Systems.

- A. Principal solar energy systems shall be permitted in the zones indicated in the Smithfield Zoning Ordinance, Article 4.3, Table of Uses.
- B. All panels, equipment, and structures associated with a principal solar energy system shall meet the principal setback requirements prescribed by the zoning district in which they are located, except that ground-mounted solar energy systems shall be set back from property lines abutting residentially zoned parcels, or parcels containing residential uses, a minimum of three hundred feet (300'), and from property lines abutting public and private roads a minimum one hundred and fifty feet (150').

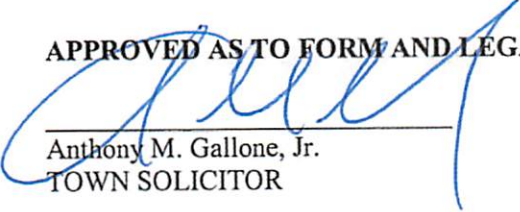
5.11.6 General Requirements For Accessory And Principal Solar Energy Systems.

- E. Solar energy systems shall be sited and designed to minimize any negative aesthetic impacts on neighboring properties, or on prominent viewsheds. The design shall incorporate landscaping and design elements to visually screen the solar energy system from view from public roads and adjoining properties on a year round basis.
- G. Applicants proposing ground-mounted solar energy systems are required to provide a buffer that adequately mitigates visual impacts on surrounding properties and the neighborhood in general on a year round basis. The type of buffer should be based on the context and characteristics of the specific site, and shall be done in consultation with a landscape architect and may include , but are not limited to one or more of the following: ...
- L. Any applicant proposing a solar energy system that includes clearing more than 20,000 square feet of forested area shall assess the impacts of the forest loss and how the impacts can be mitigated. At a minimum, the following issues must be addressed: water quality, wildlife habitats, carbon sequestration, energy storage, and the effects on adjacent properties. Additional requirements include:

1. Clearing of natural vegetation shall be strictly limited to what is necessary for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the solar energy system, but in no case shall more than 25% of the forested area of any lot be cleared for the purpose of installing a solar energy system.
2. All stumps from the cleared area must be removed, disposed of off-site, or ground on-site after removal. Otherwise clearing of natural vegetation shall be strictly limited to what is necessary for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the solar energy system or otherwise prescribed by applicable laws, regulations, and ordinances.
3. Removal of trees within a required buffer as described in Section 333-5 of the Smithfield Code of Ordinances shall be subject to receipt of a Tree Permit, which shall be approved at the discretion of the Town Engineer. Excavation and filling of project sites shall be limited to what is necessary to stabilize the installation area.
4. Solar energy systems shall utilize shade pruning rather than clear cutting wherever feasible.

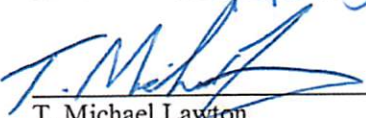
Section 2. These Ordinance Amendments shall take effect Thirty (30) days after their adoption by the Smithfield Town Council.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

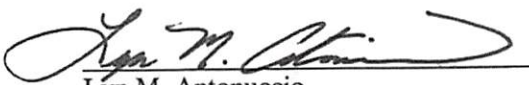


Anthony M. Gallone, Jr.
TOWN SOLICITOR

ADOPTED: 10/3/2023



T. Michael Lawton
TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT



Lyn M. Antonuccio
TOWN CLERK

