Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Town of Northbridge
PROCEEDINGS OF SPECIAL TOWN MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2018 – 7:00 PM
Northbridge Middle School
Linwood Avenue

The Special Town Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by the Moderator,
Harold D. Gould, Jr., at the Northbridge Middle School on Linwood Avenue, in Whittinsville, in said
Northbridge, Massachusetts. The Moderator declared the Town Quorum of 50 present. The number of
registered voters in attendance at 6:59 p.m. was 88.

The pledge of allegiance to the American Flag was recited.

Upon motion made and seconded and voted unanimously, the reading of the warrant and the return of
service thereof were dispensed with.

ARTICLE 1: Moved and seconded that the Town vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw, Chapter 173 of the Code of
Northbridge, Article XX [Large-Scale Solar Photovoltaic Installations] by adding the following new
subsections to provide for a "Community Shared Solar Overlay District", as follows:

§ 173-136.1 Community Shared Solar Overlay District (CSSOD)
The Community Shared Solar Overlay District (CSSOD) is hereby established as an overlay district within
the Town of Northbridge. All requirements pertaining to the underlying district(s) shall continue to be in full
force and effect, except where the provisions of the CSSOD supersede such underlying requirements or
provide for an alternative to such requirement(s).

§ 173-136.2 Purpose
The purpose of the Community Shared Solar Overlay District (CSSOD) is to allow for the siting, construction
and operation of a Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installation (LSGPI).

§ 173-136.3 Location
The boundaries of the Community Shared Solar Overlay District (CSSOD) are shown on map entitled
"Northbridge, Massachusetts Zoning Overlay District Map" prepared by CMRPC-Central Massachusetts
Regional Planning Commission dated December 19, 2017. The CSSOD is comprised of land identified on
the 2017 Northbridge Assessors’ Map 27, as Parcels 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 29, and 89.

§ 173-136.4 Permitted Use
The provisions of the CSSOD apply to the construction of solar photovoltaic systems as defined herein and
in accordance with Article XX, Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installations, of the
Northbridge Zoning Bylaw.

§ 173-136.5 Definitions
A. Appurtenant Structures. All structures, the use of which is appurtenant (secondary to) a solar
photovoltaic system, including but not limited to equipment shelters, storage facilities, transformers, and
substations.

B. Community Shared Solar. A Community Shared Solar (CSS) project is a solar photovoltaic system that
provides benefits such as electricity, net metering credits, and return on investment to multiple participants.
A CSS project is a project hosted by an entity and supported by multiple participants, who invest in the
project or purchase the electricity or net metering credits generated.

C. Hazardous Materials. Hazardous materials stored, used or generated on site shall not exceed the
amount for a Very Small Quantity Generator of Hazardous Waste (VSQG) as defined by the Massachusetts
Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) pursuant to regulations at 310 CMR 30.000, and shall meet
all requirements of the DEP, including storage of hazardous materials. If hazardous materials are utilized
within the solar electric equipment, impervious containment areas capable of controlling any release to the
environment and to prevent potential contamination of groundwater shall be required.

D. Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installation. A solar photovoltaic system that is
structurally mounted on the ground and is not roof-mounted, has a minimum nameplate capacity of 250 kW
DC, and generates power utilized at least in part off-site.

E. Rated Nameplate Capacity. The maximum rated output of electric power production of the photovoltaic
system in direct current (DC).

F. Solar Array. Solar panels arranged in a group to capture sunlight to be converted into usable electricity.

G. Solar Photovoltaic (PV) System. A power system designed to supply usable solar power by means of
photovoltaics, consisting of an arrangement of several components, including solar panels to absorb and
convert sunlight into electricity, a solar inverter to change the electrical current from DC to AC, and other related electrical accessories.

H. Special Permit Granting Authority. The Planning Board shall be the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA) for solar photovoltaic systems within the Community Shared Solar Overlay District (CSSOD).

§ 173-136.6 Special Permit
In accordance with §173-74 [Special permits], the Planning Board may issue a special permit for solar photovoltaic systems pursuant to the requirements and standards noted herein upon site plan review and approval of same in accordance with §173-48.1 [Site plan review by the Planning Board].

§ 173-136.7 General Requirements
In addition to the general requirements provided for in §173-136 for Large-Scale Solar Photovoltaic Installations, the following requirements shall apply to Community Shared Solar systems.

A. Compliance with laws and regulations. The construction and operation of Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic installations (LGSPI) shall be consistent with all applicable local, state and federal requirements, including but not limited to all applicable safety, construction, electrical, and communications requirements. All buildings and fixtures forming part of a solar photovoltaic installation shall be constructed in accordance with the State Building Code.

B. Building permits. No LGSPI shall be constructed, installed or modified except in accordance with a duly issued building permit.

C. Site plan review. No LGSPI shall be constructed, installed or modified except in conformity with a site plan approval by the Planning Board. The Planning Board shall consider and apply the requirements set forth herein and as provided for in §173-136 [General requirements].

D. Setbacks and screening. Minimum setbacks for a LGSPI shall be as follows: a minimum front lot depth of 100-feet; minimum side lot depth of 50-feet and minimum rear lot depth of 50-feet. Every abutting property shall be visually screened from the LGSPI through any one or combination of the following: location, distance, plantings, existing vegetation and fencing. No setbacks shall be required for interior parcel lot lines of adjoining parcels held in common ownership within the CSSOD.

E. Building lot. A LGSPI shall be permitted on contiguous parcels of land of one hundred acres or more within the CSSOD and having a minimum lot width of 50-feet on a public way within the Town of Northbridge. Adjoining interior parcels without frontage that are held in common ownership shall be considered toward the 100-acre requirement for a LGSPI application. A LGSPI shall be permitted on multiple adjoining parcels through the issuance of a single building permit.

F. Lot access. Access to a LGSPI may be provided via the qualifying frontage or from adjoining parcels held in common ownership as may be approved by the Planning Board as part of site plan review.

Attendance at 7:20 p.m.: 101 registered voters

Action having been completed on the Article on the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting, a motion was made and seconded to dissolve the Warrant and adjourn the Town Meeting.

Voted unanimously at 7:55 p.m. to dissolve the Warrant and adjourn the Special Town Meeting.

A TRUE COPY

ATTEST: 

Doreen A. Cedrone, CMC, CMMC

Town Clerk