

Petition for Special Town Meeting

Article I: Support for legislation to make Community Solar shares exempt from taxation on the same basis as if installed on-site

To see if the Town will vote to instruct the Board of Selectmen to convey, in writing, to Representative Jen Benson and Senator Jamie Eldridge, the Town’s support for legislation making shares in a community solar energy system exempt from taxation on the same basis as if the shares were installed on the properties of the residential and/or non-utility business share owners.

Article 2: PILOT (Payment In Lieu of Taxes) for Community Solar systems

To see if the Town will vote to approve PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) for one or more Community Solar systems, to be installed in the Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Facilities Overlay District; provided, however, that PILOT agreement(s) will be null and void if at any time during the term of the agreement(s) such shares become exempt from taxation by legislation, or by change in regulations.

Article 3: Amend Building Permit Fees, add “Community Solar” following “Solar Panels”

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Harvard Building Department Building Permit Fees schedule by adding, after Solar Panels, the category Community Solar, with the building permit fee determined by the number of full or partial 10 kW portions in the Community Solar system, multiplied by the single system fee of \$125. For example, an array of 261 kW would be charged a fee of \$3,375. To qualify for this permit category, the project must be wholly owned by residents and/or non-utility businesses located in the same utility load zone, for the purpose of heating or otherwise supplying not more than 125 per cent of the annual energy needs of each of the owners of the system or device; provided that (i) the ownership units shall be less than or equal to 15 kilowatts each, and (ii) the system or device must be sited in the Large-Scale Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Facilities Overlay District. Electrical inspection fees for Community Solar systems shall be determined by the same multiple of 10 kW portions, multiplied by \$36.

<p>Instructions to Signers For your signatures to be valid you must be a registered voter in the town of Harvard and your signature should be written as substantially registered. If you are prevented by physical disability from writing, you may authorize some person to write your name and residence in your presence.</p>	<p>Signer’s Statement We, the undersigned, are qualified voters in the Town of Harvard, Massachusetts, and in accordance with the provisions of the law request a special town meeting for the purpose stated above.</p>
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	Check	Signature (to be made in person with name substantially as registered)	Printed Name	Street Address
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Attention Voters: Before signing read signer information on the other side.

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WARNING – Criminal penalty for unlawfully signing, altering, defacing, mutilating or destroying this petition: fine of up to \$1,000 or imprisonment for one year.

Instructions to Registrars:

- You must time stamp or write date and time these papers are received.
- Check ✓ against the names of each qualified voter to be certified. For names not certified use code on right.
- Draw a line through any blank spaces not containing a signature.
- Each check must be certified by three registrars.

N – No such registered voter at this address.

S – Unable to identify a signature or address as that of a voter because of form of signature or address

T – Already signed the petition

<p>Certification of Names</p> <p>Town of Harvard, Month and Day _____</p> <p>We certify that _____ Number of names</p> <p>Above signatures checked thus ✓ are the names of qualified voters from the town of Harvard.</p>	<p>At least three registrars must be signed or stamped below.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Registrar of Voters or Election Commissioner of Harvard</p>
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Signers Gatherer: Please obtain name and email address for each person that signs the petition

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Harvard Community Solar Special Town Meeting Goals

Purpose:

As much as possible, a share in a Community Solar project is treated the same as solar installed on-site residential and/or small business.

Recent guidance: DOER decision June 28 to include projects approved by MassCEC as Community Solar in SREC-1, same as projects 100 kW and less (see hsgarden.org, Learn More, SRECs).

Recommendation: Use same criteria to distinguish Community Solar from large-scale commercial, and make tax and permit decisions accordingly.

Local Tax

On-site residential and small business is exempt for 20 years. Exemption for Community Solar may become statutory, if Benson/Eldridge legislation becomes law.

Recommendation:

Letter of support to Benson/Eldridge, for Community Solar exemption legislation being brought forward.

If project is operational before exemption legislation is enacted, PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) will be needed to minimize unequal treatment of Community Solar. Vote for PILOT, to take effect until/unless exemption legislation passes.

Building permits and electrical inspections

For Solarize, new permit category "Solar Panels" was created - \$125 building permit fee, \$36 per inspection for electrical inspections.

Applying this schedule to shares in a Community Solar system, assuming 50 shares of 10 kW each in a 500 kW system, the building permit fee would be \$6,250. An electrical inspections fee of \$1,800 ($\36×50) would cover the likely number of inspections.

The state of California passed legislation earlier this year covering PV solar permit fees, based on the principle of fees based on the cost of inspection services, that would yield a permit fee of \$3,620 for a 500 kW array.

Recommendation: Use the existing Solar Panels permit category with a fixed number of 10 kW shares. Such a formula is nearly double the California model, but less than half the permit fee applying existing commercial value-based rate.