

# Town of Manchester Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes

## January 7, 2025 – 7:00pm

**Present:** Chairman Kenneth Blazey; Board Members Jessica Hemenway, Michael Blazey, and Jacob Maslyn; Code Enforcement Officer Marty Barnett; and Secretary Laurel Pitcher.

**Absent:** Board Member Leonard Bolton.

**Also Present:** Jesse Cook and Mark Taylor.

**Application #4663-25:** Consider Area Variance #4663-25 submitted by Mark Taylor who is requesting to install a 23.92kw roof mounted solar array when the code only allows up to a 10kw roof mount on property located at 3099 Bunker Hill Rd, tax map no. 33.00-1-35.111 in an Ag district pursuant to Chapter 325 Section 40.33-B-1.

The meeting began with Chairman Blazey reading the public hearing notice. Jesse, a representative of Geotherm Inc. then discussed the project. He said that the array will be going on the back of Mark Taylor's existing barn, and the array will not be bigger than normal solar panels. He also said that there won't be much visibility from the road or other properties. Jesse said that the goal of this is to match the property's energy usage to the production from these solar panels, and the cost will be in the \$61,000 ballpark before any incentives or tax credits. The incentives will bring the cost down considerably.

Board Member Jacob Maslyn asked why the applicant is different from the property owner, and Mr. Cook said he's applying on behalf of Mr. Taylor. Mr. Maslyn also asked when the solar panels would be installed and if the extra power would be going back into the grid. Jesse said that they're just waiting for the weather to improve, and he also said that the extra power will be going to the grid.

Chairman Ken Blazey asked the applicant if there's a difference in energy production on days depending on the weather. Jesse said that energy production does depend on the weather in terms of the amount of sun, but it also depends on the time of year. He said that there's more hours of daylight in the summer, which plays a big role. Mr. Cook talked about the specific plan for Mr. Taylor's property, saying that any extra production in the summer will go to the grid and be credited to Mr. Taylor for future use. Then, when there's less energy production in the winter, Mr. Taylor can pull energy from the grid and use his credits. Ideally, this system will produce enough energy to counteract the current energy usage of the property.

Chairman Blazey asked the applicant how long the panels will last and what will happen when they are no longer usable. Jesse Cook said that there is a 25-year warranty on the solar array, but they should last beyond that. He said that there are recycling programs for solar panels, which would be utilized if the panels were no longer usable. The Board then discussed potential damage to the solar panels and what would happen in that case. Jesse Cook is confident that the panels are not easily damaged. He talked about the recent hailstorm in Farmington, and he said that they ended up removing the panels there because the roof was damaged, but the panels were not.

Code Enforcement Officer Marty Barnett asked how long it usually takes for the investment to be worth it. Mark Taylor said that he typically spends about \$3800 per year on electricity, so he's hoping it will even out fairly quickly. Jesse Cook said that the average for a roof-mounted solar array is 7-10 years.

Chairman Blazey asked the applicant if there are problems with the array in the future, will Geotherm handle the maintenance of that? Mr. Cook said that this type of solar panel doesn't require much upkeep, but yes, they would do any necessary maintenance. He also mentioned that this type of energy production is a really good option because there aren't moving parts, and it doesn't harm birds.

No further questions were had, so Chairman Blazey and the Board Members reviewed the Area Variance Findings and Decision Form. Those questions are listed below.

1. Whether undesirable change would be produced in character or neighborhood or detriment to nearby properties; the Board answered no.
2. Whether benefit sought by the applicant can be achieved by a feasible alternative to the variance; the Board answered no.
3. Whether the requested area variance is substantial; the Board answered no.
4. Whether the variance would have an adverse impact on the physical or environmental conditions in the neighborhood; the Board answered no.

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5. Whether the alleged difficulty was self-created; the Board answered no.

The Zoning Board of Appeals concluded that the benefit to the applicant DOES NOT impose a detriment to the neighborhood or community.

A motion was made by Jessica Hemenway to approve Area Variance #4663-25 submitted by Mark Taylor who is requesting to install a 23.92kw roof mounted solar array when the code only allows up to a 10kw roof mount on property located at 3099 Bunker Hill Rd, tax map no. 33.00-1-35.111 in an Ag district pursuant to Chapter 325 Section 40.33-B-1. Motion seconded by Michael Blazey. All voted “Aye.” Motion carried.

At this time the meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth Blazey  
Chairman, Zoning Board of Appeals

Laurel Pitcher  
Recording Secretary