

Town of Manchester Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes

May 6, 2025 – 7:00pm

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

Absent: Board Member Michael Blazey.

Also Present: Kathy Blazey and Jeremy Seiling.

Application #4666-25: Consider Area Variance #4666-25 submitted by Andrew Clark who is requesting to install a 23.8kw roof mounted solar array when the code only allows up to a 10kw system on property located at 3985 Armington Rd, tax map no. 11.00-2-55.000 in an Ag district pursuant to Chapter 325 Section 40.33B.

Chairman Ken Blazey began the meeting by reading the public hearing notice. Chairman Blazey noted that this application meets all requirements except that it's larger than the current code allows. He then asked Jeremy Seiling, the panel installer, if he's run into similar zoning regulations anywhere else. Jeremy said he has not. Code Enforcement Officer Marty Barnett noted that the Planning Board and Town Board are in the beginning phases of amending the solar code to increase the allowable size.

Board Member Jacob Maslyn asked what the average panel size is, and Jeremy said that it depends on what the customer needs. Jeremy said that they try to build the system so that it produces enough electricity to offset the customer's annual usage. Marty Barnett asked why a solar array might be built for say 25kw if the customer only uses about 15kw. Jeremy explained that this helps the customer produce extra electricity during the peak seasons like summer, which is then banked by the electric company to offset low production times like winter.

Board Member Jessica Hemenway asked how long the solar panels last, and Jeremy said they have either a 20- or a 30-year warranty. Jessica asked if the company offers a recycling program at the end of the solar panel's lifetime, and Jeremy said they do not currently offer anything like that. He did say that there are some changes in the works right now, and that there might be something offered in the future.

A discussion was had surrounding the Town of Manchester solar code and the solar codes of other surrounding municipalities. The Town of Manchester Planning Board began discussions at their last meeting and intends to continue discussing updates to the solar code in future meetings. Marty Barnett gave the Zoning Board an overview of those discussions and plans.

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.
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 #4666-25 submitted by Andrew Clark who is requesting to install a 23.8kw roof mounted solar array when the code only allows up to a 10kw system on property located at 3985 Armington Rd, tax map no. 11.00-2-55.000 in an Ag district pursuant to Chapter 325 Section 40.33B. Motion seconded by Leonard Bolton. All voted "Aye." Motion carried.

Town of Manchester Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes May 6, 2025– 7:00pm (cont.)

Previous Minutes:

A motion was made by Kenneth Blazey to approve the minutes from the last two meetings which took place on December 3, 2024 and January 7, 2025. Motion seconded by Jacob Maslyn. All voted “Aye.” Motion carried.

At this time the meeting was adjourned at 7:13pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth Blazey
Chairman, Zoning Board of Appeals

Laurel Pitcher
Recording Secretary