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BOARD OF BUILDING REGULATIONS AND
STANDARDS NOTICE OF VIRTUAL MEETING
Solar Setback Subcommittee

In accordance with the provisions of G.L. c. 30A § 20, notice is hereby given that the Solar Setback Subcommittee of the Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) convened a meeting in accordance with G.L. c143 § 97 on January 24, 2025:

Regular Meeting Minutes

- 1) Roll Call
- 2) Approval of Minutes from 12/20/24
Jacob Nunnemacher made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Ian Finlayson.
Motion passed unanimously.
- 3) Work product to be created by this subcommittee
 - a) Proposed amendments to the 10th edition building code regarding solar installations
Board Members reviewed a proposed solar array using NH code language and observed the difference with the lack of ridge setbacks, and the impact that has on the total size of the solar system and the economic impact of that.

Board members debated about the total percentage roof area that can be filled with solar arrays. Jake Nunnemacher and Jason Ferschke expressed concern about making sure that the roof allows access to firefighting roof operations.

Mark Durrenberger suggested the possibility of a waiver system to allow homeowners to opt in or out of roof operations during fires, and if they opt out of roof operations, then there would be no need to follow regulations on solar setbacks. Jacob Nunnemacher expressed many concerns with this proposal.

Chief Ferschke reminded the committee that a goal is to find a common ground between the solar industry and the fire industry. He also stated that the main cause of deaths in fires is due to smoke inhalation, and roof ventilation helps to remove smoke from a burning building.

The board recognized both Richard Arruda and Chris Towski and they voiced their concerns for firefighter safety and the need to be able to safely ventilate a roof during firefighting operations.

Sam Pillsbury proposed increasing the 33% percent of plan view roof area expressed in R324.6 to be increased to 50%. A lengthy discussion ensued, and the board members decided to wait on a final vote on this proposal until the next meeting.

Luke McKneally addressed the changes discussed in this meeting and told the board he will provide a clean draft for board review at the next meeting.

Mark Durrenberger suggested a conversation for a clearer definition for a “means of egress”. Jacob Nunnemacher explained there is an “emergency escape and rescue opening” definition in the IRC language that clarifies this issue. Mark Durrenberger suggested giving some examples to review for the next meeting. This will be a topic of discussion at the next meeting.

The board members discussed the creation of a clarifying guidance document. This will be addressed at the next meeting.

Items Relied Upon

Agenda
Code language
Draft Minutes
Recording

If you need reasonable accommodations, to participate in the meeting please reach out to Cheryl Yebba at 617-701-8711. While the Board will do its best to accommodate you, certain accommodations may not be available if requested immediately before the meeting

