

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS Urging the Connecticut General Assembly, Governor Malloy, the Governor's Council on Climate Change, and the electric distribution companies to support "community shared solar" legislation. (New Haven Environmental Advisory Council)

REPORT: 1532-15

ADVICE: Approval

BACKGROUND

A community solar project is usually a large solar garden with multiple investors who are often connected geographically. Depending on state laws and the goals and needs of the specific group, the garden can be hooked up directly to the utility, or it can be virtually net metered, or a host site can be utilized. However, not all community solar projects involve a common solar array. Some efforts have focused on dispersing information about available solar panel systems, and some are simply aiming to reduce the prices for individual ownership.

Two years ago the legislature authorized a pilot program for community solar, but the pilot has been delayed several times and has still not moved forward, while neighboring states have made significant gains and opened up statewide programs in that time.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Currently, only property owners can apply for residential solar installation programs. Community shared solar is of particular benefit to New Haven residents as it makes the financial and clean energy benefits of solar available to urban dwellers. Currently renters and people who do not own their rooftops, as well as any locations that are shaded or face away from the sun, cannot take advantage of the existing solar offerings. However, there is potential in New Haven for "community shared solar" development projects using City or State land, parking lots, large commercial rooftops etc.

ADVICE

The Commission finds the Resolution in the best interest of the City and recommends approval.

ADOPTED: June 21, 2017
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director