

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Monday, May 6, 2024

At 7:00 O'clock in the Evening
At the Pioneer Valley Regional School, 97 F. Sumner Turner Rd.

147 Registered Voters in attendance. Meeting START at 7:09 PM

ARTICLE 26: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Northfield ZONING BYLAWS by amending the Definitional Section of the Zoning Bylaw and adding a new Section as follows:

Battery energy storage facility: A series of containers or cabinets containing batteries and related equipment designed to store electrical energy for periodic resale to the wholesale energy market and/or other customers on the electrical grid. This includes all accessory equipment necessary for energy storage, including, but not limited to, inverters, transformers, cooling equipment, switching gear, metering equipment, transmission tie-lines, other power interconnection facilities and/or a project substation.

And by inserting the following new section as 200-10.4 Temporary Moratorium:

200-10.4 Temporary Moratorium

The use of independent Battery Energy Storage Systems to store energy produced by solar facilities and non-solar facilities, has recently expanded beyond expectations, and the Town's current bylaw contains no regulation

of such facilities when those facilities are not accessory to a permitted solar photovoltaic generating installation. These systems raise significant and evolving environmental and planning issues for the Town, thereby creating an urgent need to adopt regulation addressing this use. In addition, the law concerning the ability of municipalities to regulate battery energy storage systems serving solar energy facilities is rapidly evolving. The Town needs time to consider and study the future implications and impact of these facilities upon the Town as a whole, and on the Town's current and future planning goals. Imposition of a temporary moratorium on Battery Energy Storage Systems as a principal use will allow sufficient time to assess these issues and amend the Zoning Bylaw to address the impact of these facilities on the Town's environmental resources and its planning goals.

A. Temporary Moratorium.

For the reasons set forth above and notwithstanding any other provision of the Zoning Bylaw to the contrary, the Town hereby adopts a temporary moratorium on the use of land or structures for Battery Energy Storage Systems as a principal use. The moratorium shall be in effect through August, 2025 or the date on which the Town adopts amendments to the Zoning Bylaw concerning Battery Energy Storage Systems as a principal use, whichever occurs earlier. During the moratorium period, the Town shall undertake a planning process to study, review, analyze and address what revisions to the Zoning Bylaw relative to Battery Energy Storage Systems as a principal use are needed or desirable to allow for and regulate such use consistent with protecting the Town's environmental resources and furthering its planning goals.

MOTION BY JOE GRAVELINE TO AMEND ARTICLE 26 "STRIKE THE WORD 'CONTAINERS' AND REPLACE IT WITH 'STRUCTURES'; STRIKE THE WORD 'CABINETS' AND REPLACE IT WITH THE WORD BUILDINGS, STRIKE THE WORD 'CONTAINING' AND REPLACE IT WITH THE WORD 'HOUSING' ON LINE THREE OF THE ARTICLE AFTER THE PHRASE, WHOLESALE ENERGY MARKET. STRIKE THE 'AND/OR OTHER CUSTOMERS ON THE ELECTRICAL GRID'. ON LINE FIVE, STRIKE 'TRANSMISSION TIE LINES, OTHER POWER INTERCONNECTION FACILITIES AND/OR A PROJECT SUBSTATION' ALSO TO ADD THE WORDS "HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL" IN THE LAST LINES OF SECTION 200-10.4 AND A. TEMPORARY MORATORIUM, BETWEEN THE WORDS "ENVIRONMENTAL AND RESOURCES" IN BOTH PLACES.

MOTION TO AMEND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

*MOTION AS AMENDED: To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Northfield ZONING BYLAWS by amending the Definitional Section of the Zoning Bylaw and adding a new Section as follows:
Battery energy storage facility: A series of STRUCTURES or BUILDINGS HOUSING batteries and related equipment designed to store electrical energy for periodic resale to the wholesale energy market. This includes all accessory equipment necessary for energy storage, including, but not limited to, inverters, transformers, cooling equipment, switching gear, metering equipment,*

And by inserting the following new section as 200-10.4 Temporary Moratorium:

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The use of independent Battery Energy Storage Systems to store energy produced by solar facilities and non-solar facilities, has recently expanded beyond expectations, and the Town's current bylaw contains no regulation of such facilities when those facilities are not accessory to a permitted solar photovoltaic generating installation. These systems raise significant and evolving environmental and planning issues for the Town, thereby creating an urgent need to adopt regulation addressing this use. In addition, the law concerning the ability of municipalities to regulate battery energy storage systems serving solar energy facilities is rapidly evolving. The Town needs time to consider and study the future implications and impact of these facilities upon the Town as a whole, and on the Town's current and future planning goals. Imposition of a temporary moratorium on Battery Energy Storage Systems as a principal use will allow sufficient time to assess these issues and amend the

Zoning Bylaw to address the impact of these facilities on the Town's environmental, HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL resources and its planning goals.

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MOTION BY: MARGARET REARDON SECOND BY DAN CAMPBELL

MARGARET REARDON PLANNING BOARD REPORT: Planning Board Public Hearing held on May 2, 2024. Planning Board voted unanimously in favor to recommend this article to Town Meeting.

[VOTE REQUIRED: TWO-THIRDS] PASSED TWO-THIRDS (VOTE: 116 YES, 7 NO)