



# TOWN OF FALMOUTH

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March 11, 2024

Commission on Energy Infrastructure Siting and Permitting  
Honorable Mike Judge, Undersecretary of Energy, Executive Office of Energy and  
Environmental Affairs, Chair of the CEISP  
100 Cambridge Street, 9th Floor  
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Town of Falmouth Comments in Opposition to the Removal of Local Control and Regional Oversight for the Siting and Permitting of Renewable Energy Facilities

Dear Chairman Mike Judge,

While the Town of Falmouth Select Board places great emphasis on the transition and greater use of clean and renewable energy sources and understands the importance of identifying ways to be more responsible in the deployment of clean energy infrastructure, the Falmouth Select Board respectfully opposes any effort via recommendations from the Commission on Energy Infrastructure Siting and Permitting that would have the effect of diluting local and regional control over the siting of renewable energy facilities and infrastructure.

With respect to the question as to whether the Town of Falmouth supports the creation of a consolidated state permitting structure for renewable energy infrastructure and facilities, we do not support a consolidated state permitting structure that would supersede local control over siting and permitting. The Falmouth Select Board supports retaining the current local permitting framework with little or no changes. Town governments know best the local needs, appropriate locations, and permitting procedures that best protect public health and safety, while also fostering the development of renewable energy facilities. Home rule has been the backbone of local government in our state, and that should not be eliminated or weakened in any way.

Further, we strongly oppose the imposition of any prescriptive timelines that create the potential for the granting of de facto Constructive Approvals. Timelines at the local level should not be subject to a defined term after which summary approval is applied. However, a process that allows for greater coordination, and thus efficiency, between local and state approvals could speed up the overall permitting process.

To better assist municipalities in their reviews of renewable energy projects, we recommend that regional planning agencies be provided with the funding they need to provide technical assistance and resources to local boards. Let municipalities – the majority of which have already proven their commitment as Green Communities – choose how they want to participate in a clean energy future.

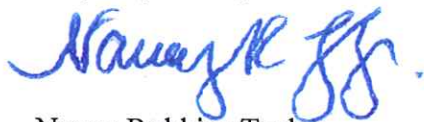
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The Town of Falmouth values its Green Community status and aims to align with the Commonwealth's Net-Zero limit in 2050 but is hindered by the Department of Public Utilities' (DPU) Capital Investment Project (CIP) group study hold. Specifically in Cape Cod with its outdated utility infrastructure, Falmouth has put many solar installation projects on hold because of these DPU interconnection distributed energy resource restrictions. We call on the DPU to remove interconnection barriers in Cape Cod so we can meet the Massachusetts 2050 Decarbonization Roadmap (December 2022).

Very respectfully,



Nancy Robbins Taylor  
Town of Falmouth Select Board, Chair