

Press Release for Solarize Chatham

The Town Board in Chatham has accepted two Community Solar Providers for the Solarize Chatham Initiative, Astral Power, Inc (<https://www.astralpower.com/solarize-chatham/>) and Delaware River Solar (<https://delawareriversolar.com/> - with the yellow sign up button in the upper right – be sure to put referred by Solarize Chatham for sign up incentive) Two providers are provided to give residents options within the program.

Solarize Chatham will highlight the advantages of Community Solar for Chatham Area residents. The key advantage being the availability of discounts for using solar electricity generated from a remote location, without having to have solar panels on the home or in the yard. And, these discounts are available to renters as well.

Both recommended providers discount electricity costs by approximately ten percent from what NYSEG or National Grid would charge. Both are relatively well established. Both offer an inducement (signing bonus) to subscribers to sign up of between \$75 and \$125, depending upon the number of sign-ups. Both will contribute to a non-profit or municipal project as well. Finally, both will provide the Solarize Chatham marketing campaign with resources to undertake the campaign.

Although provider websites should be up before that, the marketing campaign is kicking off with a virtual meeting during Earth Day week, April 21, 2021 at 10:00 AM, the link for which will be available on the Town website calendar. Solarize Chatham is scheduled to run until Park Day, August 7, 2021.

The Town Supervisor, Donal Collins, was enthusiastic about the possibilities for Chatham residents: "This is a convenient way for our residents to reduce their energy bills while contributing to our renewable energy goals as we look to step further away from fossil fuel dependency."!

Town Board member Kevin Weldon, the co-chair of the Town's Climate Smart Task Force said: "We have been working on a lot of Climate Smart things, and it nice to get another off the ground today".

Vance Pitkin, the other Town Board member to co-chair the task force said: "This is a great opportunity for utility customers in our town, however, people should expect that there may be a delay of up to a few months between the time that they sign up and when they are switched over to solar power. We also want residents that sign up for Community Solar to know that they may for a time receive a separate bill from NYSEG or National Grid for administration and have autopay to the solar provider for electricity. Additionally, note that the discount applies only to the electricity usage and delivery portion of their bill."

Town Board member John Wapner said: “We were fortunate to be able to install panels in the field behind our house, but not everybody can do that or wants to do that. Community Solar will help those people who can’t or don’t want their own panels”.

Town Board member Abi Mesick was similarly enthusiastic: “I think this a great program and a step in the right direction toward renewables”.

The Solarize Chatham team invited, through the Supervisor, six providers to submit proposals: Astral Power, Inc, Delaware River Solar, Solstice Power Technologies, Blue Wave Solar, Nexamp, and Common Energy. Proposals were submitted by Astral Power, Delaware River Solar, and Solstice Power Technologies.

A selection committee consisting of Karla Kavanaugh, Melissa Pollack, and Deborah Conrad reviewed the proposals, interviewed the candidates, and made the selections.

The criteria for selection were:

1. **Overall quality and value:** Overall quality of proposal and Community Distributed Generation (CDG) contract terms.
2. **Experience:** Provider’s experience in providing customer acquisition, billing and account management.
3. **Implementation and capacity:** Strength and ability to provide timely, quality, and enduring customer service and work well with the Solarize Chatham Team.
4. **Adequate financial strength:** Selected Providers must be able to demonstrate sufficient capacity to successfully deliver community solar electricity.
5. **Marketing Support:** Marketing Support that will be provided to Solarize Chatham.