



Legislation Text

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TITLE:

Solarize Carrboro Report

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is for the Board to receive a report on Solarize Carrboro from Rob Pinder with Next Climate, Inc.

DEPARTMENT: Planning

CONTACT INFORMATION: Randy Dodd, Environmental Planner (918-7326)

INFORMATION: Solarize Carrboro is a collaboration between Next Climate, Inc. (a Carrboro-based, 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization), the Town of Carrboro, and the NC Solar Center that seeks to inspire individuals and organizations and reduce the barriers to residential solar installations, thereby reducing emissions that contribute to climate change, improving air quality, lowering energy costs, and increasing community resilience. Central to the “Solarize” concept is leveraging local community support through outreach and aggregating sales. The aggregation of multiple residential solar PV installations within a community provides opportunities to realize economies of scale for an installer and cost savings for the customers. Next Climate, Inc. has recently issued a Request for Proposals to select an installer to perform the installations for Solarize Carrboro. The installer is expected to provide a tiered pricing structure that provides lower cost per watt installed within the project area as more people sign on, as well as free solar site assessments, financing models, applicable rebate information, and installation services. Next Climate, Inc. has also worked with Town staff to identify neighborhoods in Carrboro that have high owner occupancy rates, recent construction, and other factors that are suitable for home solar installation, and begin soliciting homeowner interest both for installations on their homes and to help get the word out about Solarize Carrboro. Next Climate, Inc. intends to support neighborhood volunteers and host free events to provide technical information, answer questions and solicit feedback. The time frame is to select an installer in February, ramp up outreach and pursue homeowner signup March-May, and complete installations beginning in the summer.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact associated with receiving this report and the Town is not providing financial support. Staff have been working with Next Climate, Inc. to support the launch of the initiative, and plan to continue to do so in coming months.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Board adopt the resolution provided in Attachment A receiving the report from Next Climate, Inc., directing staff to continue supporting Solarize Carrboro and offering any additional input. .