

WALES TOWN BOARD
Special Town Board Meeting 2025
October 28th 2025
At 7:20pm

*A*Emergency procedures: Follow the exit signs to the closest possible exit in an orderly manner.
* Please turn off all cell phones and pagers.*

CALL TO ORDER BY THE SUPERVISOR

ROLL CALL Taken at the prior public hearing

INVOCATION by Councilman Butcher

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Councilman Gawronski

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION#__ By Councilman Butcher, second by Councilman Newman, approving the agenda, with the correction of changing the wording removing through December 31, 2025 on the local law 6-2025

Carried. Aye 5 noes 0

INVITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

John Carlone Hunters Creek Road. He made comments on climate change, photovoltaic panels, and solar project land use. It was referenced that a physicist who claimed that climate change effects are exaggerated, particularly in New York and California. They stated that photovoltaic panels will eventually degrade and could affect the plant's climate by reflecting radiation back into the atmosphere. The article from the Buffalo News describes land requirements for solar projects, typically 5-7 acres per megawatt of capacity. There was a quote in the article from Daniel Montanti, president of Montanti Solar, noting that even large solar expansions would affect only 1% of the state's land mass and 4% of farmland. Montanti and Rob Gashan from Solar Liberty emphasized that solar developers primarily use low-quality or fallow land, avoiding prime farmland. A local farmer disputed this claim, responding that the statement was inaccurate. The discussion concluded with remarks urging caution about the long-term environmental and agricultural impacts of solar projects.

Dori Carlone Hunters Creek Rd

The Buffalo News recently published an article discussing the impact of solar projects on farmland, highlighting claims by industry leaders that only a small fraction of New York State's total land-and a similarly small portion of farmland-would be required even under large-scale solar development.

Specifically, the article stated that typical solar projects require five to seven acres of land per megawatt of capacity, and that if all new solar capacity were sited solely on farmland, it would utilize approximately 1% of New York's total land and 4% of its 7 million acres of farmland, according to Daniel Montanti, a notable solar industry executive. The same article relayed the industry's position that solar projects largely avoid prime farmland, favoring fallow or low-quality land instead, a stance supported by Rob Gashan from Solar Liberty, who emphasized that developers strive not to build on high-quality soils and work with local stakeholders to minimize negative agricultural impact. Despite these claims, there remains skepticism from some landowners and farmers who believe that the industry's assurances do not always align with the reality experienced on the ground, with at least one farmer quoted as rejecting the notion that prime farmland is never used. I actually spoke to Jeremiah Thorpe, his comment back to me was, "That's a lie." This skepticism illustrates the ongoing tension between the promises of solar developers, the policies designed to protect agricultural land, and the lived experience of local communities. For those inquiring about residential solar permits in New York, recent policy initiatives have aimed at streamlining approvals. The state has launched new programs to expedite permitting, especially for projects seeking to take advantage of federal tax credits before they expire in 2026-2027. This means that the window to start a new permitted residential solar project should be opening soon, with continued reforms intended to make the process quicker and more accessible for both homeowners and developers.

Corey Mentel Merlau Rd When would I be able to apply for a solar permit? Supervisor Howard stated the building inspector will be taking applications now and having them prepared, so as soon as the local law is passed, you will be ready to have your home solar installed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. LOCAL LAW 6-2025 - TO AMEND LOCAL LAW 2-2025 ALLOWING RESIDENTIAL SOLAR INSTALLATIONS

MOTION#__ By Councilman Newman, second by Councilman Butcher to call for Public Hearing Public on Local Law 2-2025 allowing residential solar installations on November 12th. Carried ayes-5 noes-0

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION#__ By Councilman Butcher, second by Councilman Gawronski to adjourn the special board meeting at 7:28pm Carried ayes-5 noes-0