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NYSERDA to host solar workshop in West Valley

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ASHFORD—The Ashford Town Board heard updates on the Ashford solar project and information about an upcoming solar workshop during its meeting April 19.

After the board showed interest at its last meeting, New York State Energy Research and Development Agency West Valley Program Director Paul Bembia reported that NYSERDA has set up an “Introduction to Shared Solar Workshop” on Thursday, May 18 from 6-8 p.m. at the West Valley Volunteer Hose Company Memorial Hall, 9091 Route 240 in West Valley.

The workshop is free and will give an overview of shared solar, New York’s newest mechanism for expanding solar access to communities. Representatives from the NY-Sun PV Trainers Network will be in attendance to cover “the New York solar market and incentives, shared solar models, rules and regulations and the role and concerns of different stakeholders in developing and managing shared solar projects including zoning and property tax concerns.”

“We would really like to get as many people here from the community and the neighboring communities and towns because they can become involved with it,” Ashford Supervisor Charlie Davis said.

Bembia also gave the board an update about the Ashford community solar project. NYSERDA recently had a meeting with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission about what information the NRC would need to determine whether there are any concerns with the project being on state property. The NRC would need a project description, information showing the property is unimpacted, whether a license amendment is needed and information from the New York State Department of Energy about impacts on the project. Bembia said that they hope to get this information to the NRC by early this summer.

In other board news:

- The board will hold a public hearing on May 10 at 8 p.m. to discuss the proposed town constable law.
- The Ashford Youth Commission is hosting a survey to get the opinion and gauge interest in summer programming, which includes swimming two days per week at the Machias pool – with transportation provided – and evening activities for older kids. A link for the survey can be found on the town’s website.
- Board member Jean Bond reported that Cattaraugus County has received a grant to help residents with the cost of replacing water lines from the street to their house, if they met the income guidelines, and the town is looking for people who might need assistance with their waterlines. Bond said once they get enough interested people, the county will set a date and they will come and help residents fill out the applications for the program.

The next Ashford Town Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 10, at 7:30 p.m. at the Ashford Community Center, located at 9377 Route 240, in West Valley.