

SPRINGVILLE JOURNAL

Concord moves forward with Solarize partnership

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Associate Editor

Town of Concord residents who are interested in installing solar panels at their homes will soon have the opportunity to save money. The Concord Town Board, at its March 14 meeting, approved the town signing a partnership agreement to join the Solarize movement from Green Springville.

Solarize is a New York State Energy Research and Development Agency program that brings potential solar customers together to help lower costs. Green Springville, along with the town and the University of Buffalo Regional Institute, will be working together to vet installers for residents to use for solar panel installations. If residents or businesses sign up for an installation through the solar installer, they are eligible for a lower group rate below market prices.

"What we are trying to do is bring together a solar installer ... with the knowledge that they are going to be installing many solar installations around Southern Erie," Green Springville President Reed Braman said. "They are going to offer us their best price ... so based on the results from other Solarize programs, it tends to be a



15 to 20 percent discount."

Concord will be joining other local municipalities including Colden, Boston, Eden, Evans and North Collins in Green Springville's Solarize initiative. Green Springville will be working with NYSERDA, organizing the program, hosting outreach events and "doing most of the heavy lifting," Braman said, so the program can benefit as many people as possible.

"I think we have a real plus here because we have Green Springville right here to help us with it which the other towns won't have," Concord Supervisor Clyde Drake said.

Green Springville is also planning on adding another option to its Solarize campaign called Solar for All to help residents that have lower incomes. Residents with low to moderate incomes would be able to fill out a document that would make them eligible for the program, where a credit would be applied to their electricity bill.

"There are some fac-

tors in who solar benefits and one of those factors is income. Whether it's low to moderate income or a fixed income, then generally people don't have access to solar," Braman said. "Essentially if you qualify for HEAP, then you would already be qualified for Solar For All. It is a very easy way for people who qualify to take part in buying solar energy."

Sending a scoping document to NYSERDA, which includes the partnership agreements from all the interested towns is the next step in the process for Green Springville. Once approved, Green Springville would put out a request for purchase to solar installers, conduct interviews and select installers for Solarize. Promoting the program and hosting an open house event in all participating towns will later start to help answer questions and concerns from residents.

In other board news:

— Drake announced the town, the Village of Springville and Springville Center for the Arts are working on a new partnership for summer concerts in Springville.

— The board approved Springville-Griffith Institute to use the baseball diamonds at Concord Town Park for its baseball seasons.

The Town Board will next meet Thursday, April 11 at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall.