

<b>Topic:</b>	Solar Energy; Zoning
<b>Resource Type:</b>	Regulations
<b>State:</b>	New York
<b>Jurisdiction Type:</b>	Municipal
<b>Municipality:</b>	Town of Bedford
<b>Year:</b>	1989
<b>Community Type – applicable to:</b>	Rural; Suburban
<b>Title:</b>	Town of Bedford Zoning Regulations; Solar Zoning
<b>Document Last Updated in Database:</b>	June 4, 2018

### ***Abstract***

Within its Zoning Chapter, the Town of Bedford includes solar panels in its Accessory buildings or structures section, § 125-27. Bedford lists solar energy collectors and studios as an accessory structure permitted in all districts, subject to a list of requirements including floor area minimums and maximums, height maximums, and ground floor area measurements. § 125-27, however, does not specify requirements for solar energy systems individually.

Bedford created the Bedford Energy Task Force to help the Bedford 2020 Coalition accomplish their goal of reducing Bedford's greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020. The Energy Task Force seeks changes to Bedford's land use and other regulations that will make it easier to install solar energy systems on residential and commercial properties.

### ***Resource***

**For energy task force information, see website:**

<http://bedford2020.org/energy-task-force/>

Goals of Energy Task Force:

The Energy Task Force will focus on all three building sectors — residential, commercial and municipal — to improve energy efficiency and promote renewable sources of electricity (solar, wind, hydroelectric and geothermal) to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, reduce air pollution, and reduce imports of foreign sources of oil and save money. Specific goals include:

- **Home Energy Efficiency.** Ensure the success of Energize Bedford and continue to promote energy efficiency in residential households throughout the region.
- **Commercial Energy Efficiency.** Bedford's commercial buildings contribute 15% of GHG emissions. By working in partnership with Bedford 2020

Business, Schools and Religious Task Forces, we will develop model plans for improving commercial energy efficiency.

- **Promote Renewable Energy Sources.** Solar, geothermal, and wind power are all viable options for energy production in Bedford. If Bedford were to purchase 100% renewable electricity, community wide GHG emissions would be reduced 19%. In 2016 Bedford 2020 held the [Power Up for Clean Energy New York](#) event, bringing together leaders from business, government, and environmental organizations to explore renewable energy in New York. The Task Force and community members will continue to investigate how to scale up renewable energy production and reduce costs.
- **Metering/Smart Grid Technology.** Smart Grids promise a more effective and efficient way to monitor energy use. The Energy Task force will explore the viability of these technologies in Bedford and consider integrating metering/smart grid technologies into our current systems.
- **Municipal Energy Use.** Bedford's municipal buildings contribute an estimated 74 percent of the municipal sector's greenhouse gas emissions. Municipal vehicles accounted for 20%, streetlights 5% and waste 1% of that sector's total. For information about changes in municipal operations, visit <http://bedfordny.info/html/green.htm>

**For code section re: accessory buildings and structures, see below.**

*Town of Bedford, NY  
Monday, April 20, 2015*

## Chapter 125. Zoning

### Article III. Applicability; General Regulations

#### § 125-27. Accessory buildings or structures.

The accessory buildings and structures listed below shall be permitted in all districts, subject to the following:

- A. The total building coverage of all principal and accessory buildings and structures, regardless of size, located on a lot shall comply with the maximum building coverage requirements in § **125-50** herein.
- B. The following shall be considered accessory buildings or structures for the purposes of this section: tennis courts, paddle tennis courts and similar facilities without provisions for night play; swimming pools; garages for passenger or commercial vehicles; greenhouses; playhouses; garden houses; toolhouses; stables; barns; solar energy collectors and studios.  
[Amended 2-7-1984; 5-15-1984; 8-1-1989]
- C. Accessory buildings and structures not greater than 100 square feet in floor area and not more than 10 feet in height measured to the highest point of the building or structure shall be located not closer than one-third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) of the side yard and rear yard dimensions specified in § **125-50** herein. Accessory buildings and structures shall comply with the front yard setbacks specified therein.
- D. Individual accessory buildings and structures greater than 100 square feet in ground floor area or greater than 10 feet in height shall meet the following requirements:
  - (1) Accessory buildings and structures permitted under this section shall comply with the front, rear and side yard requirements specified in § **125-50** herein and shall be limited in height to a maximum of 20 feet measured to the highest point of the building or structure.
  - (2) The ground floor of an individual accessory building or structure permitted under this section shall not exceed 0.5% of the area of the lot on which the accessory building or structure is located.
  - (3) The construction of an accessory building or structure over 2,500 square feet in ground floor area or greater than 20 feet in height shall require the issuance of a special permit by the Planning Board pursuant to the requirements of Article **VII** herein.
- E. In calculating maximum building coverage, 50% of the square footage of tennis courts should be included in the calculation of building coverage.  
[Added 6-7-2005 by L.L. No. 7-2005]