

**Topic:** Solar Energy; Local Boards; Green Buildings & Energy Efficiency; Energy Efficiency & Conservation  
**Resource Type:** Not Applicable  
**State:** New York  
**Jurisdiction Type:** Municipality  
**Municipality:** Town of DeWitt  
**Year:** 2014  
**Community Type – applicable to:** Suburban  
**Title:** Town of DeWitt, New York Sustainability Plan & Solar Task Force  
**Document Last Updated in Database:** June 7, 2018

***Abstract***

In 2010, the Town of DeWitt, New York adopted a Sustainability Policy that stated goals and related planning initiatives to increase the Town's environmental sustainability. Following this, the Town adopted a Sustainability Plan in 2014 to provide GHG emission reduction strategies for achieving Sustainability Policy goals and to guide municipal operations. The Sustainability Policy presents a goal to “review and revise Town codes, plans and policies to support energy efficiency, renewable energy systems and green practices.” Its related planning initiatives include “[r]evis[ing] codes to ensure roof and exterior mounted solar collection systems are allowed”, “[r]ecommend[ing] new residential construction be solar ready”, and including exceptions in the Town’s codes for experimental architectural and energy innovations that advance building performance. Additional planning initiatives include enacting a law “that protects the rights of property owners to install, operate and maintain solar energy systems and to promote the use of such systems by requiring solar site orientation for any new residential or commercial development.” Related strategies in the 2014 Sustainability Plan include specific GHG emission reduction targets for municipal, commercial, and residential solar PV energy installations, assuming the installation of a 100-kW solar PV array on government buildings, a 2,000-kW solar PV array at the Town’s old landfill site, the installation of ten 25-kW solar PV systems on commercial land uses, and the installation of a 4-kW solar PV array on five percent of occupied homes in DeWitt. To overcome large up-front costs associated with solar PV installations, the Sustainability Plan suggests offering low-interest loans; organizing group buying programs to negotiate lower prices; utilizing NYSERDA incentives and state and federal tax credits for residential and commercial solar PV installations; providing educational and technical assistance programs; offering an information clearinghouse that connects consumers with resources and renewable energy installers; and facilitating a “solar services model” or Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) in which a property owner “provide[s] the space for a power producer to install the system . . . [and] agrees to buy the power produced from that system at a set rate that is competitive with grid electricity”, an arrangement that eliminates consumer installation and maintenance costs.

The Town's Solar Task Force has overseen the town's participation in Solarize Syracuse, a grassroots community solar initiative for the City of Syracuse and the Towns of DeWitt, Manlius, and Onondaga (and the villages within), in which these communities pool their financial and community resources together to purchase solar energy in bulks. The Task Force oversaw the installation of a 51 kW solar PV rooftop system on DeWitt's Town Hall in 2011 and the Town's adoption of the New York State Unified Permit in 2014. The Task Force's work was also integrated into the Town's 2014 Sustainability Plan, which reviewed the benefits of solar energy systems and some of the changes to the Town's land-use regulations that were needed to promote its installation.

### ***Resource***

For more information about Dewitt's Sustainability Policy and Plan, go to <http://www.townofdewitt.com/Sustainability.aspx>.

To learn more about DeWitt's solar initiatives, visit <http://www.townofdewitt.com/Solar.aspx>.