



BANGOR DAILY NEWS

Northport moves forward with solar power project



by **Bridget Huber**

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Sundog Solar employees install solar panels on the Searsmont Town Office in 2012. The company will install Northport's new municipal solar array. Credit: Courtesy of Sundog Solar Store

Northport is planning a municipal solar project that will save the town an estimated \$15,000 per year on its electric bill.

A 42-kilowatt array consisting of 72 panels will be built on a town-owned empty lot at 216 Beech Hill Road. It is projected to be up and running by the end of 2027.

The project will cost around \$118,000, which the town plans to cover with grants and donations from individuals, said Molly Schauffler, a member of the town's select board.

"It was very important to us to have this project not have to be paid for with any tax money," said Schauffler.

Voters unanimously approved the project at a special town meeting last Wednesday.

In order to qualify for certain tax credits, the town had to put down a \$10,000 deposit by the end of 2025. Donations covered the sum and so far the town has also collected pledges covering roughly a third of its next payment installment of \$23,500, which is due in March, Schauffler said.

Anyone wishing to donate to the solar project can contact the town administrator, James Kossuth, she added.

The town chose Searsport-based Sundog Solar to install the array after receiving bids from four companies.

Northport is building a new community center and town office at 16 Beech Hill Road. The array should cover at least half of the facility's energy needs, said Schauffler. Over the course of their 30-year warranty, the panels should save the town about \$450,000.

The solar project will cut the town's carbon emissions, too, said Schauffler. It will offset the equivalent of 92,000 pounds of carbon per year — about as much as removing nine cars from the road.

“It’s kind of a no-brainer,” Schauffler said.



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