

Mayor Almon Answers Your Questions About East Haven's Solar Energy Projects

1. Why is East Haven pursuing such a large project in a short period of time?

- The availability of State of Connecticut school construction grants is limited and time sensitive.
- Grant monies from the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund for solar photovoltaic projects is becoming scarce due to the high demand from other municipalities throughout the State of Connecticut. Every electricity consumer, including the Town of East Haven, pays into the Clean Energy Fund through a surcharge on our monthly electricity bills.

2. Why is the Town of East Haven considering solar technology and not other technologies?

- Solar technology currently has one of the highest rebates available from the State of Connecticut. Because of these rebates, the costs of solar energy are lower than the electricity costs we are currently paying.
- Solar energy is predictable. Solar energy is very predictable on a day-to-day basis and will help the Town stabilize the volatile energy price increases we have seen over the past several years.
- Solar technology requires little to no maintenance. Solar energy is created with no moving parts and requires little to know maintenance except routine inspections.

3. How much will it cost to maintain these panels?

- The solar panels are made to require little to no maintenance except for routine inspection.

4. Will this make our taxes go up?

- No. The costs of bonding these proposed capital improvements will be lower than the energy and operational savings that will result from the roof replacements and the installation of the solar panel systems.

5. What affect will the solar panel systems have on the Town's long term energy budgets?

- The solar panel systems at the four schools will lower our reliance on electricity from the grid and also lower our exposure to rising fossil fuel prices which directly affect the price of electricity.
- Installing the solar panel systems will reduce the Town's exposure to volatile changes in electricity prices.

6. Don't we want to 'pay off' all of East Haven's debt?

- The idea is to maintain a healthy debt level where you use debt only when it is used in conjunction with major capital projects. Assets that have a life expectancy greater than twenty years should be maintained at a reasonable level not to put too much stain on taxpayers.

7. Shouldn't we wait until the roofs leak to replace them?

- If we wait for the roofs to begin leaking, we expose the Town taxpayers to higher repair and replacement costs. These additional repair costs would not be eligible for State of Connecticut reimbursement resulting in 100% of the costs being borne by the taxpayer.

8. How do we know solar technology will work?

- Solar panel technology has become main stream with many applications.
- The solar technology that we will use at the schools will be approved by the State of Connecticut in order to receive grant funding from the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund.

9. Why hasn't East Haven gotten the same money for school construction that New Haven has been getting for years?

- In the past, East Haven has simply not taken advantage of the lucrative school construction grants available. A change in administration is giving us the opportunity to take advantage of these opportunities.

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