November 16, 2026

**Shiloh LaFreniere - Town Manager**
Town of Jay
340 Main St.
Jay, ME 04239

**RE: Draft Solar Energy Development Ordinance for the Town of Jay**

Dear Shiloh,

On behalf of Walden Renewables, I am pleased to submit the enclosed draft Solar Ordinance for the Town of Jay's consideration. We recognize the importance of establishing clear, reasonable, and enforceable local standards governing solar development and believe the attached ordinance provides a comprehensive framework for protecting the interests of the Town, its residents, and the environment while allowing for responsible renewable energy development.

The proposed ordinance was developed with consideration of established regulatory frameworks and guidance available to Maine municipalities, including the Maine Department of Energy Resources (DOER) solar development handbook and applicable state environmental permitting requirements. We have taken these frameworks and tailored them for the town of Jay based on the commitments Walden has made thus far and feedback we've heard from Town officials and the public over the past several months. The draft also benefits from the legal expertise of Verrill, a, a Maine-based law firm with substantial experience in municipal law, land use regulation, and renewable energy development. Verrill's involvement in the development of both the State's solar guidance and the proposed ordinance provides a valuable foundation for a regulatory approach that is informed by Maine law and established permitting practices.

The proposed ordinance addresses several important considerations for the Town, including:

- **Protection of neighboring properties:** Establishes setbacks, vegetative buffers, and screening requirements intended to minimize potential visual impacts and protect adjacent property owners.
- **Environmental protection:** Incorporates standards addressing stormwater management, erosion and sedimentation control, groundwater and surface water protection, wildlife habitat, and other natural resources.
- **Public health and safety:** Requires emergency management planning, fire prevention measures, emergency access provisions, and coordination with local officials.
- **Protection of municipal infrastructure:** Establishes requirements for documenting existing road conditions and repairing damage attributable to project construction.

- **Decommissioning and financial assurance:** Requires a decommissioning plan and financial security to ensure that facilities can be properly removed at the end of their useful lives without imposing an unreasonable financial burden on the Town.
- **Municipal oversight and public participation:** Provides for Planning Board review, public hearings, and a defined permitting process that allows the Town and its residents to evaluate proposed projects.

An important feature of the ordinance is its recognition of the substantial environmental review already required under Maine's Site Location of Development Law (SLODA). Larger solar developments subject to Maine Department of Environmental Protection review must demonstrate compliance with extensive environmental standards addressing natural resources, stormwater, noise, and other potential impacts. The proposed ordinance recognizes these existing state requirements while preserving the Town's authority to establish and administer standards addressing matters of particular local concern. This approach is intended to avoid unnecessary duplication of regulatory reviews while ensuring appropriate environmental protections remain in place.

We understand that the adoption of a solar ordinance is an important policy decision for the Town of Jay and its residents. Our intent in providing this draft is not to prescribe the outcome of that process, but rather to offer a technically informed and legally grounded starting point for discussion. We believe that a well-crafted ordinance can provide regulatory certainty for the Town, neighboring property owners, and prospective developers while ensuring that future solar projects are evaluated against clear and consistent standards.

Walden Renewables welcomes the opportunity to work collaboratively with Town officials, the Planning Board, and interested residents to refine the proposed ordinance to reflect Jay's specific priorities and community objectives.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to continued discussions and being directly involved to provide subject matter expertise regarding how responsible solar development can contribute to Jay's long-term economic and environmental interests.

Sincerely,



**Dale Knapp**
Head of Development - Walden Renewables

**CC: Jay Selectboard Members & Code Enforcement Officer, Ronda Palmer**

**Enclosure:** Draft Jay Solar Energy Development Ordinance