



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY

### CONNECTICUT DISTRIBUTED GENERATION WORKING GROUP

#### INTERCONNECTION GUIDELINES SUBCOMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, June 30, 2022

9:00 AM – 10:15 AM

Location: Microsoft Teams

#### **9:00 AM – 9:10 AM                      Introduction**

- The meeting began with all participants introducing themselves and identifying the entities they represented. The meeting included representatives from both EDCs and numerous solar developers.

#### **9:10 AM – 10:15 AM - Residential Interconnection Guidelines Discussion**

- Mike Trahan stated that the most pressing issue is the application approval not occurring within the timeframes set out in the guidelines. Developers need to be able to count on projects being reviewed and approved on a predictable and consistent timeframe
- Mike Farrell stated that the new Eversource Fast Pass pilot program has been working well and applications are being processed much quicker
- Representatives from Eversource explained that the Fast Pass applies to approximately 700 applications for projects under 20kW that will not likely require upgrades and have already received RRES approval. The pilot project was aimed at experienced developers who were willing to take responsibility for certain aspects of their applications.
- Eversource is looking to examine additional data before working this process into the broader interconnection guidelines
- UI does not have a similar program but expressed that it would like to learn more about the technical aspects from Eversource and is willing to trial a similar program
- Developers noted that although the pilot program is working well, they are uniformly experiencing significant (8 weeks – 2 month) delays on application approvals. Early applications took as long as 90 days for approval
- Carl N. stated that when the residential guidelines were developed when there was a separate tariff review process with the Green Bank and that the tariff review process must happen before the interconnection application can be reviewed
- Participants brought up the idea of having developers pre-qualified so that their applications could all be fast-tracked and asked whether the Green Bank had a similar process
  - Mike Farrell stated that the Green Bank had a type of pre-qualification process but that was focused on installation qualifications and not the actual process.

- Kyle Wallace stated that he was reluctant to add additional requirements for interconnection and that some of the issues causing the slowdowns, e.g., home energy audit delays, would have to be addressed at the program level
- Developers asked what was causing the bottlenecks in application processing
  - Eversource stated that through April, complete applications were processed in 3-5 business days, but many applications were missing information or contained mismatching information, requiring them to be returned. Eversource stated that currently 30-40% of applications are rejected.
  - Jim Ferrughelli stated that there was a bigger backlog at Eversource on the interconnection side than the program side; he also stated that he believed UI has been experiencing staffing issues
- Savkat and Sunpower expressed frustration with having to serve as the spokesperson for interconnection delays when it came to explaining delays to customers
- Carl stated that Eversource tries to work with installers to manage their priority projects but that some installers have been installing projects prior to their application being approved.
- Mike Farrell presented the idea of creating three lanes for applications: a fast lane, a slow lane, and a breakdown lane. The idea being that the applications that were incomplete or had significant issues would not slow down other the projects.
- Mike Trahan stated that installers are currently in crisis and that immediate action is needed to clear the backlog. Based on the high rate of rejections, more developer training is also needed.
- The EDCs agreed to have a regular open call during which developers can drop in and discuss any questions or issues they have regarding the application process