Fiore-Rosenfeld Gets Onerous Fees Waived for Homeowners Who Install Solar Electric-Photovoltaic or Solar Hot Water Systems

posted on 1/25/2013 10:20:55 AM

January 25, 2013

**With unanimous support of the Town Board, Fiore-Rosenfeld’s Amendment to Town Code is another successful step in his efforts to streamline the process and save money for homeowners who want to go solar.**

Farmingville, NY - At a public hearing during the January 23 Town Board meeting, the Town Board voted to adopt Councilman Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld's bill to waive fees for homeowners who install a solar voltaic or solar hot water system in their one or two-family homes or single family home with an accessory apartment. The bill amends section 29-11 of the Town Code which previously required a fee to be paid for a certificate of assessment.

"By waiving onerous municipal fees and getting homeowners, and their solar installers, a permit more quickly, they will find the process easier and more affordable and will more likely install solar electric and solar hot water generation systems," said Councilman Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld, who spearheaded the Town's Go Solar Initiative and assisted Councilwoman Kepert with her Green Homes program. "Homeowners have become more conscious of both the tangible economic as well as environmental benefits of going solar," Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld added, "Encouraging homeowners to save their family's money by using the best renewable energy systems and help reduce our overall carbon footprint is a best practices method all towns and local governments should be employing."

This amendment was met with overwhelming support from the public and leaders in the renewable energy industry. In a letter to members of the Town Board prior to the vote, William Feldman, President of the Long Island Solar Energy Industries Association said, "Everything and anything we can do to make our planet better for our children we should do without hesitation."

"This type of legislation helps our local residents to do their part by reducing their carbon footprint by reducing reliance on fossil fuels. Thank you for your leadership on this issue." said Beth Fiteni, Program Manager of ReLI (Renewable Energy of Long Island) in a letter sent to Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld prior to the vote.

In another letter, Kevin B. MacLeod, a board member of the LISEIA - Long Island Solar Energy Industries Association, asked the entire Town Board to vote 'yes' and urged them to "continue to take the necessary steps toward a cleaner, safer environment."

Jane Fasullo, representing the Sierra Club Long Island and a member of the Town’s Clean Energy Task Force said, "Solar water heating and PV reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions thus reducing the rate of global warming and allowing us to breathe easier. Anything that leads to an increase in solar installations is a step in the right direction."

In October 2011, Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld co-sponsored a bill which was unanimously adopted by the Town Board, to create Residential Solar Energy System Fast Track Permit Application Forms as a way to help applicants and solar energy systems installers to cut through the myriad of building permit forms for each town and village on Long Island. A second resolution sponsored by Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld to fully implement the Solar Energy System Fast Track process in Brookhaven, was adopted in November 2011.

Councilman Fiore-Rosenfeld said, "All these changes to the Town Code make for a more streamlined application process. They save time, eliminate paperwork, reduce expenses and speed up approvals. I will continue to review our codes and do whatever I can to make sure that residents can do their part for the environment and save money without having to cut through unnecessary red tape."