

Massachusetts DPU Approves Zoning Bylaw Exemptions for Two Energy Storage Projects

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On June 30, 2023, the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (the Department) approved comprehensive zoning bylaw exemptions to two important energy storage projects:

1. Cranberry Point Energy Storage, LLC to construct a 150 MW standalone battery energy storage system in Carver, MA.
2. Medway Grid, LLC to construct a 250 MW standalone battery energy storage system in Medway, MA. Medway Grid also requested and was awarded approval to construct a 345 kV line to interconnect the battery facility with the electric grid.

Both orders allow Cranberry Point and Medway Grid to begin construction imminently, thereby contributing 800 MWhs of energy storage in Massachusetts, which is a substantial portion of the Commonwealth's goal of procuring 1,000 MWhs of energy storage by 2025.

In this case of first impression, the Department deemed both of these non-utility standalone battery energy storage facilities as public service corporations, because both facilities provide energy services in Massachusetts and the assets are available to serve the New England market.

Per the Order, the Department also found that the projects are necessary and will provide public benefits, and that the alternative sites evaluated, or no-build alternatives, are inferior to the proposed locations and plans. The Department also evaluated public health and safety issues related to potential fire risks at the proposed project sites, details about battery operating technology, water and wetlands impacts and issues pertaining to land use.

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