



Cornell University
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Kathryn J. Boor, Ph.D.
The Ronald P. Lynch Dean

260 Roberts Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853-5905
Telephone: 607.255.2241
Fax: 607.255.3803
E-mail: kjb4@cornell.edu
www.cals.cornell.edu

April 12, 2017

To Dryden Resource Awareness Council, Town of Dryden Board and Planning Board -
Neighbors:

I am writing to acknowledge the interest and inputs expressed by many members of the Dryden community regarding the community solar project on 110 acres (+/-) of Cornell-owned land, currently managed by the Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and Veterinary Medicine, for agricultural research.

As you know, this important project proposal - to be developed by Distributed Sun and placed on the tax rolls - includes the Ellis Tract north of Stevenson Road, and sites on Dodge Road and Turkey Hill Road, south of Stevenson Road.

In recent weeks, we have heard concerns about this siting, as well as claims of a waste of "good farmland."

To clarify, the Cornell lands proposed for solar development are not included in either of Tompkins County's two [Agricultural Districts](#), nor are these lands within any of the County's six identified [Agricultural Resource Focus Areas](#). It should also be noted that, as dictated by circumstance, solar farms are readily reverted to traditional agriculture and can support concurrent grazing activity.

During the site-selection process, more than 50 Cornell sites were analyzed, many managed by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. A number were eliminated due to distance to an interconnection point (access to grid), and several other possible options were eliminated from consideration as well because they support active, funded research, are being maintained in a state of readiness for future research, or operate as research support.

The parcels selected for the community solar project were identified as either having low-productivity soils, less agricultural value, and-or the ability to relocate existing and planned research operations from the selected sites to other suitable Cornell lands.

There are few institutions in the world that care more about farmland preservation than Cornell University. Of equal concern and attention for Cornell in 2017 is climate change, and

doing all we can to enable sustainability efforts around the world, on our campus, and in the local community to prosper while also reducing our dependence on fossil fuels.

We are thankful to many of you who have voiced support for the solar project. These are important decisions and the engagement of Dryden residents to date has been encouraging, informative, and helpful.

As Steve Kress, vice president for Bird Conservation at the National Audubon Society wrote recently:

"The warming of our Earth is the single greatest environmental threat of our time. The solar farm proposed for Dodge Road is an opportunity to take local action for a global problem. It will make a statement that our community is committed to moving away from burning fossil fuels and toward sustainable energy."

Again, thank you for your inputs and for staying engaged with the project team on any questions, concerns, or support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Kathryn J. Boor'.

Kathryn J. Boor, Ph.D.
The Ronald P. Lynch Dean