

Agrawal 5-8-17

From: Anurag Agrawal [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 08, 2017 8:02 AM
To: Jason Leifer; Linda Lavine; Daniel Lamb; Kathy Servoss; Deborah Cipolla-Dennis
Cc: Bambi Avery
Subject: Comment in Support of the Dryden Distributed Sun Solar Project

Dear all,

I am writing both as a citizen of Tompkins County and as an environmental scientist and biologist with expertise on local biodiversity. I write in strong support of the Dryden Distributed Sun Solar Project. I ask you to consider approving this project as quickly as possible and certainly NOT to approve any moratorium which will only serve to delay the project.

As a person who has studied the local flora and fauna for the past 13 years (and with research plots along Turkey Hill Road), I have no concerns over the impact on local biodiversity. Advancing an agenda of alternative power will serve this community and the local biodiversity in the long run. There are few if any rare species in the areas that will be impacted.

Indeed, I believe that the project will benefit the Town of Dryden and Tompkins County much more broadly in many significant ways including providing enough clean, quiet, renewable energy to power all the homes and businesses in Dryden and in helping the County achieve its 2050 goal of 80 percent carbon emissions reduction. Solar panels do not burden the existing school, sewer or water infrastructure, and are compatible with the grazing of sheep so the land retains its agricultural value. I have personally met with a team who has experience with the sheep grazing in local solar arrays and was impressed by the method.

My understanding is that the project builders have listened to Dryden citizens' requests and concerns and have made many significant changes to all aspects of the project including moving arrays further from homes and the cemetery, adding rustic fencing, and developing a thorough planting scheme to restore and imposed damage and to create ample vegetative screening near the arrays. Again, I met with the team who is planning the plantings and I personally thought the plantings were above and beyond what was needed.

From my perspective we have an important choice to make about the sustainability of our local community and the planet. We are lucky to live in a place with spectacular open space, abundant water, and a very involved community. So many people have given their time, knowledge, and energy all towards reducing fossil fuel use, carbon emissions, and increasing the long-standing need for use of available sustainable sources of energy in our county. This project represents what we desperately need. The time is now.

Best wishes, and please feel free to get in touch. –Anurag Agrawal

Professor Anurag Agrawal
Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Cornell University, 

See Monarchs and Milkweed - <http://press.princeton.edu/titles/10944.html>

Blog, publications, and multimedia: www.herbivory.com

Basl 5-8-17

From: Kevin Basl [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 05, 2017 11:40 PM
To: Bambi Avery
Subject: Dryden solar farm

Dear Dryden Town Board,

As an Iraq War veteran and user of solar power, I'm writing to express my support for the Dryden solar farm. Solar power is quiet, clean and resilient. It doesn't rely on foreign oil (a major factor in ongoing war), and there's no risk of polluting the air or local water sources. Projects like this must happen if we are to take the future of our children seriously. While the panels may change the look of the landscape near the cemetery, the benefits to the greater community outweigh complaints that to some it may be an eyesore.

Sincerely,
Kevin Basl
Sergeant, U.S. Army 2003 to 2008
Trumansburg, NY

Belina 5-6-17

From: Mark Belina [REDACTED]

Sent: Saturday, May 06, 2017 11:06 AM

To: Bambi Avery

Subject: Willow Glen

My name is Mark Belina my wife Gwen is buried at Willow Glen. I STRONGLY appose this solar project. Is there any respect for deceased people and their loved ones? Is money so much more important? I do not want to visit my loving wife in the middle of a solar array.

Thank you

Mark Belina

[REDACTED]

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Bittner 5-8-17

Dear Leaders in Dryden,

Our town should pursue the current opportunity to work with SUN8 to bring solar power, solar jobs, and increased tax revenue to our local economy.

I understand that these changes will affect some community members who feel that their quality of life will be affected. It is a very emotional situation. But in the big picture, some changes are inevitable, and in this case the benefits outweigh the costs. Some development is going to happen - it might as well be good for the planet AND the economy. Solar panels do take up space, but they are otherwise minimally invasive and cause no permanent damage to the land, unlike fossil fuel extraction.

We must consistently make difficult choices in favor of cleaner energy because climate-wide changes on Earth affect everyone, and are life-threatening for many people as well as other species.

Thank you for your attention to all public comments.

Best,

Tonya Bittner
Ringwood Road
Freeville

Bonney 5-8-17

My husband and I live in Ellis Hollow (Thomas Road). We support the SUN8 projects. Many eloquent, knowledgeable people (among them ornithologists) have posted comments in support so I won't duplicate their input. I just want to stress that global warming has to be one of society's highest priorities and at this point in time, solar energy appears to be the safest option with the least negative impact. I understand the concerns of the people on Dodge Road who are opposed but I believe the project planners have taken those concerns into consideration by taking steps to reduce the project's potential impact.

We do not support a moratorium for further study. From the documents we have read, it appears that the SUN8 planners have undertaken a comprehensive appraisal of the best way to help our community move ahead with solar energy in Dryden. We agree with the posted comments -- If not now, when? If not here, where?

Thank you for your consideration of our feedback. Please keep this project moving ahead.

Sincerely,
Julia Bonney
Greg Bostwick
424 Thomas Road
Ithaca, NY

Bostwick 5-8-17

-----Original Message-----

From: Julia Bonney [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 08, 2017 11:48 AM
To: Bambi Avery
Subject: Dryden solar project

Could you please distribute this e-mail to members of the Town Board, Planning Board, Conservation Board, and ZBA? Thank you.

My husband and I live in Ellis Hollow (Thomas Road). We support the SUN8 projects. Many eloquent, knowledgeable people (among them ornithologists) have posted comments in support so I won't duplicate their input. I just want to stress that global warming has to be one of society's highest priorities and at this point in time, solar energy appears to be the safest option with the least negative impact. I understand the concerns of the people on Dodge Road who are opposed but I believe the project planners have taken those concerns into consideration by taking steps to reduce the project's potential impact.

We do not support a moratorium for further study. From the documents we have read, it appears that the SUN8 planners have undertaken a comprehensive appraisal of the best way to help our community move ahead with solar energy in Dryden. We agree with the posted comments -- If not now, when? If not here, where?

Thank you for your consideration of our feedback. Please keep this project moving ahead.

Sincerely,
Julia Bonney
Greg Bostwick
424 Thomas Road
Ithaca, NY

Evelt 5-8-17

Dear Dryden Town Board members,

You are currently struggling with two issues that have its residents stirred up. One is the menace of the ramped-up Borger compressor station with its threat of increased harmful air emissions and their effects on human health and the possibility of spills that could contaminate the surrounding wetlands and ultimately the stream leading to Cayuga Lake. And then there is the solar farm proposed by Distributed Sun that is opposed by people whose view shed would be adversely affected or are concerned about their experience at the cemetery on Route 13. Interestingly enough, the opposition to the solar farm is loud, vehement and intensely emotional. The concerns of the Ellis Hollow residents who stand to suffer the serious health consequences of the expansion of the Borger station have received far less attention from the larger Dryden community. And yet what an odd juxtaposition— quiet, safe, non-polluting solar arrays that help us reduce our carbon footprint on this precious , vulnerable planet threatened by catastrophic climate change versus a noisy, dangerous, polluting facility that enlarges our carbon footprint and hastens our plunge towards an unlivable planet. Luckily you are not faced with an either/or choice between these two projects. But the solar farm is an easy choice in the obvious advantages for now, and more importantly for future generations and the planet. Doing something to protect the community and future generations from the effects of the Borger station and the repercussions of perpetuating our dependence on fossil fuels is a much more gnarly problem. I urge you to approve the solar farm and save your energies for finding a way to put obstacles in the path of the New Market expansion.

Yours,

Elisa Evelt

Fitzgibbons 5-8-17

From: pat fitzgibbons [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, May 07, 2017 11:21 PM
To: [REDACTED] Bambi Avery
Subject: Please prived the following to your respective board members. Thank you, Pat Fitzgibbons

To: Members of the Tompkins County IDA

May 6, 2017

Cc: Dryden Town Board

Subject: Dryden Solar Projects

I would like to question the appropriateness and legality of the IDA 's involvement in the PILOT programs related to the Sun8/Distributed Energy's proposed installations in the Town of Dryden (Turkey Hill & Willow Glen).

Directly from the Tompkins County IDA web site....."The primary mission of the TCIDA is to offer economic incentives to Tompkins County businesses selling product outside of the region, in order to create and retain quality employment opportunities and strengthen the local tax base." "The IDA targets the industrial sector and will only consider other sectors if certain criteria are met."

1. Sun8 and the Dryden Town Board have been emphatic that these installations are not industrial solar. Why then is the IDA getting involved, as they target the industrial sector?
2. Mission of the IDA to offer economic incentives to Tompkins County businesses Distributed Energy/Sun8 is not a Tompkins County business.
3. Mission of the IDA to create and retain quality employment opportunities no long term jobs are being created for town residents.
4. Mission of the IDA to strengthen the local tax base Roughly \$8 million in PILOT funds over 30 years is a small percentage of the taxes that would be collected on the assessed value of such installations. Some might argue that the PILOT funds are better than nothing; I would ask is that the price of prostituting our lands and community character?

It would also appear to many that the IDA may be attempting to operate outside their legal mission. Per GML Article 18-A paragraph 852 states Policy and purposes.... preventing unemployment and economic deterioration (see full text below). These solar programs do nothing to prevent unemployment or prevent economic deterioration.

General Municipal Law Article 18-A

852. “Policy and purposes of article. It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state to promote the economic welfare, recreation opportunities and prosperity of its inhabitants and to actively promote, attract, encourage and develop recreation, economically sound commerce and industry and economically sound projects identified and called for to implement a state heritage area management plan as provided in title G of the parks, recreation and historic preservation law through governmental **action for the purpose of preventing unemployment and economic deterioration** by the creation of industrial development agencies which are hereby declared to be governmental agencies and instrumentalities and to grant to such industrial development agencies the rights and powers provided in this article. It is hereby further declared to be the policy of this state to protect and promote the health of the inhabitants of this state by the conservation, protection and improvement of the natural and cultural or historic resources and environment and to control land, sewer, water, air, noise or general environmental pollution derived from the operation of industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, commercial, recreation, horse racing facilities, railroad facilities, automobile racing facilities and research facilities and to grant such industrial development agencies the rights and powers provided by this article with respect to industrial pollution control facilities. It is hereby further declared to be the policy of this state to protect and promote the health of the inhabitants of this state and to increase trade through promoting the development of facilities to provide recreation for the citizens of the state and to attract tourists from other states. The use of all such rights and powers is a public purpose essential to the public interest, and for which public funds may be expended.”

The proposed PILOT arrangement also appears to be in contradiction to state law. Assessors Manual Volume 4, Exemption Administration Section 4.01 – RPTL Section 487- Summary-paragraph D. PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES: None required. States:

“ However, each county, city, town, village and school district (except the school districts of New York, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers) **that has not disallowed the exemption** may require the owner to enter into a contract for payments in lieu of taxes. As part of such contract, the property owner may be required to make annual payments in an amount not to exceed the amounts which would have been payable without the exemption. **Such a contract may not operate more than 15 years**, commencing from the date on which the benefits of this exemption first become effective.” (paragraphs 9.a & 9.b of 487 also addresses these two points).

It is my understanding that the Dryden School Board has disallowed the exemption; therefore a PILOT program related to school taxes is not appropriate. It is also my understanding, based on what has been presented at various public meetings, that the 30 year time period that has been discussed for the PILOT is also in violation of the law. My view on these issues also seems to be supported by information found on the NY-Sun PV Trainers Network (training.ny-sun.ny.gov) in presentations prepared by Jessica Bacher of the Land Use Law Center of Pace Law School.

Also, from the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance, Recently asked questions about the real property tax law on the topic of solar energy systems, Issue #2 dated January 25,2016.

PILOTs

“If a municipality does not opt out – i.e., if it leaves the exemption in place – then qualifying solar energy systems constructed in the municipality will be exempt from taxation for a period of 15 years. However, the municipality then has the option to require the owners of such systems to enter into contracts to make payments in lieu of taxes, which are generally referred to as “PILOTs.”

Q: If a municipality leaves the exemption in place and requires owners to pay PILOTs, how much should those payments be?

A: That is largely a local decision, except that the statute sets limits on how large these PILOTs may be, and on how long they may last. Specifically, it provides that the PILOTs may not exceed the taxes that would have been payable if the property were not exempt under § 487. It also provides that the period over which the PILOTs are to be paid may not exceed 15 years. See § 487(9)(a). In effect, then, if a municipality leaves the exemption in place and imposes the maximum allowable PILOT obligation, the owner will be making payments to the municipality in the same amount as if the property were fully taxable. The primary difference is that those payments will have the legal status of PILOTs rather than property taxes.”

I am concerned that many atypical actions (such as the creation of landlocked parcels to arguably circumvent the 2 MW limit) and arguably legally questionable actions (concerning the PILOT programs) are being contemplated by Dryden’s Town Board as well as the Tompkins County IDA. Please only consider your fiduciary responsibilities to the residents and taxpayers of the Town and County and not let your personal views of solar energy enter into you decision process. There will be many adversely affected by these installations for a marginal electric savings for some and huge profits for an out of state company (Sun8). Unfortunately, it is easy to envision the law suits that people are talking about that may result against the Town Board and the IDA if these projects are approved in any semblance of their current form.

Sincerely,

Pat Fitzgibbons [REDACTED] Dryden taxpayer

637 Wilson Creek Rd.

Newark Valley, NY 13811

Geisler 5-7-17

Dear Dryden Town Board Members,

I have spoken at various Dryden TB meetings in favor of solar farm development. I much appreciate your devoted work on our energy future amid useful debate on how to proceed.

I hope you'll trust your instincts and show full support for community solar in Dryden. Future residents will praise your commitment. The work leading to these projects is impressive, especially the fruitful, year-long moratorium to study the costs and benefits of community solar. It resulted in Dryden's new solar law, a better sense for the role of large-scale solar in rolling back our carbon footprint, and an invitation to Distributed Sun to launch us into action.

Distributed Sun was an excellent choice. The firm is well aware of Dryden's arcadian lifestyle and has offered thoughtful mitigations to make community solar widely meet high standards. Many residents with reservations now agree that community solar is part of our common future. They show a willingness to sacrifice viewsheds and aesthetics to usher in the new energy era. It is a truism that some good things in our lifestyle fall apart so that better things can fall together.

This is neither a time for time-out nor a second moratorium. The resolution that surfaced at last week's Planning Board Meeting is a last-ditch measure by a small group of peoples shouting loud and late. Where were they during the previous year-long moratorium? Where were they when (in the case of Willow Glen) the parcel was leased for a not-so-scenic fracking well pad? Are they tone deaf to the tax and job benefits of the twin projects? Do they not see that these 'industrial' solar projects are about as clean as industry gets, and that Distributed Sun is staking its reputation on solar success in Dryden? And not least, have the moratorium enthusiasts lost sight of the low-cost electricity these solar communities will avail renters and homeowners who don't have the luxury of private solar installations?

There are two kinds of climate denial. One comes from those who refuse to accept that our planet is 'losing its cool' and say so. The second comes from those who say they believe in solar power but don't act on it when the opportunity arises, as in our present community solar proposals.

It is time for resolve, not moratoria.

Thanks again for leading.

Chuck Geisler

517 Ellis Hollow Cr. Rd.
Ithaca/Dryden

Gueldner 5-9-17

Hello-

I live in the town of Dryden at 28 Brooktondale Rd. My house is not suitable to have solar panels, I don't get enough sun and my house doesn't face the south. I had an estimate done from 2 solar companies and the result was that it would not make financial sense for me to purchase solar panels.

What would make sense for me is to buy into community solar power from a solar farm. I am very pleased that Dryden continues to be a leader in clean energy for our future. I support the SUN8 project going forward, which will create jobs in our community, low-cost renewable electricity, millions in new tax revenue and an "open for business" reputation.

I do not think a moratorium on solar development over 2MW is prudent. I would like to see this project move forward without further delays because the benefits are great and the detriments are small. SUN8s projects have been advanced under the new solar law adopted by Dryden and I urge you to approve them as soon as possible with all of the mitigations and low-impact, best management practiced they have proposed.

Sincerely,

Pam Gueldner

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Pam Gueldner

Owner and Catering Manager
Mannible Cafe in Mann Library
Fork & Gavel Cafe in Myron Taylor Hall



April 28, 2017

As a child one of my happiest memories was a Sunday drive from Syracuse NY to Dryden NY. Our family would bring my Gramma to Willow Glen Cemetery to lay flowers on my Grandpa's grave. As children we all loved Willow Glen. We played hide and seek behind the stones. I used the hand pump to get water so that we could wash off the Veterans stone which proudly adorned my grandfathers grave. We would leave a plant. But before we left for home, I'd climb up the hill by the trees, and overlook the fields of wheat or corn and watch them swaying in the sun. I thought to my young self, there is no other place on earth as beautiful as this, or as quiet, I love it here. Then I would run down the hill and take my Gramma's hand, we'd go to the School of Ornithology for a picnic. Years later I would receive a degree from the same school. After Gramma passed I would bring my children there and tell them the same stories of my Grandmother and myself and my brothers and sisters, running and playing. As I washed my Grandmother's stone and layed flowers there it was reminiscent, seeing my girls running, playing among the stones, getting me water to wash my Grandpa's stone now.

There they learned the history of their family but more importantly loving the beauty of the place and the reality it played in their lives. Then as in the past, a picnic followed at "flat rock", near the school. We would talk about family, how fun Great-grandma was and how important she was. Each one would say "when we go to heaven we want to be buried there Mom, it's so beautiful."

Now they come seldom as they live far away. But they do come, with me, in the car are their children & they wash the same stone and tell the same stories. I wait until it's time to be

drives up to the top of the hill, along the tree lines
back of the cemetery where I will lay one day soon. Where
I can look out at the wheat or corn swaying in the wind
and the magnificent view scape that is mine forever.
This is the same one I saw 60 years ago. Don't take
it from me or my children or my grandchildren, give
us one place on this earth to love and cherish and
keep sacred in our hearts and souls forever...

Dr. Robin A. Lucas Ph.D.

1320 Cleveland Ave.

Wyomissing, Pa. 19618

owner of 6 lots in

Willow Glen Cemetery

RECEIVED

MAY 8 - 2017

DRYDEN TOWN CLERK

May 4, 2017

Dear Town Board,

I support the solar
project and hope that it
will go forward.

Thank you,

Elizabeth McMahon

RECEIVED

MAY 8 - 2017

DRYDEN TOWN BOARD

Mermin 5-9-17

May 9, 2017

We write to express our strong support for the solar development projects currently being considered by the town of Dryden. We live in Ellis Hollow near one of the projected sites and drive on Stevenson Road almost every day, and we acknowledge the objections of those who live closer still. But we agree with Martha Robertson's highly informative assessment, and with the detailed commentary of Judith Pierpont in yesterday's Ithaca Journal.

Like most residents of this area, including, I assume, those who oppose these projects, we strongly support the move towards solar power. We do not believe that other sites could be found with so few disadvantages, even in this relatively rural, unspoiled area. If these projects are not approved, it is hard to imagine that any others could be.

We have not been able to attend the public meetings, and are therefore writing to urge you to support the projects.

Yours sincerely,

Dorothy Mermin

David Mermin

75 Hickory Rd

May 8, 2017

To the Town of Dryden Board,

I am writing this letter to urge you to support the recommendation from the Town of Dryden Planning Board for a 6-month moratorium on solar energy projects over 2 MW in the Town of Dryden. This moratorium should include the current solar project proposal from Distributed Sun. Both the Town of Dryden Board and the Town of Dryden Planning Board have been great about trying to hear comments and concerns from Dryden residents, about researching the issues surrounding this project and about working through the hundreds of pages of documents submitted about this project. There is just too much information to digest and there are too many concerns to consider about the project to move forward at a rapid pace. A moratorium makes the most sense because there are so many concerns raised, there is so much information to digest, this project is so big, that taking time to really figure out what is needed and best for Dryden is the most logical way to proceed. Our Dryden community wants solar energy; even the residents opposed to the current configuration of the project want solar energy. There has to be a way to find compromise to the current configuration, explore other site options to relieve the massive scale on the current sites, and to make this a project that ALL Dryden residents can fully support. We can bring solar energy to Dryden without causing the severe distress expressed by so many neighbors who have concerns about the project. Taking the time for a moratorium will help in finding a solution to the concerns with this project. Two of the biggest concerns expressed have been the large commercial scale of this project and rapid pace for seeking approval. Please support the moratorium to allow the time needed to figure out a way to bring solar to Dryden without also causing a deep negative impact to all of those who have concerns about the current configuration of the project.

Thank you again for taking the time to listen to residents and to try to evaluate all the issues and details of this enormous project. I am unable to attend the upcoming May Board Meetings due to childcare responsibilities. Please know that the outcome of the proposed solar project is extremely important to me, but taking care of my children supersedes everything else. May is a very busy month for all of the kids' activities. Please vote for a moratorium to gain more time, time that is truly needed to make this project acceptable to all residents.

Thank you,

Leslie Appel, DVM
78 Dodge Road

5/17

To Town of Dryden Planning Board Members,

My grandfather is buried since 1965 at Willow Glen Cemetery.

I strongly oppose the solar project & the cell tower project. The cemetery is a sacred place & the view to the North & East should remain in the natural real setting that has existed for the last several hundred years.

Please find another location.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dorothy R. Muñoz

RECEIVED

MAY 8 - 2017

DRYDEN TOWN CLERK

Rith 5-8-17

With so many advantages and no down sides whatsoever please let Dryden build this solar project. It's the direction we need to go both for our children's future and a decent environment now.

Please distribute this email of my support to the planning board. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Maude Rith

Shippy 5-7-17

From: Jim Shippy [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, May 07, 2017 9:03 PM
To: Bambi Avery
Subject: Sun8 Project/Application

We Support The Planning Board's resolution recommending that the Town Board place a 6 month moratorium on solar projects over 2 Megawatts. This moratorium Must include the current Sun8 Project/Application.

The Moratorium would help hit the "pause" button on this project. It might help the entire community take stock of how to go about embracing solar without the kind of upheaval we've all been experiencing. So many of us could peacefully make room in our neighborhood for a smaller scale project. A moratorium could be the time we all --legislators, planners and citizens ---need to intelligently grapple with doing solar right.

Sincerely,
Jim Shippy
Judy Shippy
Sophia Steh

Wallace 5-8-17

From: Larry Wallace [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 05, 2017 4:31 PM
To: Bambi Avery
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Moratorium om Solar Project

Dear Dryden Town Board;

I am a 30 year resident of the Town of Dryden and am writing in support of a 6 month moratorium on the Solar projects. I believe the current project supersedes the 2 mega watt standard for community solar projects and needs further study before approving a project of this magnitude.

Sincerely,
Larry Wallace
1139 Ellis Hollow Rd