

**Ray Burger** – Beautiful Dryden started a petition on Change.org and listed you as a decision maker. Learn more about Beautiful Dryden’s petition and how you can respond.

## Calling for a Moratorium on Large Scale/Industrial Solar in Dryden, NY

Petition by Beautiful Dryden · Started May 15, 2017



On May 3, 2017 the Dryden Planning Board voted to recommend that the Town Board adopt a Moratorium on Large Scale/Industrial Solar in Dryden, We applaud... [Read more](#)

[View the petition](#)

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

#### 1. View the petition

[Learn about the petition and its supporters.](#) You will receive updates as new supporters sign the petition so you can see who is signing and why.

#### 2. Respond to the petition

[Post a response](#) to let the petition supporters know you're listening, say whether you agree with their call to action, or ask them for more information.

#### 3. Continue the dialogue

Read the comments posted by petition supporters and continue the dialogue so that others can see you're an engaged leader who is willing to participate in open discussion.

lavine b 5-18-17

From: Buzz Lavine [  
Sent: Thursday, May 18, 2017 1:33 AM  
To: Bambi Avery  
Subject: Clarifying Recent Developments on Dryden Solar Proposals

Please forward this to all Town Board Members and all Planning Board members, as well as to the Town Planner.

Thanks,  
Buzz Lavine

### Clarifying Recent Developments on Dryden Solar Proposals

There have been four recent developments affecting the large scale solar development proposals in the Town.

1. Cornell has revealed its rationale for making sites available for the proposed solar development.
2. The IDA's change of calculations for approving the PILOT agreement resulted in major concerns from the public.
3. The Planning Board voted to recommend a Town moratorium on large scale solar projects.
4. New York State's recent changes of regulations and solar incentives have resulted in any new proposals being much less financially feasible.

1. Cornell met with Town representatives on May 11th and verified that the alternate sites proposed by many Ellis Hollow residents are indeed needed to be held for agricultural research. The sites have to be close to the Cornell campus and have good agricultural soils. The neighborhood's proposed alternate sites meet those criteria, and the Dodge Road sites do not. Furthermore, any exchange of tax parcels used for the solar project would require a new application to the State, and thus be much less financially feasible due to the new state regulations and incentives. (See 4 below.)

lavine b 5-18-17

2. The May 9th County IDA hearing on the solar projects' PILOT's elicited major concerns from the public regarding the the apparent "hosing" the Town was being asked to accept. Those concerned citizens noted that the annual rate of increase of PILOT payments throughout the life of the project had been decreased from 2% originally to now only 1%. Many citizens said the Town was being "hosed" because of that change. However, it turns out that the decrease to the 1% rate is merely recognizing that the solar company would instead be paying the other 1% directly instead of through the PILOT. Unfortunately the IDA hearing rules didn't allow the developer to respond to that misunderstanding right then at the meeting. The long and the short of it is that along with the 1% rate of increase, the developer would be making separate payments directly to the fire and ambulance districts. Under the 2% rate those payments were part of the PILOT. The end result is that the developer will make more than \$8-million in tax payments over the life of the project - either way, i.e. no change in the total amount. And that of course would keep these projects ranked as the county's third largest tax payer, right behind the Cayuga Power Plant and the Borger natural gas compressor station in Ellis Hollow.

3. The May 3rd special Planning Board meeting resulted in a recommendation for a Town moratorium on large scale solar projects, to give the Town more time to further study the environmental impacts of the proposed projects under the SEQRA law. The Planning Board noted some environmental impacts of concern. The environmental impacts were few in number and were disputed among the Planning Board members. In addition, there is no indication that those impacts have not already been studied, nor that any environmental impact statement would be required. In fact on May 11th the state DEC, acting in its advisory role, issued a negative declaration, meaning that their advice is that there's no need for an environmental impact statement. The Town, acting as the lead agency for the SEQRA process, might well come to the same conclusion. That would leave the purpose of the moratorium as a moot issue.

lavine b 5-18-17

4. On March 9th, New York State changed its regulations and also its incentives for large scale community solar development. Consequently any new proposals not already grandfathered under the older regulations and incentives must be considered under a different set of assumptions. Note that the projects proposed in Dryden made their applications to the state last December and are thus grandfathered in under the previous regimen of regulations and incentives.. The principal changes of concern to the proposed Dryden projects are the new NYSERDA incentives for solar development and the new net metering rate structure that determines the financial value of the solar power produced. Both have decreased: the incentives by 50% and the value of the solar power by about 10%. Thus anything that may cause the existing proposals in Dryden to have to re-apply for state approvals, would also cause them to be much less financially feasible -- in my mind, likely unfeasible. In other words, we'd likely have no large scale solar proposals at all.

After considering these four recent developments, two truths stand out. First, many arguments put forth by opponents to these projects have been shown to be misunderstandings of the facts. And second, because of the state level changes, a significant delay of the projects will risk making Dryden's hope for a large solar future unlikely to be achieved.

milller 5-17-17

From: Nancy Miller  
Sent: Wednesday, May 17, 2017 10:47 PM  
To: Bambi Avery  
Subject: Please forward to Town Board Members

I am very much in favor of the Solar 8 project. It is time to move this project along. I am not in favor of the Planning Board recommendation for a six months moratorium on the Solar 8 project. As I understand it, the reason for the moratorium is to give Solar 8 more time to find more suitable land for their projects. But the Town Attorney is very clear that neither the Planning Board nor the Town Board can legitimately require Solar 8 to compile an inventory of potential solar sites or to move its solar projects to pieces of land other than those which are now under lease. The only practical effect of the recommended moratorium is a delaying tactic to make Solar 8's project not feasible within their time frame. This will be the effect regardless of whether it was an intended result or not. Dryden needs to take the lead again in preventing further climate change and protecting its citizens. This time in community solar, in large solar arrays. It is a win for our residents who will be able to receive solar power at a discount, a win for the PILOT funds the Town will receive for the project. It is a win for the Tompkins County goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Please do all you can to move this important project along to get it built and producing energy.

Thank you for all the work you do to Protect Dryden.

Nancy  
Miller 501 Midline Road, Town of Dryden

"Laughter really is carbonated holiness" - Anne Lamott

To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness... What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we

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see only the  
worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and  
places—and there  
are so many—where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to  
act and at least  
the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different  
direction...And if we do act, in  
however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The  
future is an infinite  
succession of presents and to live now as we think human beings should live, in  
defiance of all that  
is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory." -- Howard Zinn

morgan 5-16-17

From: Nancy Morgan  
Sent: Tuesday, May 16, 2017 3:27 PM  
To: Bambi Avery  
Subject: Please Forward to the Town Board and Planning Board Members

May 16, 2017

To the Members of the Dryden Town Board:

I cannot attend the Town Board meeting but would like to express my support for the Dryden Solar Array Project. While some of the arguments against it are valid and emotionally compelling, they seem to have more to do with aesthetics than practicalities. I believe the reasons for allowing this project to move forward carry more weight.

First of all, the installation would provide thousands of Dryden homes with clean energy, at a reasonable price, reducing Dryden's dependence on fossil fuels.

Second, it would bring quite a lot of new revenue, which would benefit the Town as a whole.

Third, the developer has listened carefully to the concerns of near neighbors of the site, and worked hard to make changes to the project based on those concerns. With no access roads required, it will be a quiet presence, and won't be a danger to birds or other wildlife.

This kind of opportunity may not be offered again, with so many benefits to the Town of Dryden. It is a chance we should not miss. As a long-time resident, I would be proud to see our town take this small step toward energy sustainability.

Sincerely,

Nancy Morgan  
1608 Hanshaw Road  
Ithaca (town of Dryden) NY

From: Joleen Multari  
Sent: Monday 5/8/17  
Subject : In support of planning board moratorium on Large Solar Installations

Dear Dryden Town Board members:

I am writing in support of the Planning Board's resolution of May 3<sup>rd</sup> that recommends that the Town Board place a 6 month moratorium on solar projects over 2 megawatts. I urge the town board to vote YES to establishing a 6 month moratorium. It is the wise thing to do.

I am a strong supporter solar energy, as are the great majority of those who are asking you to pass this moratorium. This is not about being for solar or against solar; it is about doing things the right way, making good decisions and a good plan for the town of Dryden and its future. Taking this time is especially important given the intense and wide spread reaction from the residents of this community.

This moratorium is NOT a tactic to delay the proposed large scale solar project. It is a time for the Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board, along with the citizens of this community to role up our sleeves and work hard together on a comprehensive plan and zoning laws to address the future of solar in the town of Dryden. The boards and community have not had the time they need to do this properly. It is a much needed, reasonable & logical pause. The town boards have done this in the past for cell towers, big box stores, etc and now they need to do it for solar installations.

The boards need time to study the best sites, all alternate sites, and parameters for current and future large scale solar development. They also need to assess the impact they will have on neighborhoods, local business, and the community.

We also just learned that TCIDA wants to deviate from the proposed PILOT which will result in reducing the already small amount of taxes that the Town of Dryden will receive.

This is a complex situation that deserves a well thought out plan.

The town board and other boards need to competently represent the community and to protect the Town of Dryden form unintended consequences of moving too quickly into such a major project.

Thank you.

With respect,  
Joleen Multari  
Town of Dryden resident



perkins b 5-18-17

From: Brad Perkins  
Sent: Thursday, May 18, 2017 8:21 AM  
To: 'supervisor@dryden.ny.us' <supervisor@dryden.ny.us>  
Subject: Message from Brad Perkins

Jason,

First, Thank you for guiding the town with a steady hand and a thoughtful mind. We need folks like you. Second, I am asking you for your support for a moratorium on large scale solar installations in the Town of Dryden. These types of things are going to be with us for a long time. As the PV panels become inefficient they will be replaced at the same original locations. So, a choice of where to site them for today's world will become where they are for lifetimes. A six months moratorium now will help the residents of the town to understand what we are getting into. From the meetings that have been held, I believe that even The Town Board has questions that are not yet answered. The moratorium helps all stake holders. Please make every effort to pass a six months moratorium on large scale solar installations. We did due diligence for fracking, solar needs just as much consideration by the residents and voters.

Brad Perkins

330 Savage Turn Drive  
Ithaca, N.Y. 14850  
May 15, 2017

Town Clerk  
Dryden, N.Y.

We lived at 536 Ellis Hollow Creek Rd from June 1956 to September 2016. I still routinely travel to potato research plots in Ellis Hollow and on Mt. Pleasant. We have a burial plot at the Willow Glen Cemetery. I want to voice my approval of plans for the solar power projects proposed on the Alton Reed property and in proximity to the Willow Glen Cemetery.

Please present this letter to the appropriate individuals considering this project.

Sincerely yours.

Robert L. Pleasted

schickel j 5-13-17

From: Jacques Schickel  
Sent: Saturday, May 13, 2017 5:00 AM  
To: Bambi Avery  
Subject: to all boards and committees

The uglification of our community with industrial solar is not the answer;  
if this is the extent of our town board's creativity in this matter then we need to  
elect ourselves a new  
town board.

- Jacques Schickel

Tuesday, 5/09/17

In support of planning board Moratorium on Large Solar Installations

To: Dryden Town Board members:

I support the Planning Board's May 3<sup>rd</sup> resolution to the Town Board for a 6 month moratorium on solar projects over 2 megawatts. I urge the town board to vote YES to establish the 6 month moratorium.

I support solar energy, as do most of those who are asking you to pass this moratorium. However, this is not a referendum on the merits of solar; it is about considering and establishing an appropriate plan for the Town of Dryden.

If anything, the meetings of the past few weeks clearly show that it would be best to step back, take a deep breath and establish a consensus taking into consideration the diverse concerns of the residents of this community.

The six months will allow time for the Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board to develop a comprehensive plan to address the future of solar in the town of Dryden. It is clear that the boards and community have not had the time they need to do this properly.

Sincerely,

Eddie Sieradzki

Town of Dryden resident

Comments on the Solar 8 Moratorium Proposal and the Planning Board's SEQR, FEAF Part 2  
Prepared for the Dryden Town Board Meeting of May 18, 2017

Joe Wilson, Planning Board Member  
75 Hunt Hill Road  
Town of Dryden

To the Town Board Members,

I am a member of the Planning Board but did not attend or vote at the Board's May 3 Special Meeting. I asked for the meeting to be held after I returned from vacation but that did not happen.

I have read the notes on the meeting prepared by the Planning Board Chair and the draft meeting minutes prepared by the Deputy Town Clerk. I have reviewed the Full Environmental Assessment Form, Part 2 prepared by my colleagues on the Planning Board. I want to share my views on their SEQR recommendations and their recommendation for a moratorium on the Solar 8 project.

1. It is important to remember that the Town's Zoning Law permits solar arrays which serve the "general public" like those proposed by Solar 8 at both the Dryden Road and Ellis Tract sites.
2. In its SEQR recommendation on the Solar 8 projects, the Planning Board found "No or small" potentially significant environmental impacts in 119 of the 129 potential impacts specified by the DEC for consideration.
3. Significantly, the Board's findings of "No or small impact" included categories where there has been much public comment including: Impact on Land, Impact on Geological Features, Impacts on Surface Water, Impact on Flooding, Impact on Plants and Animals, Impact on Historical and Archaeological Resources, Impact on Critical Environmental Resources, and Consistency with Community Plans.
4. Among the 10 indicators of potential impact, one was based on a technicality which the Planning Board members actually rejected.<sup>1</sup> The rest were subject to dispute among the members.
5. The notes and draft minutes show that the possible impacts identified by the majority were based on speculation rather than facts or on authoritative sources of information.<sup>2</sup> Given these

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1 The Planning Board members found "No or little" impact under no. "7. Impact on Plants and Animals, h. ...conversion of more than 10 acres of forest." Members changed their rating to "moderate to large impact may occur" only after Town Attorney Brock informed them of the technicality that the "SEQR Workbook" recommended a finding of "moderate to large" for any disturbance over 10 acres.

2 "8. f." under "Impact on Agricultural Resources" was labeled "moderate to large" after one member speculated without giving any facts that "The cost of farmland might go up as competition between farmers and the solar industry increases." Seven of the balance of eight "moderate to large" labels are under "8. Impact on Aesthetic Resources." However, the members failed to name or identify any "officially designated ... scenic or aesthetic resources" as required by the SEQR form which they used. The last supposed "moderate to large" impact was under "11. Impact on Open Space and Recreation, d. ... loss of an area now used informally ... as an open space resource." Here the majority attached the word "hunting" without further explanation. Because the implication is that this "hunting" would be taking place near occupied homes, operating businesses, a cemetery, farms, and well-traveled roads, it is only reasonable to expect supporting specification of which of the sites is where hunting occurs, what kind of hunting, when the hunting occurs, the animals hunted, and how much or how little hunting occurs. Overall, in applying the label "moderate to large," the only instance where the majority relied on an authoritative resource was when Attorney Brock told them of the "DEC Workbook" recommendation regarding the disturbance of 10 acres. And, as noted above, the Planning Board

factors and had I been present, I would voted with the members who disagreed with the majority, and had I been present, the majority “for” would have been reduced.<sup>3</sup>

6. This means that there is little reason for a moratorium for further study of the impacts described as “moderate to large” by the Planning Board. It also means that Town Board members should feel free to exercise their independent judgment on what if any potential impacts exist and whether any should get the high level of scrutiny and expenditure of time that study under an "Environmental Impact Statement" would require.
7. There already is a moratorium in place across the Town for all large solar projects serving the general with the exception of the Solar 8 project. Therefore, if the primary goal of the Planning Board is to conduct a survey for additional, large solar sites and not simply to delay Solar 8, there is time to do it and a prohibition on processing similar solar applications until the current moratorium runs out—sometime in July.
8. The draft minutes show that Town Attorney Brock has instructed the Planning Board that neither it nor the Town Board can legitimately use the SEQR law to force Solar 8 to compile an inventory of potential solar sites or to move its solar projects to pieces of land other than those which are now under lease.
9. Given that the Planning Board's majority's proposed moratorium has the announced purpose of giving time to find more suitable pieces of land for Solar 8's projects—something Solar 8 cannot be forced to do, the only practical effect of the recommended moratorium is that of a delaying tactic to make Solar 8's project un-doable in a feasible time frame. This will be the effect of the suggested moratorium regardless of whether those who propose it intend such a result or not.
10. Had I been present at the Special Meeting, I would have voted against the proposed moratorium, As with the SEQR recommendations, my vote against would have reduced the majority voting for the recommended moratorium.

For all these reasons, I urge you to give modest if any weight to the Planning Board majority's SEQR recommendations, and I urge you to vote against the recommended Solar 8 moratorium.

/s/ Joseph M. Wilson

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did not agree based on the actual facts as the members knew them.

- 3 One can calculate the vote one of two ways: 1. Had I been seated and Ms. Lambert, the alternate, not seated, the vote would have been 4 “for” and 3 “against.” 2. All members of the Planning Board's votes counted including both my vote and Ms. Lambert's: 5 “for” and 3 “against.” In either case, the split vote shows significant lack of agreement among Planning Board members.