

+Dear Supervisor Leifer and Town Board,

I am writing to express my concerns with the proposed SUP revision at the 2150 Dryden Road solar project. I want to make it clear that although I am a member of the Conservation Board I am making these comments as a concerned citizen of the Town Of Dryden. I attended a site visit of the proposed project area on September 16 along with the Project Manager, the Town Planning Director, two members of the Planning Board and a neighboring land- owner. I had emailed Ray Burger and asked if the Conservation Board could be included in the site visit considering the location along Virgil Creek where work is proposed to be completed but received no reply. So, I took it upon myself to join the visit.

The following are highlights of what I observed:

1. The proposed site work is in the Virgil Creek 100 year flood plain and in the town's designated Conservation District zone.
2. To complete the work of running high power lines over Virgil Creek there will be considerable clear cutting of many trees (50 or more in the words of the project manager) in a estimated 150 ft. (maybe more) swath on both sides of the creek. Without a cutting plan, it is difficult to know for sure. (Virgil Creek is a DEC designated trout stream). Not only will this open Virgil Creek up to erosion, it will also destroy what is currently a very well buffered (wide riparian buffer) stretch of stream and allow warming of the water. Currently this stream segment is well shaded and protected for optimal fish habitat. The stream corridor is also an important wildlife corridor and the cutting of the mature white oak trees (as described by the project manager) on the south side of the creek, and, many more trees will jeopardize this important habitat. Haven't we already lost enough carbon sequestering trees and other vegetation from the clearing for the arrays? I distinctly remember at some of the meetings when asked about the mature willows along Willow Glen Creek the solar representatives stating that they would do what they could to preserve some of those mature trees. We see how that worked out. The willows are all gone and a bulldozer was used to straighten that stream. It makes it very difficult to believe anything these companies promise.
3. Once the lines come over the stream then there is the proposed twenty plus 45-50 ft. poles that will be placed in the large agricultural field, rendering that flat parcel of land useless for future agricultural uses. The stakeout for the poles is questionable at best and will make it near impossible to get machinery into the western end of the field if someone wanted to do so. I can only imagine that the utility company would not allow tractors and machinery going in and out through its array of poles.
4. Then of course is the visual impact of the poles. Again, we were told at meetings by the solar representatives that the interconnections would all be underground. (minutes of April 20, 2017 Town Board meeting) The placement of these poles was never shown on the original drawings for the project when it was approved. The Town Board bought into these misrepresentations and the citizens of Dryden will suffer if this project is

approved as presented. I asked the project manager directly if these interconnections could all be underground. His response was don't quote me but yes, they could be underground but the company doesn't want to spend the extra money to do so. I even asked about going under Virgil Creek and again he said it could be done but the company doesn't want to spend the extra money to do so. It goes to prove what these companies are all about. All they care about is the bottom line and the local people are stuck with the end results. So all the rhetoric about wanting to be good neighbors was false. The corporate greed is coming to light.

Everything about this proposal is contrary to the Town of Dryden Natural Resources Plan, the Town of Dryden Agricultural Protection Plan and the NYS Ag and Markets recommendations for these facilities. Both town plans referenced above, you as a Town Board accepted and approved and at the time praised them as good guidance for protecting critical areas and agricultural lands. Here is a time when protections are needed.

So where do we go from here? I first think it is prudent for the Town Board to ask both the Conservation Board and the Agricultural Committee to review and comment on this proposal before any decision is made. That was what these boards were originally established to do. Again, as often happens, the Town Board takes the attitude of not utilizing the expertise of the individuals on these boards.

Personally, I feel this proposal should be denied and the company should be told to put the interconnections underground or look for an alternative site. To me this is the only prudent action to take to "Protect" the taxpayers of Dryden as you always run for office on the "Protecting Dryden" line. Here is an opportunity to do just that.

Thank you for your time and consideration and please enter this letter into the public record of the SUP public hearing.

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