

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Greenskies Clean Energy, LLC petition for a declaratory ruling for the proposed construction, maintenance and operation of a 3.0-megawatt-AC solar photovoltaic electric generating facility on two parcels at the Elmridge Golf Course located to the east and west of North Anguilla Road at the intersection with Elmridge Road, Stonington, Connecticut, and associated electrical interconnection.

Petition No. 1410

September 24, 2020

PRE-FILED TESTIMONY OF RHANDI LEE

Q1. Please state your name for the record.

A1. My name Rhandi Lee.

Q2. What is your involvement with this project?

A2. I am the treasurer of PRESS (Proponents for Responsible Emplacement of Stonington Solar), a community group that is opposed to the project proposed by Greenskies Clean Energy at the Elmridge golf course. My address is 1 Fairway Court, meaning that my home is very close to this proposed site, which abuts a neighborhood of single-family homes.

Q3. What is the purpose of your testimony?

A3. This testimony describes some of PRESS's opinions and concerns with respect to this proposed project, as well as some of my personal concerns. It is intended to supplement the prefiled testimony submitted by Mary Ann Canning McComiskey, also a PRESS officer.

Q4. Please explain PRESS's concerns about the project.

A4. To be clear, PRESS is not against solar in general, or even ground-mounted solar arrays. PRESS is concerned about such an installation at this specific site, for many reasons.

First, PRESS's research has not yielded any literature about the impact of such an installation being developed on property abutting a neighborhood. These projects seem to be

typically installed on undeveloped property, sometimes forest or farmland, or on brownfield sites. The impact of this development on neighboring home values is therefore not known.

The proposed layout is very close to existing single-family houses, including mine, and likely will affect their values and potentially their quality of life. Greenskies has claimed that the panels will not be in close proximity to homes. Exhibit A is a series of photos taken from the edge of the proposed solar plant showing how close the homes will actually be. I took these photos on May 6, 2020, and the flags were set out by Greenskies. The question becomes would you spend \$500k on a house that overlooks a solar utility plant? Would that owner be able to sell that house for fair market value?

Second, PRESS is very concerned about the precedent approval of this project could set. This is a property zoned R880, with unique and significant issues such as being in a groundwater overlay protection district due to its proximity to an aquifer protection area, abutting a residential neighborhood, and being in proximity to Anguilla Brook. PRESS is concerned about all of these matters, and notes in particular the vernal pools located on the lower section of the proposed project and the proximity to Anguilla Brook, which is a high-quality stream that part of several conservation efforts to restore native fish and eel populations. The stream belt and the protected area owned by the Stonington Land Trust, which abuts the west section of the proposed solar plant, is a unique habitat that should be protected from development.

Third, PRESS is concerned about the potential for toxic chemicals to leach into the surrounding soil and water. While Greenskies has downplayed that risk, and provided information about leaching protocol testing, the simple fact is that Greenskies has not included in its petition the type of panel it will use if the project is approved, or the manufacturer of the panels. Without that information, it is impossible to know what chemicals may be present in the

panels and may be released if panels break during installation or otherwise, or if a fire breaks out, or if they do actually leach into the soil and water. The west section of the proposed site is in a groundwater protection overlay district, meaning it is especially worthy of protection from those possible outcomes. In fact, if any other kind of project was being proposed, the developer would need to go through a special permit process to engage in certain activities on the site, and that process would be overseen by our Planning and Zoning Commission. The water in that area feeds into not only Anguilla Brook, but also the wells of the residents in the surrounding area. Exhibit B shows the aquifer and groundwater overlay areas.

In sum, the likely future damage of this project far exceeds the current benefits, and PRESS opposes it for that reason.

The statements above are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Rhandi M Lee

Rhandi M Lee (Sep 24, 2020 11:23 EDT)

Rhandi Lee

Sep 24, 2020

Date

ATTACHMENTS

Exhibit A - Photos of flags marking project site

Exhibit B - Stonington Zoning Map

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing document was delivered by e-mail to the following service list:

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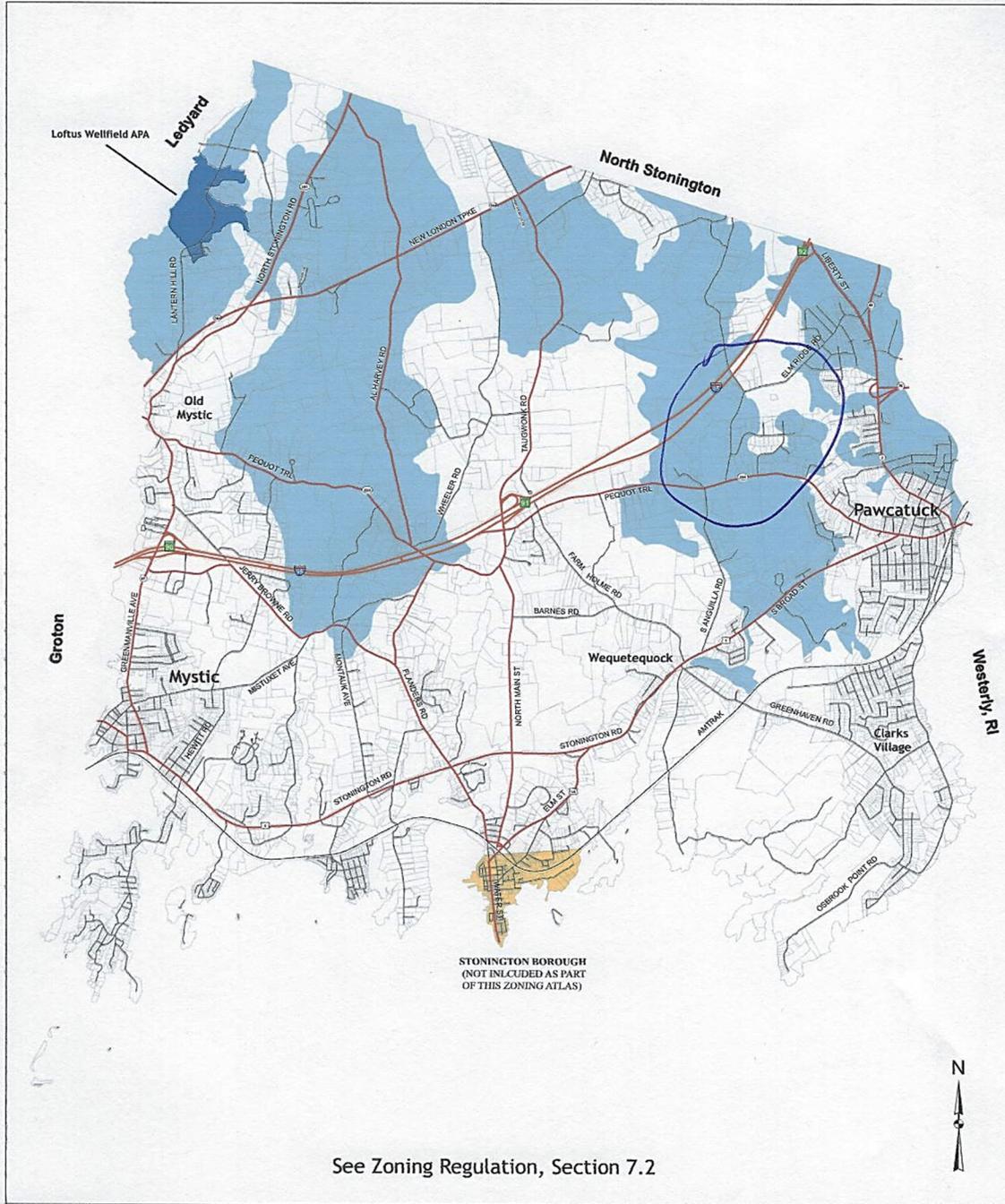
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/s/ Emily A. Gianquinto
Emily Gianquinto



Exhibit A

Exhibit B



See Zoning Regulation, Section 7.2



Zoning Map Atlas Planning and Zoning Commission, Town of Stonington, Connecticut

- Aquifer Protection Area (APA)
- Groundwater Protection Overlay District (GPOD)

Effective July 20, 1961 as amended through September 19, 2017



Data: Stonington GIS / Projection: Connecticut State Plane NAD83

2020-09-24 Lee pre-filed testimony

Final Audit Report

2020-09-24

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