



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
*CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL*

Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051

Phone: (860) 827-2935 Fax: (860) 827-2950

E-Mail: [siting.council@ct.gov](mailto:siting.council@ct.gov)

Web Site: [portal.ct.gov/csc](http://portal.ct.gov/csc)

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

September 22, 2023

Michael Knight  
Director of Government Relations  
United States Parachute Association  
5401 Southpoint Centre Blvd.  
Fredericksburg, VA 22407  
[mknight@uspa.org](mailto:mknight@uspa.org)

RE: **PETITION NO. 1589** – USS Somers Solar, LLC petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed construction, maintenance and operation of a 3.0-megawatt AC solar photovoltaic electric generating facility located at 360 Somers Road, Ellington, Connecticut, and associated electrical interconnection.

Dear Michael Knight:

The Connecticut Siting Council (Council) is in receipt of your Request for a Public Hearing, dated September 22, 2023, for the above-referenced petition.

The Request for a Public Hearing will be placed on the next Council meeting agenda, a copy of which will be sent to you. You will be notified of the Council's determination immediately thereafter.

Please contact our office at 860-827-2935 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Melanie A. Bachman  
Executive Director

MAB/IN/dll

c: Service List dated August 24, 2023  
Council Members

**From:** Michael Knight <mknight@uspa.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 22, 2023 12:03 PM  
**To:** CSC-DL Siting Council <Siting.Council@ct.gov>  
**Subject:** Petition No. 1589 - Public Comment

Connecticut Siting Council,

Please find the attached public comment concerning Petition No. 1589 submitted by the United States Parachute Association.

Please recognize the following letter as public comment about the above petition. Additionally, please consider this a formal request for a public hearing in person and virtually.

Regards,

**Michael Knight** | Director of Government Relations



**United States Parachute Association**

540-604-9740 O | 615-934-0199 C

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# United States Parachute Association

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September 21, 2023

State of Connecticut  
Connecticut Siting Council  
10 Franklin Square  
New Britain, CT 06051  
860-827-2935  
[siting.council@ct.gov](mailto:siting.council@ct.gov)  
<https://portal.ct.gov/csc>

RE: [Petition No. 1589](#) — USS Somers Solar, LLC petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed construction, maintenance and operation of a 3.0-megawatt AC solar photovoltaic electric generating facility located at 360 Somers Road, Ellington, Connecticut, and associated electrical interconnection.

Connecticut Siting Council,

On behalf of United States Parachute Association (USPA), the national membership organization representing over 42,000 skydivers and more than 230 USPA-affiliated skydiving centers across the country, and Connecticut Parachutists Inc. (CPI), one of the oldest and most popular skydiving centers in the northeast, we are deeply concerned about the proposed solar array that is planned to be constructed at Ellington Airport.

It is insufficient that USS Somers Solar LLC has not performed a study to consider the potential impacts of the solar array on the reduction of available safe parachute landing area, visual effects, and impact of turbulence on parachutes and pilots landing at the airport. Our organization cautiously urges the Siting Council to reject, or at least delay, the approval of this project until thorough and independent safety analysis is conducted. USPA trusts independent studies will accurately assess the risks and impacts of the proposed solar array on parachute operations at Ellington Airport.

The proposal to locate the solar array in the “north field” adjacent to the parachute landing area and airport runway reduces the available safe options creating serious hazards to powered flight and skydiving operations. Currently skydivers are trained to use this field as a safety measure and over the years countless skydivers have performed safe emergency landings there. Moreover, it also encloses the flight path of the aircraft that carry skydivers to their jump altitude. This project poses a serious hazard to both skydivers and pilots, as it creates a large obstacle that will interfere with their landing approach and emergency procedures. The safety of skydivers, pilots, and the public should be our top priority. We believe that this project could jeopardize safety.



## United States Parachute Association

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In addition to the safety concerns outlined above, USPA would like to reiterate that CPI is a significant economic asset to the Ellington community. CPI employs dozens of people and attracts thousands of visitors to the area each year. The proposed solar array would jeopardize their ability to operate safely and could have a devastating impact on their business.

USPA urges the council to consider the safety and economic concerns raised by USPA, CPI, and other opponents of the proposed solar array. We look forward to being a collaborative partner with the council and appreciate your consideration of this matter. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns and we hope that you will act in the best interest of public safety and aviation.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael Knight  
Director of Government Relations