From: Lisa Bress <bresslili@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 1, 2024 12:54 PM
To: Bachman, Melanie <Melanie.Bachman@ct.gov>
Subject: Re: Petition 1598

Forgive me Ms. Bachman,

Sent the wrong version. This is the completed version. Same question applies. Sorry about that.

Lisa Bress

On Feb 1, 2024, at 12:46 PM, Lisa Bress <bresslili@msn.com> wrote:

Good Morning Ms. Bachman,

I've attached my evidentiary letter I will be submitting later today to the parties. I was wondering if it is necessary or beneficial to include copies or links to all of the resources I've referenced, stated with titles or unstated. I have them but don't want to overload the Council members with unnecessary paperwork. Thank you for you help in this matter.

Lisa Bress
860-670-7935

February 1st, 2023

Ms. Melanie Bachman, Executive Director
Connecticut Siting Council
10 Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051

Dear Siting Council Members,

I am writing to oppose Petition No.1598, the utility scale solar installation proposed for historic River Street Farm in Windsor. As the mother of Keith Bress, whose home abuts the project, and former Deputy Mayor of Windsor, my concerns about this project are both personal and civic minded.

My son purchased his very first home on September 1st 2023 at 166 Eastwood Circle and the proposed project is literally less than 100 feet from his back door. Keith saved many years for a down payment while living with us, and with my husband and I's help, was able to purchase a two-bedroom attached home in the Strawberry Hills Association. Like other neighbors in the community, he planned to be here long term and was very excited to live in such a beautiful place. We specifically chose this location for its quiet and serene setting hoping it would have a positive impact on the chronic illness he's been battling since childhood.

As outlined in Florence William's Book, The Nature Fix…Why Nature Make Us Happier, Heathier, and more Creative, research has repeatedly shown that exposure to the living world improves our cognition and enhances our mood. By observing nature, humans can improve physical and mental health. A recent Washington Post article supported that view when research proved living near green spaces can add about 2.5 years to a person's life. After searching for many years, we felt having a home in this location, with a view of the farm, would be beneficial to our son's well-being.

Keith's bedroom window overlooks River Street Farm and he placed his desk there since working from home. I've included pics of his current view. If this project is approved, his new view will be a large black chain link fence behind rows and rows of metal solar panels emitting glare and electromagnetic energy. According to a study titled Visual Impacts of Utility Scale Solar Energy Facilities on Southwestern Desert Landscapes by Robert G. Sullivan, Coordinator of the Environmental Science Division Argonne National Library, "Glare from parabolic trough facilities is an important source of potentially negative visual impact". Additional Information I've read indicates one mile away as the safe distance required to mitigate any possible negative health effects from electromagnetic exposure to solar grids. As stated by the Developers his home is 95 feet from the proposed project.

I may have missed it, but I did not see the results of a Visual Impact Study on this project. The current landscaping plan does not address that impact on abutters, intervenors across the street or even address the biodiversity of the area. The use of monoculture planting, like a row of evergreens, should be avoided due to tree disease prevalence according to respected Forrester and Tree Warden James Govoni. "One tree dies, they all die". A diversity of healthy specimen native plants on berms tall enough that consider tree growth rate will provide the natural barrier that will improve the visual field and increase the area's biodiversity.

Dr. Doug Tallamy, renowned author of Penn State Department of Entomology states keystone genera, meaning that they are essential for helping support local ecosystems, should be planted. Without these genera, local food webs can collapse. Dr. Tallamy's lab researches plants that serve as keystone genera here in the eastern U.S., which include: oaks, cherries, willows, birches, cottonwood elms, goldenrods, asters, and sunflowers. I don't see any of the above mentioned environmental issues addressed in this plan.

Other ill effects from close proximity to utility size solar installations according to a UC Davis research paper sited below, is toxic dust for workers and those who live nearby. This happens during construction when the soil is disturbed. Electrical fires, and ongoing construction work due maintenance/replacement of panels can also impact neighbors' health. It seems solar panels do not last the 20 years as stated and often need to be replaced sooner. Living so close to a utility grade solar power plant that could negatively impact daily life and health, on an ongoing basis, is not a risk I would want for anyone including my son.

Close proximity of solar arrays to resident's homes, has also been shown to create cell phone service interruptions which could impact their ability to work. I personally visited a Verogy project in East Windsor and heard the ongoing high-pitched noise that permeates the houses across the street. I found the noise disturbing and unsettling, which made it difficult to concentrate. I did not see an Acoustical Design Study done for this project and would like to request one. Residents in East Windsor have been battling this noise issue for two years without success. I've been told this has caused a great deal of stress to the people who live there. I don't fault the Council as I'm certain they exercised due diligence. However, I have

little trust in a solar company that doesn't foresee, or resolve, the negative quality of life outcomes they create for others.

I have additional concerns beyond the visual and health impacts of this project. The residential neighborhood my son lives in is not far from the Farmington River and borders an agricultural zone rich in history and cultural significance. A recent news story from CBS, Boston about Plainville MA sited severe flooding of neighboring homes due to runoff from a solar development built on agricultural land. Not only are their homes badly damaged, but the topography of the land and local habitat have been marred. This issue has yet to be resolved by the developer of that project. Any runoff from the River Street project could flood local homes and reach the Farmington River, a state protected area.

The negative impact on wildlife (birds, insects, turtles and bats), from utility grade solar installations is well documented. In the UC Davis Research paper, Environmental Impacts of Utility-Scale Solar Energy, (see Fig. 2 for complete list) problems may occur at differential rates and magnitudes throughout the lifespan (i.e., construction, operation, and decommission) of a USSE power plant, which varies between 25 and 40 years. The chart I've included shows impacts related to biodiversity, water use and consumption, soils and dust, human health and air quality, transmission corridors, and land-use and land-cover change.

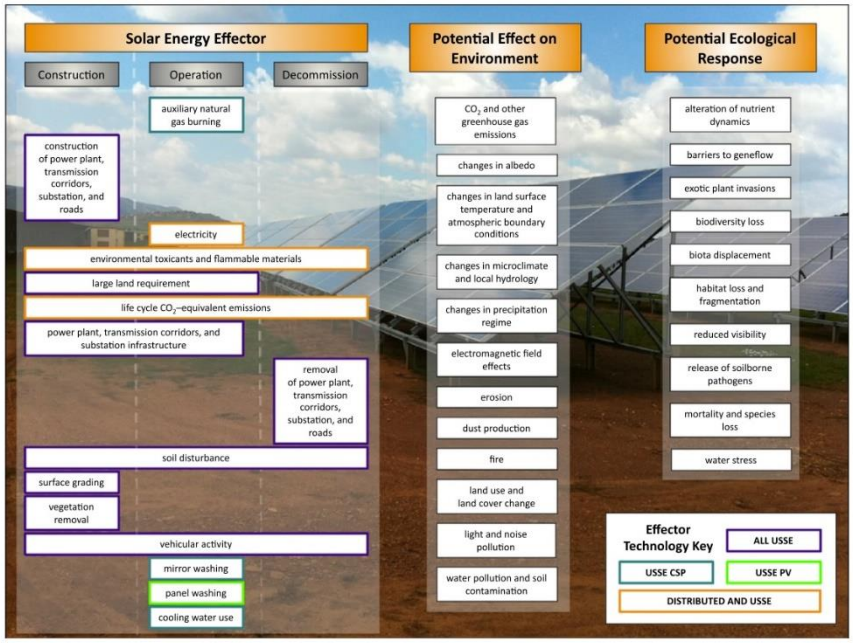

Fig. 2. Solar energy effectors for utility-scale solar energy technologies (ALL USSE), including concentrating solar power (USSE CSP) and photovoltaics (USSE PV), and for both utility-scale and distributed schemes (distributed and USSE). Effectors have one or more potential effects on the environment with one or more potential ecological responses. Photo credit: RR Hernandez.

In an article titled, The Dark Side of Solar Energy…The Hidden Environmental Costs written by an alternative Energy Company, Energy5, its stated that, "Birds are particularly susceptible to the negative impacts of solar panels. They can be injured or killed by colliding with solar panels or the support structures that hold them up. This is particularly true during migration season, when birds are flying long distances and may not see the panels until it's too late.

It also states, "Birds are not the only wildlife that can be negatively impacted by solar energy. Insects and bats can also suffer from solar panel installations. Insects are attracted to the

panels because of the warm surface, and may become trapped or stuck in the panels. Bats, which use echolocation to navigate, can be disoriented by the reflective surface of the panels. This can cause them to collide with the panels or other nearby structures. In addition to direct impacts, solar energy can also have indirect impacts on wildlife. Large solar panel installations can fragment and alter habitats, making it more difficult for wildlife to find food, shelter and breeding sites. This can result in declines in populations and even extinctions."

Late last year I met with over 30 neighbors who live in the Strawberry Hills community and they are devastated. Many came to a Town Council meeting in November to share their panic, sadness and anger over this proposal. Some are elderly, disabled or have young families with children and feel helpless. This area is zoned agricultural and they believe it's a betrayal of public trust to place a facility more suited to an industrial zone, in the middle of their neighborhood. I agree with them. Residents, some who've lived here for decades, have no recourse except to incur the expense, indignity and upheaval of having to move from their homes to avoid this development.

Many more attended another town meeting in January, where they shared additional valid concerns that were reflected in questions submitted to the petitioner. Some were worried the investments they made in their home would be negatively impacted causing loss of income and security when they retire. There is evidence in other states that property values can be affected up to -5%. Having just scratched the surface of research, I don't believe the benefits of this 3-megawatt facility outweigh the negative impacts on the residents of this community and biodiversity of the area. There are better sites at safer distances from people that can be found to meet the states' goal of increasing renewable energy resources.

As a Town Councilor, I led the effort to create the first Clean and Sustainable Energy Task Force in Windsor, so I want to make it clear that I understand, as does my son, the need for responsible renewable energy sources. If we want those sources encouraged, we must locate them in areas that do not directly impact the quality of life of ordinary citizens, hurt the biodiversity of the area or render scenic farmland no longer usable. Please honor the residents many legitimate concerns, reject this proposal and recognize that River Street Farm's historic, cultural, biological and scenic value should be preserved.