



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051

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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

March 5, 2024

Susan Hewett
21 Bette Drive
Manchester, CT 06040
mshewett@sbcglobal.net

RE: **PETITION NO. 1609** – TRITEC Americas, LLC notice of election to waive exclusion from Connecticut Siting Council jurisdiction, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §16-50k(e), and petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed construction, maintenance and operation of a 0.999-megawatt AC solar photovoltaic electric generating facility located at 250 Carter Street, Manchester, Connecticut, and associated electrical interconnection.

Dear Susan Hewett:

The Connecticut Siting Council (Council) is in receipt of your Request for a Public Hearing, dated March 4, 2024, 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,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Melanie Bachman".

Melanie Bachman
Executive Director

MAB/RDM/dll

c: Service List dated January 26, 2024
Council Members

From: Michael Hewett <mshewett@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 7:39 PM
To: Bachman, Melanie <Melanie.Bachman@ct.gov>
Subject: PETITION No. 1609

Melanie A. Bachman, Director
State of CT Siting Council
Ten Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051
Email: melanie.bachman@ct.gov
RE: PETITION NO. 1609

Dear Ms. Bachman,

I am writing to formally request a Public Hearing with respect to PETITION NO. 1609, the TRITEC Solar Farm Proposal at 250 Carter St. Manchester, CT and to express my strong opposition to the proposal.

As I understand, the CT Siting Council's purpose is to determine whether or not an energy project provides more benefit to Connecticut and its inhabitants than harm to the environment. This project does not meet those criteria. I am concerned about various impacts this proposed construction will have on my neighborhood/community. I live at **21 Bette Drive**, adjacent to the parcel of land in question. My areas of concern include but are not limited to: 1) environmental impacts, 2) habitat destruction, and 3) safety issues.

Environmental Impacts: A significant concern that was not adequately addressed in the proposal is water runoff from the parcel toward Amanda Drive from rain, snowmelt, and infiltration basin overflow. Currently, on the east side of Amanda Drive the drainage is already extremely challenged. The sidewalk is flooded after moderate rain or snowfall and remains affected much of the winter and spring. Clear cutting at least 7.8 acres of forest may have a large unforeseen impact on water absorption and erosion of the sloped terrain on the parcel. Further, water flow paths may change. Based on the drainage report provided in the petition, it's not clear that the drainage onto Amanda Drive will be unaffected.

In addition to the impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods, the construction directly and indirectly impacts a portion of protected Wetlands and Watercourses. According to the proposal's environmental report, "approximately 1,100 square feet of unavoidable direct impact is proposed to inland wetlands and watercourses".

Habitat Destruction: Many species utilize these forests for sustenance, shelter, and safe passage. Of these species is the Eastern Box Turtle – listed as a "species of special concern" by CT DEEP. These turtles tend to spend their entire lives in an area of less than 2 acres. The proposed site will destroy approximately 8 acres of this animal's habitat – the petitioner's solution being to move them out during construction and simply put them back after. This is hardly a solution as the site will no longer be the appropriate habitat, thus the animals will be forced to find new homes. In addition to the Eastern Box Turtle, there are several species of bat that are considered Species of Greatest Conservation Need (GCN) as well as some that are listed as Endangered by the State and Threatened Federally.

There are six species of bat in Hartford county, three of which are Species of Special Concern that dwell/roost in trees – Silver-haired Bat, Eastern Red Bat, and Hoary Bat. Exhibit G Environmental Assessment also mentioned that the habitat within the parcel is suitable for Northern Long Eared Bats,

one of the six bat species and an animal that is listed Endangered by CT and Threatened Federally. Destruction of their habitats is one of the primary drivers to species decline. Not only does this affect the aforementioned Species of Special Concern, but it will displace many other animals including local deer, coyotes, birds, fox, and rodents.

Health and Safety: The project also poses safety and quality of life concerns for the community. While the risk of fire may be low due to a solar farm, in this case, the consequences are high. There is a gas line that passes through the woodlands which runs close to the proposed site. Fire in this area would cause substantial damage to the woodlands and nearby neighborhoods, potentially being exacerbated by proximity to the gas line. The terrain may also prove difficult for first responders who would be battling such a fire.

In addition to fire risk the plan also calls for regular use of herbicides and pesticides. As stated prior, the significant likelihood of excessive drainage could cause unintended spreading of these chemicals. The usage of these chemicals may affect children, pets, and wildlife that live in the area.

Finally, the constant noise pollution from the power inverters would be a nuisance to the neighboring homeowners, pets, and the wildlife that live in the woods. The decibel levels expressed in the proposal will be similar to those that are experienced by East Windsor residents near a solar farm. DEEP allows up to 66 dBA. They have been negatively impacted by amplitudes below CT DEEP guidelines – approximately 30 dBA. While this is the level of a constant whisper, this equates to high pitch buzzing all day long, disturbing our neighborhood's tranquility.

With the points listed above, the detriments clearly outweigh the purported benefits of this proposal. Destroying acres of forest is counterproductive when there are many suitable, more developed locations not situated on residential zoning.

I urge you to reject PETITION NO. 1609. And I also urge you to let the concerned residents and local officials be heard with a public hearing on this PETITION.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Susan Hewett
21 Bette Drive
March 4, 2021