

Email received 3/25/15 – Submitted as public comments on Renewable Energy Facility Siting

Hello, my name is Henry Bonges and I live in Milton VT. I am on the planning commission, improvements committee and the VECAN town energy manager. As a Vermont resident I am talking to both a 7.5kW PV solar on my roof and more so to two solar parks totaling 4.3 mW planned to be operational by 4Q2016 in Milton.

We are excited about these two projects, sited on largely unusable land at the capped landfill and the waste-water treatment plant.

I've heard concerns about solar siting, usually by people who could barely see the panels. A deeper conversation often turns into a rant against renewables telling me the siting concerns may be a facade to fight solar.

Yes we must respect individual choice and the state of Vermont, but what does one see when they see solar panels?

I see something that does not generate an invisible acid rain. Invisible until we look at the devastation it causes.

I see an energy source that does not generate CO<sub>2</sub>. Is CO<sub>2</sub> acceptable since we cannot see it?

I see a future with less black carbon, sulphur and nitrous oxides and ground level ozone. All invisible if there is enough wind, until we see their effects. Are these all ok, if we cannot see the plant that is burning the coal?

Solar is NOT pursuing the Alberta tar sands while ignoring the gross environmental, social and climate damage that brings. Look at the damage caused to the lands of the Indigenous First Nations tribes. The environment is devastated, then a coat of soil and grass is applied as if everything is ok.

Solar is NOT putting our groundwater at risk with fracking. Ethylene Glycol (Antifreeze) and Acetaldehyde (possible carcinogen) with dozens of other chemicals pumped below my groundwater with promises that it won't ever be a problem.

Solar is NOT drilling in ever riskier deep sea and arctic environments where spills have the potential to be much greater than Deep Water Horizon of 2009. We've seen pictures of this disaster, the longer term effects in the gulf ecosystem are just beginning to be seen.

Solar is NOT burning oil, but using this valuable resource more appropriately.

Renewables mean ongoing jobs. Milton is looking to contract with SunEdison for our 4.3mW PV solar parks and most of the contractors are expected to be local.

Renewables means resiliency. As the Milton solar parks are moving forward we will be evaluating an energy action plan for emergencies. How to isolate the town core from the grid and power this core by the existing solar if the need should arise.

Renewables justify confidence in our future due to the economic, environmental and climate benefits.

Renewables mean money spent on infrastructure, not fuel. Capital assets, not expenses.

People and technology, not on commodities.

Renewables mean economic energy stability. Once the capital outlay has been made the cost of the fuel is stable and predictable for the next few billion years. Fossil fuel based energy is subject to the whims of the market and a source of capital to organizations many would prefer to not be so well funded.

Most importantly, renewables are about our time of stewardship. The legacy we leave our children and grandchildren. We don't have the right to take what should be theirs to steward for the generations we hope will follow.

What solar is and is not must be in somebody's back yard, I'm proud to have it in mine.

Thank you for your time, Henry A. Bonges III, Milton Vermont