

Ms. Pickens,

Set forth below are the comments of John McGuire from this evening's Public Hearing on Renewable Energy Siting.

Warm regards,

Elizabeth McGuire  
John McGuire

My name is John McGuire and I represent my family who own property that abuts the proposed siting of a 150kW solar field under construction at Mile Point, Ferrisburgh, VT. The application to construct this field was submitted by Basin Harbor Club. The proposed field contains 25 solar tracking panels that are each the size of 2 UPS trucks mounted on 25 foot poles.

I am not here to discuss the merits of solar energy. Myself, my family and many of our neighbors are huge proponents of solar energy. What I am here to present to this committee is the grave concern we have for the process and criteria by which "fast tracked" projects are handled via the PSB. Any solar project that is under 150kW is currently fast tracked. Fast tracked projects are not required to have a public hearing and site visits are not required. Therefore, a solar field the size of 25 massive panels can receive rubber stamp approval with incredibly minimal oversight. This, in my opinion, puts one of Vermont's greatest resources....its natural beauty....at great risk.

The site at Mile Point went up with astonishing speed and little regard to any of the nearby properties. I was personally shocked that a project of this magnitude could be pushed through the approval process with such disregard to dissenting opinions and failure to review facts presented by adjoining landowners. My family made several comments to the PSB regarding impacts to Lake Champlain, to historic properties, as well as solar glare issues that pilots may encounter when landing at the airport next door. The solar glare analysis provided by the applicant was factually incorrect - it was for the wrong runway - and still the PSB moved forward. The applicant incorrectly stated on the application that no historic homes were in close proximity....this too was not correct yet they are still moving forward.

In closing, solar energy is important however when it comes to fast tracked projects more oversight and attention to the siting of such projects is desperately needed. I urge the members of this committee to stop the project at Mile Point until appropriate review can be conducted.