

From: Melissa [mailto:amaya2222@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2015 2:29 PM
To: Katie Pickens
Subject: Solar panel plant

Hello,

I'm writing because I recently purchased a house in Pownal, VT. I chose to do so after several years of thinking of moving here to raise my daughter in a healthy, beautiful environment and just an overall better quality of life. I closed on my house February 12, 2015. On March 20, 2015 I received a "courtesy" phone call at 9 pm from a member of a 5 person board representing the local fire district. He proceeded to tell me that a plan has been in the works for about a year for a solar power plant directly across the street from my home to raise money for the fire department. Several things were said during this conversation that were very alarming, but what stands out is that even if I objected that I had no say even as a community member that would be directly affected. Let me say that I am pro solar, but I believe that these solar plants should not be in residential neighborhoods nor over an entire towns water supply. On every level it will effect the quality of life of all involved. Below are some points that stand out about this particular case and Vermont in general. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

-RIGHT NOW, in contract with a California based company, there is a proposed solar farm installation right in the middle of our residential neighborhood? This installation will be right next to our homes, on Route 346 covering an area of over 5 acres.

-The Local Fire District will be receiving a little over 10,000 dollars a year to maintain this solar farm. Solar farms that are not properly maintained (by trained engineers and technicians) present numerous potential hazards that can affect water supply, soil, and also fires and other hazardous conditions.

-The five acre lot will be covered in 6 feet tall metal solar panels and their inverters. This is an INDUSTRIAL installation in our residential neighborhood. There are absolutely no long term studies that can prove the safety of solar farms in residential areas. Until recently, solar farms have been put on non-buildable/non-usable land, and in industrial zoning. Towns all over the country are fighting solar farms coming to their backyards.

-The solar farm will be built directly over the town water supply. The water that we pay for, and that money is supposed to go to the maintenance of that site. There are several studies that show that the inverters and panels can leach toxic chemicals into the soil and water supply. If even this is the case by 1% then that is more than enough to pollute an entire towns water.

-This certainly will mean that property values will decrease in the area directly surrounding this solar farm? Just because of the eye-sore alone, but also because of these potential risks and industrialization of our rural neighborhood.

-tourism will surely decrease as tourists come to Vermont for the beauty, not for acres of metal fields. again if they were in industrial locations, it would be expected to be seen there.

-No matter our personal views on “Green Energy” we can come together to prevent out of state corporations building industrial businesses in our community, offering little to no benefit to those of us who live in it.

I will not allow my daughter to become a science experiment with what the possible long term effects could be from this plant across the street and most probably leeching into the water supply.

Let's keep Vermont green and beautiful. Let's keep tourism on the rise that brings money into the communities. Let's keep our property values constant and on the rise. Let's maintain healthy environments where our children can grow up healthy. Let's keep going forward with renewable energy to save the planet, but let's keep it in industrial, unused places and out of our backyards. We can coexist with all forms of renewable energy in a way that makes sense.

Melissa Collins