

March 20, 2015

From: Dale Hastings and Jessie Whitney (Property owners-- 999 Dog Team Road, New Haven, VT)

To: Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy

Regarding: Public Hearing on Renewable Energy Siting

A commercial COMMUNITY SOLAR ARRAY (SunCommon Sun CSA6) has been constructed in the rural agricultural field south of our home. The original proposal for the CSA was to place it within 25' of our property line which would mean it would start 50' from our home. This is a SunCommon commercial project. Our property is located in a residential area with two acre zoning. This project is directly in our view shed...no amount of screening can offer us relief from seeing this commercial monstrosity every day.

Our local New Haven Planning Commission, though supportive of our concern regarding loss of property value and the intrusion of our view shed, were not able to help us intervene. The current Law governing this project does not provide consideration for individual property owners. We feel current Law supports abuse of private property value by for profit companies installing solar CSA's.

A CPG (#NM-4188) was issued 9/10/14 for the project. Following are excerpts taken from the CPG

*-Turning first to the issues reflected in Ms. Whitney and Mr. Hastings' comments and the Town's letter regarding the New Haven Zoning Bylaw and **potential impacts to private property valuations, it is settled law that these issues fall outside of the scope of proceedings under 30 V.S.A. § 248.3** Accordingly, these comments fail to raise a significant issue for purposes of Board Rule 5.110(B)(3).*

*Based on the Application, we have considered the views of the Project from the neighboring properties, the public views, and the mitigation proposed by the Applicant. **While we recognize that the impact of the Project on views from the immediate neighboring property will be adverse,***

The above excerpts from the CPG state clearly that the Board is not to be held responsible for the adverse impact we suffer. Vermont towns, through Zoning and Planning Commissions, are stripped of input to protect property values due to current Laws governing solar sitings of CSA projects.

Current Law for siting industrial solar projects supports commercial developers and Vermont renewable energy goals at private land owner expense. To improve the current process new Law needs to be passed so developers work with local town Planning Commissions and Select Persons to locate projects with consideration for :

- individual property owners.
- our VT landscape and scenic views.
- individual Town's Planning Goals (including concern for tax base).