

Thank you for slotting me in to testify on Thursday at 10AM. The fact is that I am getting over a major medical incident and don't feel sufficiently recovered to make the trip to Montpelier.

I have thought long and hard about your thoughts to me going forward. And I have just seen Annette's responses to those very bullet points. Yesterday I told Annette that I was totally overwhelmed by your email and I realized after reading Annette's replies to each bullet point, that I was overwhelmed because as an average citizen who is a total novice at maneuvering through the complex maze of State government, it is entirely predictable that I would be overwhelmed.

I attended the Bennington Select Board meeting last night and they were thrilled and congratulating themselves over their "win" and said other towns were calling and asking them how they did it. Well the simple fact is that they did develop a terrific town plan but they waited a year too long, sitting on their hands instead of getting into the fray to support me as a lone intervenor against a deep pocketed and represented Wall Street firm. And if it hadn't been for Mary Morrissey and Rick Carroll, my neighbor and fellow activist, appearing at the Select Board meeting in August 2015 and plying them with evidence of what the consequences of this solar array would look like, did the town then, with one week left to file, choose to intervene. Briana Collier wrote a brilliant brief digesting and explaining the town plan in a way anyone could understand and I had the inspiration to include her words in my final comments. That is the only reason that the PSB took another look at the town plan for Chelsea Solar since the Town hadn't looked to intervene on that first part of the solar project.

I see now that the average person and the average town has no clue how to enter into the process offered and have a comprehensive understanding about what is happening. If Annette hadn't taken me by the hand from day one, give me detailed advice about how to write answers to filings, even how to file a filing, I would have given up from the start. And sitting in the PSB hearings, where I am supposed to be my own lawyer, and cannot just testify as myself as I look across the room at a row of lawyers and highly paid expert witnesses all of whom intend to "wipe the floor with me" as they indicated by phone to myself and my attorney that they would do, is enough to make a grown person cry.

Also, we can see already that Thomas Melone is already pushing back at the decision against Chelsea as he has filed a "motion for enlargement of time on Board Rule 2.207 which we will be filing today". He asked for who would object to this motion and Jean Elias said no objection. It seems I'm the only one who objected. I don't even know exactly what he's asking for but I'm guessing that he's looking to reopen the case for the chance to overturn the decision.

You now have in your hands all of the information about the process we endured. Annette wrote a thorough analysis for you and you have my testimony and Bill Knight's, the president of the Aoole Hill Home Owner's Association. Therefore, I don't think that I need to add anything further about the process.

And your thoughts in response to my comments were very difficult for me to answer because I didn't even have working knowledge of most of what you were referring to. But Annette took the ball and ran with it through every dot and dash. That's why I cannot with any intelligence offer advice about how you might move forward. You have a daunting task ahead of you and you know it.

But I can offer several thoughts that might help you to see into the mind of a novice:

1- Offering a Public Assistance Offer who would make it easier for the public to participate in the process is a step in the right direction. However, much more important is to change the process where the average citizen has to represent himself pro se and act as his own attorney when the developers are fully prepared with their legalize and highly paid expert witnesses is a terribly skewed playing field.

2- There must be a better way to allow the average person's findings in support of the areas in which she is allowed to participate a more even weight stacked against highly paid expert witnesses on the opposing side. The app I put on my phone which measured the wind velocity as my home at different times of the day was laughed at and basically thrown out. The opposing side offered no wind study and was not admonished.

3- Margaret Cheney's bullet points in Vt. Digger offering further solutions would be very helpful for average people and towns: encourage developers to place solar projects where communities want them, poorly located projects will undergo a more thorough review than the one in place today, solar developers must file a summary of comments from citizens and towns and must respond to the comments and explain why concerns they raise aren't addressed, developers who sell their renewable energy credits out of state would be punished with a "significant subtracter".

Respectfully submitted,

Libby Harris

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