

5/10/17

My name is Beth McGee, I live at 173 Tucker Rd. in Enfield.

I'm a Councilperson for the Town of Enfield. I'm also a member of Enfield Neighbors for Safe Air and Water, and have long been an active proponent of safe and responsible alternative energy development in Enfield.

First, I'm troubled by the timing of this hearing. Our Deputy Supervisor and our Town Clerk asked that this meeting be scheduled after 5:00 PM and were told that "no one will come anyway" and "no reps are available at that time". I intend to make a motion this evening at our Town Board meeting that we ask for another Public Hearing at a time that actually allows more residents to be in attendance to express their concerns and ask questions.

To quote the IDA's website:

"The primary mission of the (TCIDA) is to offer economic incentives to Tompkins County businesses selling product outside of the region, in order to create and retain quality employment opportunities and strengthen the local tax base."

and

"The creation and quality of jobs, and how well the jobs meet the needs of local employers, are primary considerations of the IDA."

The Mecklenburg Solar plan will receive over \$500,000 from the taxpayers of New York, many of whom are residents of Enfield, through grants and NYSERDA credits.

Residents of Enfield alone will be forced to forgo nearly \$146,000.00 over 20 years for this project.

Attachment C in their application states "without the CERTAINTY provided by an IDA PILOT, the project will likely not be financeable and hence would not be built in the county..." It doesn't say an abatement is necessary in order to build. It says insight and CERTAINTY of amount is necessary. We're happy to provide them with that through a PILOT, in an amount more in line with the amount they would pay under the actual property tax valuation.

Net permanent jobs for Enfield from this project? ZERO.

Over \$300,00 of New York State taxpayer money will be gifted Delaware Solar through grants and NYSERDA credits, and yet that still isn't enough corporate welfare to make these projects profitable without taking money from the hard working residents of the Town of Enfield on top of that to the tune of \$136,000.

Net jobs for Enfield from this project? Also ZERO.

Today we are here to hear from the public regarding the proposed solar arrays on Podunk Rd. and Mecklenburg Rd. New York State and Tompkins County have made commitments to encourage the production of alternate forms of energy to fuel the ever expanding demand for electricity. The 2 projects before us are a partial answer to this current societal problem.

Both projects have been before the Enfield Town Planning Board and have complied willingly with the concerns that this Board has had. This Board has approved both of these projects to go forward as they have complied with all environmental and other concerns that the Planning Board has had.

In recent months some residents and public officials have expressed concern about the PILOT process. Many, many years ago New York State designed a process so municipalities could avail themselves of planning and economic development resources. Counties could set up a Community Area Development entity. The people that man these agencies have the professional qualifications to assess and encourage new and old companies to set up production and create jobs in their area. Another authority that the State gave these agencies was the ability to create Payments In Lieu of Taxes to give companies some breaks on property taxes. The Tompkins County Area Development Agency has been doing this for many, many years. They have a professional staff which is versed in this area of economics, has a vested interest in seeing companies succeed in their local communities and also seeing that a fair amount of taxes is given to local municipalities because they know the importance of the services that these municipalities give to the residents of these municipalities. In Enfield, there is a Local Law passed by the Enfield Town Board in 2009 called the Wind Facilities Law. In this Local Law all matters of a PILOT regarding alternative energy facilities is referred to the local IDA, the Tompkins County Area Development agency. The emergence of ^{solar} farms in Enfield is not a surprise to the Enfield Town Board. The subject has been on the agenda of the Town Board on 7 different occasions: Sept, 2015; October, 2015; November, 2015; January 2016; February, 2016; March, 2016 and April, 2016. The Enfield Town Board has shown no interest in addressing this issue in the recent past. Thus the Planning Board has been the body in Enfield that has reviewed these projects, has set some demands which the companies have complied with and the Planning Board has approved these projects.

These projects are sited on privately owned land, (mainly non productive farm land) and as such do not take away from farm production. As a resident of the Town of Enfield for 41 years, I see this as a win, win for the Town of Enfield.

Ann S. Rider, Supervisor of the Town of Enfield
77 Halseyville Rd.
Ithaca, NY 14850

HEATHER D. MCDANIEL, CECD, AICP, EDFP
Vice President, Director of Economic Development Services
TOMPKINS COUNTY AREA DEVELOPMENT (TCAD)
401 E. State St., Suite 402B, Ithaca, New York 14850

Dear Ms McDaniel:

I am writing with respect to the proposed PILOT agreements for the Mecklinburg Solar and the DE River Solar projects.

I live at 115 West Enfield Center Road. I live in an earth-berm, off grid, solar powered home, which I built with my partner and my kids in 2006. I am a part owner of a business which for many years had the honor of being able to claim the largest solar array of any private business in Tompkins County. I am a member of ENSAW (Enfield neighbors for safe air and water) and after years of successfully working on our fracking ban, went on to work to establish the first community solar farms in the area. I am not "anti-solar"

I believe the Town of Enfield should be able to negotiate directly with the developers as we are in the position to best evaluate the impacts on our town and our tax base. These projects are very profitable when you add together all the tax credits, grant monies, accelerated depreciation as well as the money received from the power to be sold to NYSEG. The developers should be asked to contribute substantially more in property taxes than is being sought by the IDA.

As stated on your web-site, your primary mission is to "offer economic incentives to create employment opportunities and strengthen the tax base." This, I believe does neither. A few temporary jobs, which are not necessarily even local and a long term reduction in property taxes and sales taxes, would, I argue, weaken our future tax base. In contrast the business of which I am a part owner, has increased it's work force from a few dozen when we bought it, to over 375 employees, (all paying taxes) as well as contributing significantly to sales taxes and property taxes in our community – all without asking for, or receiving the help of the IDA.

I also object to the scheduling of this public meeting during a time when most working people cannot attend. I see that in both Dryden and Newfield the hearings were scheduled for 6pm. I ask that you consider a second meeting for Enfield at a similar meeting time.

Sincerely,
Mimi Mehaffey