

**Middletown Springs Selectboard
Special Informational Meeting
Thursday, June 2, 2016 • Approved Minutes**

Select Board Present: Terry Redfield, Patty Kenyon, Chris Fenton, Jim Webber

groSolar Present: Rod Viens, Peter Bay

Public Present: Vito Macaluso (PEGTV), Pattie Macaluso (PEGTV), Kimberly Bushnell Mathewson (Town Moderator), Maureen LaBate, Lauren LaSante, Bob Johnson, Bruce Bouchard, Elizabeth Cooper, Kent Stafford, Richard Spitalny, Frank Dykes, Kate Bouchard, John Arsenault, Marilyn Marcy, Elaine Huber, Judy Querrey, Dan Querrey, Steve Bartlett, Bernhard Bischoff, Kathy Letendre, Cynthia Craig, Alan Craig, Meredith Morgan, Grant Reynolds, Ellen Secord, Neil Russell, Cameron Gilmour, Deserie Valloro, Jim Gilmour, Melissa Chesnut-Tangerman, Robin Chesnut-Tangerman, Tom Hurcomb, Kathy Doyle, Richard Johnston, Maureen McCormack, Doug Freilich, Don Hemenway, Hilary Solomon, Chris Smid, Janna Tournabene, David Munyak, Edu Updike, Patty McWilliams, Peter Stevenson, Eileen Stevenson, Kim Harbaugh, Gary Lindorf

Call to Order: Terry called the meeting to order at 7:01pm

Purpose of Meeting - To gather information on the proposed Orchard Road Solar Project.

Terry introduced Rod Viens & Peter Bay of groSolar, who were in attendance to give a brief presentation and to answer questions on the proposed Orchard Road Solar project. Terry also introduced Kimberly Mathewson, Town Moderator who was in attendance to moderate the discussion.

Rod & Peter gave a brief power-point presentation with an overview of their company and the specifics of the proposed project.

Public Comments/Discussion/Input: The following is a synopsis of the questions asked and the answers given after the presentation.

- Q - Question about RECs (Renewable Energy Certificates) and how they are sold, are there regulations surrounding RECs? -
 - A - State does not require RECs to be sold to them. Owners of projects have sole discretion as to whether or not they sell their RECs.
 - A - ½ of this projects power is being sold to Goddard College who intends to keep their REC's so that they can maintain that the power they are purchasing is renewable power.
- Q - Are there plans for Orchard Rd solar 2 or 3?
 - A - No plans for a bigger system. GMP transmission lines in this area limits the scope of the project to 500kw
 - A - Lease is for 5 acres of land only - 3.7 acres of solar panels.

- A - Dan Querrey - property owner - talked about the project and the lease and how they project came to be. Querrey's sought out groSolar to put a project on their property.
- Q - Who is the Owner of the project right now?
 - A - groSolar owns the project right now, but the project will probably will be sold to another VT company that they are in discussions with right now.
- Q - Question about project screening - One house within 400 feet of the project.
 - A - Current groSolar is currently conducting a visual analysis for the project. Ultimately screening proposal will be determined by the results of that analysis. The intent is to do what's right in terms of the screening plan with any neighbors who are affected.
 - A - Intent of screening is to mitigate the visual impact not block the view of the system entirely.
- Q - Question regarding disruption of the soils and any considerations for arsenic and pesticides that have been used in the orchard in the past?
 - A - The intent is to minimize any disruption by using minimal concrete footings and instead driving poles directly into the ground.
 - A - There will be a gravel road 100' long by 12' wide built to access the site.
- Q - How long will the installation last? -
 - A - 25 to 30 years is the expected longevity - Lease is for 25 years with two subsequent 5 year options.
- Q - How is this project assessed in terms of taxes?
 - A - State has guidelines in terms of valuing solar installations, tax is placed on the value of the equipment and separate from the property tax the landowner pays on that piece of property.
- Q - RE: Decommissioning concerns - concerned for future generations that it will be decommissioned responsibly. Doesn't have a lot of faith in the state to enforce decommissioning.
 - A - All projects 500kw and larger need to have a decommissioning fund. This will be part of this project. Fund needs to be in place before they do any site prep. This regulation is part of new law S-230 (which has not been signed yet), but also believed to be in the new net metering rules. Either way a decommissioning fund will be a part of this project as it is also part of the lease agreement.
 - A - Additionally, the stipulation is transferred to any new project owner.
- Q - What will this project cost?
 - A - Cost to put in this project is 1.3 to 1.5 million dollars.
- Q - Will any MTS residents be net metering off this project?
 - A - Although no net metering credits will be applied from this project to any homes in Middletown Springs, the power in reality will be used in Middletown Springs.
- Q - What tax credits and incentives are the owners are entitled to?
 - A - 30% federal tax credit, plus 7% state tax credit. There are no other incentives.
- Q - How often do you have to be there for maintenance?
 - A - There will be an O&M (Operations & Maintenance) contract through groSolar. Generally a site is checked on once a month
 - A - Mowing will happen at the end of the nesting season (August 15 & October)
 - A - Snow removal doesn't happen often - but if needed would be minimal.
- Q - What angle will the panels sit at? Will there be glare from the panels?

- A - Panels will be installed at a 25 to 30 degree tilt and they will have anti-reflective coating.
- Q - What's the panel's durability with hail?
 - A - Experience with an installation in NJ/PA with a hail/wind event was no damage reported either to the panels or the mounting systems from hail or wind.
- Q - What is the expected timeline for filing for the CPG?
 - A - CPG expected to be filed around the 4th of July holiday. Once filed it will go to the 21 day comment period. Abutters and the Town will get certified letters notifying them of that milestone.
- Q - Question about what the service upgrade to the site would entail?
 - A - groSolar met with GMP to review the project. Poles from Rt. 140 up to the site will be upgraded with new poles and 3 phase wiring. There will be no net gain of poles in the roadway. There will be 2 new poles on the project site.

General discussion was closed.

The board thanked groSolar, the Querreys, and all interested parties for coming out to have this discussion. The board also thanked Kimberly Mathewson for moderating the discussion.

No Other Lawful Business transacted.

Adjourn: Patty moved to adjourn at 8:40pm, Chris seconded, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Patty Kenyon
Selectboard Member (Acting Clerk)