



TOWN OF NEW MILFORD

Office of the Zoning Commission
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www.newmilford.org

September 11, 2017

Robert Stein, Chairman
Connecticut Siting Council
Ten Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051

RE: **PETITION NO. 1312** – Candlewood Solar, LLC petition for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for the proposed construction, maintenance and operation of a 20 megawatt AC (26.5 megawatt DC) solar photovoltaic electric generating facility located on a 163 acre parcel at 197 Candlewood Mountain Road and associated electrical interconnection to Eversource Energy's Rocky River Substation on Kent Road in New Milford, CT

Dear Chairman Stein:

At the July 25, 2017 Regular Meeting of the New Milford Zoning Commission, a public informational hearing was held for the above referenced petition. The applicant's representatives gave an overview of the project, and the Commission and members of the public had an opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns. The overwhelming majority of people who offered testimony at the hearing were adamantly opposed to the project, primary due to the unsuitability of the site for large-scale solar development and destruction of over 60 acres of old growth forest. The Minutes from this meeting are attached.

Below is a summary of the comments, concerns, and recommendations that were discussed with regard to Candlewood Solar, LLC's petition.

1. The proximity of the proposed facility to Candlelight Farms Airport, located at 5 Green Pond Road, in the Airport District, approximately 0.5 miles west of the proposed facility. This small airport, unlike larger instrument airports, is frequently used for plane aerobatics. The Commission recommends requiring the applicant to provide additional information and analyses about glare impacts to Candlelight Farms Airport and its users.
2. Visual impacts and lack of screening being provided to abutting residential properties. The New Milford Zoning Regulations require non-residential uses on properties over 5 acres in size to provide a 100' buffer (60' required for properties under 5 acres in size) along common property boundaries with properties containing single family homes. The Commission recommends requiring a 100' buffer along the property's frontage on Candlewood Mountain Road and along all common property boundaries with single family homes.
3. Questions were raised about the fact that the only vehicular access to the proposed facility is Candlewood Mountain Road, which is a long, steep, residential, Town road. How much truck traffic is estimated to be generated from construction, including tree removal and site

preparation? How will damage to the road be addressed? Will construction hours be limited? Will there be designated staging areas? Will processing be allowed? Where will employees and site contractors park?

4. Concerns were discussed about the lack of detail provided in regards to sedimentation and erosion control and stormwater management both during and after construction. The Commission recommends requiring the applicant to hire a third party sedimentation and erosion control specialist to provide weekly inspection reports to the Town during construction. Once construction is complete, the Commission also recommends requiring a Connecticut licensed professional engineer to provide written certification that the stormwater management plan was installed in accordance with the approved plans.

Several of the questions and concerns that were discussed all stem back to a reoccurring theme: Is the size and scale of the proposed facility appropriate for the subject site? Do the costs associated with the significant loss of forestland, wear and tear on the Town road, and potential negative impacts to the rural culture of the area, aesthetic beauty, neighboring residents, property values, Candlelight Farms Airport and Inn, outweigh the benefits of providing a renewable energy facility? To address and/or mitigate several of these potential negative impacts, the Zoning Commission recommends the following additional information and/or stipulations of approval:

1. Provide a more detailed investigation and glare analysis tailored to Candlelight Farms Airport and its use for aerobatics.
2. Require a 100' landscape buffer along the property's frontage on Candlewood Mountain Road and along any common property boundaries with single family homes.
3. Restrict construction hours and traffic to Monday – Friday from 7:30am – 5:30pm and Saturdays 7:30am to 12:00pm. No construction activities should occur on Sundays or Federal holidays.
4. Require the applicant/developer to hire a third party sedimentation and erosion control specialist to provide weekly inspection reports to the Town during construction. Once construction is complete, the Commission also recommends requiring the applicant to provide written certification to the Town from a Connecticut licensed professional engineer that the stormwater management system was installed in accordance with the approved plans.

Should you have any questions please contact the Zoning Office at (860) 355-6095 or zoning@newmilford.org

Sincerely,



William Taylor, Chairman, New Milford Zoning Commission, signing on behalf of himself and the following members of the New Milford Zoning Commission:

Sharon Ward, Vice Chairwoman
James Volinski, Secretary
Charles Bogie, Member
Tom O'Brien, Member
Robert DiMichele, Alternate

Enclosure: New Milford Zoning Commission July 25, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes
Copy: Melanie A. Bachman, Executive Director, Connecticut Siting Council