

29 May 2018

Hon. Kathleen H. Burgess  
New York State Public Service Commission  
Empire State Plaza  
Agency Building 3  
Albany, NY 12223-1350

Re: Additional community comments on Hecate Greene Solar Facility Revised Public Involvement Plan, master matter case no. 17-F-0619

Dear Secretary Burgess:

Hecate Greene has not actually met the PIP criteria as far as our community is concerned, which we have discovered through extensive petitioning efforts. Even now, 3 months after their formal announcement of the project, an alarmingly large number of our constituents still are not aware that a solar power plant is looking to occupy 890 acres of prime, picturesque farmland in an agricultural/residential zone. Of the nearly 1000 signatures gathered so far from people opposed to this project,  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$  indicated that they had no knowledge the power plant, with only some having heard of it in conversation.

Apart from the poorly advertised Open House, Hecate representatives have visited a handful of adjoining stakeholder's homes, set up a website which did not announce the details of the Open House before the actual event, have not set up a public outreach office as was required, distributed a flyer after a Planning Board meeting, asked our librarian to organize an informational meeting of approx. 6 people who might have been on the fence about their project, and recently they have emailed again a fraction of the stakeholders surrounding the parcels to announce their Notice of Submission of PSS. The only formal presentation made before our local officials was at a Planning Board meeting, the local officials completely superseded by Art 10. At the meeting, one of the Hecate Directors, Gabe Wapner, was asked multiple times "What are the benefits to this community?" When he couldn't answer the question, Gabe was politely asked to leave, as he was wasting the Board's time. I'm afraid if the DPS continues to entertain this project under Art. 10, Hecate will be wasting everyone's valuable time and money.

In regard to ethics:

1. Hecate has stated that they have met the PIP criteria, while also claiming that the community is excited about the project. This statement is completely false. Our soon to be not-for-profit, Saving Greene: Citizens for Sensible Solar, has been formed due to this project, with a core group of 40+ members, and a Facebook page comprised of nearly 1000 members and growing. As previously mentioned, we have embarked on a very aggressive petitioning campaign revealing how the community is not embracing this project, and we will be reaching out to our State officials with the results.

2. Hecate has not actually been awarded PPA status for this particular project as they have boldly stated on their website, nor are any of these parcels slated for this project zoned industrial, as they have indicated in the PIP.

3. Hecate's preliminary environmental screening of the parcels indicates "no significant wildlife habitat", however, the DEC and local Audubon Society have been studying an endangered owl and threatened raptor in this area for years.

4. Hecate's PIP concludes that the visibility of array is anticipated to be "limited". The parcels are surrounded by 110 + homes within direct view. The main parcel is in a valley with many homes elevated, and as there are no provisions for substantial plantings in the PIP, the transparent 8 foot chain link/barbed wire fence will by no means mask the 8-13 ft high arrays. The visual impact will be devastating to this community

5. Hecate's PIP lists that the project will have positive impacts on "socioeconomics" through employment. We have been told that they will temporarily employ 100-150 individuals for the first year of construction. We predict the jobs will either be Union, or a solar contractor with seasoned skilled workers will be secured. Hecate's directors have stated there will only be 2-5 permanent positions created from this project. However, the devaluation of hundreds of homes surrounding the site and village will adversely effect our tax base, and degrade our community by profoundly impacting existing and future tourism. This project in no way aligns with our town's comprehensive plan, and there appears to be no "socioeconomic" benefit whatsoever.

Hecate is an out-of-state developer with no genuine concern or vested interest in our community. The untruths we have already been fed not only reveal the lack of integrity this company embodies, but they are an insult to this community. Their decision to choose one of the most fertile, picturesque parcels of land left in our community speaks to their inability to make responsible, ethical decisions. Also, their attempt to take 3 entirely separate parcels/projects and bundle them together under Article 10 to supersede local jurisdiction is a blatant misuse of the law.

Saving Greene is supportive of responsibly sited solar projects i.e. brownfields, our industrial corridor and the State land surrounding prison. This project does not fall into any of these 3 categories. Ruining green in the name of green is just not necessary if proper regulations are in place, and just laws are enforced. If projects of this scope are allowed to proceed unchecked and irresponsibly sited based solely on the discretion of the developer and landowner, New York's beauty, wildlife, and economic growth/tourism will be negatively impacted. The utility sized solar projects needed to make a dent in global warming will suffer negative press, and ultimately be tied up in legal battles for years to come. I truly hope the DPS realizes that this project is ill fated on every level, and if allowed, will set the tone for communities viewing necessary renewables in a very negative light.

Hecate was banking on the fact that if they could quietly tip toe in, essentially disregarding the requirements of the PIP, the damage would be done before the community woke up. But this sleepy little town is now wide awake, and will not rest until this project is eradicated from this proposed site.

We greatly appreciate your careful and diligent consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Kim Rose

Saving Greene: Citizens for Sensible Solar