

Subject: Letter to Town Board, Planning Board and Residents: Ancram
PV LLC SUP-24-005

Dear Town Board, Planning Board and Residents-

As always, thank you for your time and investment in Ancram.

I have been a grateful resident of Ancram for over a decade. My late father introduced us to Gallatin in 1985 and my older brother lived in that very family home until recently. This town and our friends here mean the world to our family.

I appreciate the time invested by volunteers on the Planning Board. I am equally appreciative of the work required to square this industrial solar project with the Ancram Comprehensive Plan. I should also state I am not against the deployment of solar technology: I remember with fondness when Gallatin's Planning Board approved my brother's solar array (just over a decade ago) on Route 11. It wasn't visible from the road or the properties of his neighbors.

With that said and more, I am baffled why this proposed industrial solar project should be promoted in the manner it has been.

How do we reconcile this industrial solar project with a town hall website that promotes an endless gallery of pictures featuring farmland and thousands of acres of bucolic countryside. That same website gallery artfully features its very own Highway Department with an attractive dirt road stretching to meet a horizon of lush green fields, mature trees, and blue skies dotted with picturesque clouds.

Should we look forward to updated pictures of this industrial solar array prominently figured in the various galleries of the town hall website? Will real estate agents do the same with their featured properties? Will signs be changed on Route 82 or Pats Road or Cottontail?

How do we reconcile a developer whose website touts developing hundreds of energy projects that drive economic growth while respecting communities, but has recently back-tracked on prior statements and omitted material facts in an application made or presented to the Ancram Planning Board? How in the face of this behavior can Ancram residents accept this developer's own mantra of "being data-driven and environmental experts with global experience you can trust"?

Is this a trusted, responsible, and valued neighbor we hope to partner with for the next 30 years?

How do we reconcile the economic benefits of lower utility bills for local residents when these very benefits remain undefined by the developers of this industrial solar array? Will the shockingly conspicuous absence of project tax revenues from this solar

partner exceed the reduction in the real estate taxes from aggrieved property owners? How will the town make up for the net loss of these tax revenues?

What reliable partner would camouflage relevant facts asked by the Planning Board more effectively than they camouflage proposed industrial solar arrays on a prized historic farm? Is it reasonable to assume volunteers on a town planning board should also be - invested and diligent as they are - experts themselves regarding industrial solar arrays? Shouldn't professional experts in a given field pressing the town for business be more forthcoming with the Ancram Planning Board? Indeed, more forthcoming with the entire town of Ancram?

Are these partners we want to encourage?

How do we reconcile this industrial solar array sitting in fields adjacent to the Millerhurst Farm? Yes, the same family that has farmed it since 1887 and the very same farm that was recognized as a National Bicentennial Farm. Oh, and yes, the same farm that burnt to the ground and was resurrected through the humility of good neighbors both local and far away. Yes, the same farm that now - once again - may well lose many of its farm stand customers, too. And yes, even more, the same farm that could see lease arrangements for its arable land disappear as those farmers remain concerned with the impact of industrial solar arrays on their crops and their end markets.

Is this a historic farming community moving forward?

This industrial solar array won't honor our town hall's popular weblink, [Protecting Scenic Ancram](#): in revising the Comprehensive Plan, the town board of Ancram received 342 surveys and residents prioritized the objective to preserve Ancram's rural character and natural scenic resources. Ancram residents were also explicitly asked why "I love my community...": the most frequent answers were "pastoral rural community", "reconnecting with nature", and "beautiful, beautiful landscapes". In the same exercise our town board received directions from Ancram residents making it clear wind or solar infrastructure shouldn't be obtrusive and large scale solar was deemed a threat.

Is this how we introduce industrial solar arrays to our neighbors and farmers who are in fact our true partners? Should we expose Ancram to industrial solar arrays or should we expose the developer "you can trust"? Is this how residents are rewarded when they were specifically asked by elected officials and volunteers what mattered most to them?

Can a trusted partner surrender too little or too much?

Imagine you are an Ancram resident or a visitor driving down scenic Pats Road, Route 82, or Cottontail. Imagine also reading the informative road signs along your way in and around Ancram: "**Town of Ancram a farm & agricultural community**". Imagine stopping at a farm stand and buying sweet corn from a historic farm. Imagine paying for whatever you buy on an honor system with a cash box in plain site...open on the table before you.

Now imagine this industrial solar array project is built. Imagine trying to justify to friends, families, and visitors why all those Ancram signs feel like a strident contradiction. And, finally, imagine that farm stand and cash box may also be gone. What was once a truly idyllic landscape and revered corridor is now just a cherished memory.

Imagine changing **all** of this for a self proclaimed “trusted partner” who has bobbed and weaved around the harsh realities and shortfalls of their product. Changing this all for a “trusted partner” who has yet to document- (insert list here) - the exceptionally modest financial relief on utility bills within Ancram? What an honor to exchange the entire history of this prized landscape for the physical presence of an industrial solar array with little benefit whatsoever.

I would rather live in the dark.

With respect,

Matthew Tuck