

RECEIVED

JAN 24 2025

PUBLIC SERVICE  
COMMISSION

January 11, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing as a citizen of the community of Dunmor, KY. On 10-14-2024, a citizen posted on Facebook about the proposed 1,300-acre solar project to be placed in the communities of Penrod and Dunmor. This was the first time community members were made aware of this project. As a small rural community, we became very disturbed that our way of life and peaceful enjoyment of our property was about to be ruined. As a community, we mobilized and attended the proposed meeting with the solar company on 10-29-24. A lot of Dunmor and Penrod citizens attended the meeting and asked direct questions (in a question-and-answer format) of the developer, Sean Joshi, who was supposed to have answers to our questions. I feel I can speak for the group and say we were left with more questions than we received answers to. Sean did publicly agree to have another meeting with the community in a town hall type setting. I have personally been asking for another meeting to be set up since the conclusion of the 10-29-24 meeting. I have been in contact with the company's representative, Gaylan Spurlin, on multiple occasions asking for another meeting. I was told that the company did not want to meet with us again. I reminded Gaylan that it was promised at our last meeting on 10-29-24 and that Sean was on video agreeing to the meeting. Gaylan then recanted and said I was correct, and he would reach out to Sean. Another conversation with Gaylan on the same matter found Gaylan saying they only wanted owners touching the property to have a meeting. I reminded him again this is a community matter, and they agreed to a community meeting. As of this date, I have had multiple conversations with Gaylan, and so far, the company has refused to have another community meeting to answer any community questions.

In our meeting on 10-29-24 several community members were promised access to the environmental studies that had been done up to that point. Gaylan took down their email addresses, and the company promised to send them copies of any studies. Again, this is another promise the company failed to follow through on. Not one person in the Muhlenberg County for Responsible Solar group has received any studies promised to them. I personally reached out via their website email asking for copies of environmental studies they promised in the 10-29-14 meeting. I got the following response emailed back on 12-17-24.

Aaron:

Thank you for reaching out. We've received your message and will get back to you as soon as possible.

You can also call us at 843-510-5254.

As of this date I have not received any information I requested, and no one from the company (other than Gaylan) has reached out. I would encourage the PSC to call the above number. It goes directly to voice mail, and there is never a return call.

Another point of concern is that according to the KRS statute, a letter is to be sent to adjoining landowners 2 weeks prior to the community meeting. There are some landowners I know that have never received a letter. One of those gentleman attended the 10-29-24 meeting and found out at the meeting that the proposed solar complex is going to encompass his property on three sides. Not only that, but there was also a proposed substation 500 ft from his home. Lost City Renewables and Sean Joshi have never completed one solar project to date. This does not appear to be a company that needs to be granted any permission to operate in the state of Kentucky. Not only have they failed to uphold their promise to hold another meeting with the community, they also have failed to deliver any of the environmental studies to any community members as promised. If that is not bad enough, they have failed to comply with KRS Statute 278\_704 subsection 7 and 8. Subsection 7 says someone with "full knowledge" of the project shall be there to answer questions. As a community, we were left with more questions than answers. Subsection 8 refers to letters being sent to adjoining landowners. That requirement was not met as evidenced by a community member finding out at the meeting they are surrounded on three sides by this proposed project.

There was a private meeting between Lost City Renewables, LLC, Muhlenberg County Judge Executive (Mack McGhee), and Kentucky State Representative (Rebecca Raymer) prior to our 10-29-24 public meeting. After this meeting, I spoke with Rebecca Raymer on the phone about the meeting. She related the company stated there is a projected \$20 million in revenue for Muhlenberg County over a 30-year period. When I spoke with the company at our 10-29-24 meeting I asked about projected revenue for this project, and I was told by Marty Marchaterre there was \$12 million in projected revenue over the life of the project. I was at a function a few days later and Rebecca Raymer was present at the same function. I spoke with her about what she was told in the meeting regarding the \$20 million in revenue, and she confirmed the amount again. I told her I was told \$12 million, and she related there were several things they were told in the meeting with the company that has since been changed.

The lies that the company has been telling officials and county residents is not the only reason they need to be denied operation in the state of Kentucky. I have been told by Judge Executive Mack McGhee that Lost City Renewables has basically cut off all communication with him. He related to me that he has caught them making statements that were not factual, and he has pushed back on them. As a result of him questioning their statements for validity and truth, they stopped communicating with his office. If they act like this with the Judge Executive of Muhlenberg County because he questions things that are not facts, how will they be if granted a construction certificate? How many short cuts and laws are they willing to break?

Now to the site of the property itself—this is a proposed 1,300-acre area that has now grown to 1,425 acres since Lost City Renewables held their first public meeting on 10-29-2024. Back when it was just 1,300 acres, there was about 300 acres tillable and 1,000 acres of hardwood forest. How can anyone reasonably say that clear cutting 1,000 acres of forest is not going to have an enormous impact on the wildlife in the area? There are multiple published documents warning and advising against doing this exact act. When questioned in our 10-29-24 meeting, Sean Joshi dismissed this and said small “critters” can still enter the fenced in area. When pressed on the subject, he said that animals like squirrels and racoons will be able to go through the fence. What are they going into the fence for? With no trees, there is no food for them to eat. What about the deer in the area? We were told by one of our magistrates that support the landowner of the project that “it is going to push the deer onto neighboring farms, and they will be easier to hunt.” Even though it is true they will be pushed off their land, what he failed to mention is that they will be pushed into roadways as well. This project connects with US 431 that is a major highway in the area and traveled by hundreds of people each day. How many people are going to encounter deer on the roadway? How many deer are going to run a gauntlet of cars once their 1,425-acre home is fenced in? How many deer and possible people are going to have to lose their life in car vs deer encounters?

Now let's consider other aspects such as run off. When 1,000 acres of trees are cut and the stumps removed, how much soil is disturbed? The land will have to be graded to a 30% grade to make it suitable for solar panels. This is going to lead to the removal of topsoil and all its moisture holding capacity. Once it does rain, this is going to lead to large amounts of water running to places that it normally does not flow. The water from this region flows into the Mud River then into the Green River. What pollutants from leaky dozers, backhoes, pile drivers, side by sides, trucks, and other equipment will end up in the Mud and Green Rivers? I understand that there are mediation measures that have to be in place. However, there are multiple cases where these mediation measures are not effective. Who is responsible for damages to adjoining property once these mediation measures are ineffective?

Can we discuss the issue of diminution of property values? I have seen where the solar companies use Kirkland or CohnReznick to demonstrate there is no reduction in property values. I would like to point out that both of these companies are employed by the solar company. Wells Engineering has found on several occasions issues with Kirkland and CohnReznick's property evaluations. They hired an “expert” to review the findings of Kirkland and CohnReznick. The expert found their evaluations to be not factual and that property values were in fact damaged. Wells Engineering went to their engineer Tom Chaney (who has no credentials in property evaluation) as a tie breaker. Mr. Chaney only restated areas of the report from Kirkland's evaluation and stated no facts of his own. I would like to point out that in one of Wells Engineering reports they even stated they know there is going to be reduction of property value and the possibility of litigation if affected. I would encourage the Siting Board to take this area very seriously as there are numerous independent reports indicating reduction in property values when solar complexes are present.

I would like to close and ask the PSC not to support this project. This is not a project that our community desires. Not only is it going to affect our property values and the quiet enjoyment of our land, it is going to cause enormous environmental issues in removing 1,000 acres of forest. Most projects of this size are on open fields where minimal changes in land topography and forest destruction are needed, reducing the community and wildlife impacts. If the PSC allows the project to proceed, I implore the PSC to uphold the minimum 1,000-foot setback from property lines and the 2,000-foot setback from areas in Penrod and Dunmor where the definition of "neighborhood" is met.

I appreciate your time and thought into this matter.

Sincerely,

Aaron Cobb

Aaron Cobb  
Case # 2024-00406