

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

PETITION NUMBER 1598: APPLICATION FROM WINDSOR
SOLAR ONE, LLC

Petition from Windsor Solar One, LLC for a
declaratory ruling pursuant to Connecticut
General Statutes 4-176 and 1650k, for the
proposed construction, maintenance, and operation
of 3-megawatt AC solar photovoltaic electric
generating facility located at 445 River Street,
Windsor, Connecticut.

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION
HELD VIA ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCING
FEBRUARY 8, 2024
AT 6:30 PM

HELD BEFORE:

- John Morissette - Member and Presiding Officer
- Bryan Golembiewski - Designee for Commissioner
- Katie Dykes, Department of Energy and
Environmental Protection
- Quat Nguyen - Designee for Chairman Marissa
Paslick Gillett, Public Utilities Regulatory
Authority
- Melanie Bachman, Esq. - Executive Director/Staff
Attorney
- Robert Mercier - Siting Analyst
- Robert Silvestri
- Chance Carter -
- Lisa Fontaine - Fiscal Administrative Officer
- Dakota Lafountain

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2 **A P P E A R A N C E S**

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4 **APPLICANT, WINDSOR SOLAR ONE, LLC:**

5 **Bryan Fitzgerald, Verogy, Director of Development**
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9 **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

10 **D'Arcy Maine**
11 **Diane Lehan**
12 **Donna Grossman**
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2 (The hearing commenced at 6:30 p.m.)
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4 MR. MORISSETTE: Good evening, ladies and
5 gentleman. This public comment session is
6 called to order this Thursday, February 8th,
7 2024, at 6:30 p.m. My name is
8 John Morissette, member and presiding
9 officer of the Connecticut Siting Council.
10 Other members of the Council are
11 Bryan Golembiewski, designee for
12 Commissioner Katie Dykes of the Department
13 of Energy and Environmental Protection; with
14 Quat Nguyen, chairman for Marissa Paslick
15 Gillett for the public utilities regulatory
16 authority; Robertson Silvestri, Dr. Thomas
17 Near, and Chance Carter.

18 Members of the staff are Executive
19 Director, Melanie Bachman; Siting Analyst
20 Robert Mercier; and Administrative Support
21 Lisa Fontaine and Dakota Lafountain. If you
22 haven't done so already, I ask that everyone
23 please mute their computer audio and
24 telephones now.

25 This is a continuation of the public

1 hearing that began at 2:00 p.m. this
2 afternoon. A copy of the prepared agenda is
3 available on the Council's Petition 1598 web
4 page along with the record in this matter,
5 the public hearing notice, and instructions
6 for public access to this remote public
7 hearing, and the Council's Citizens Guide to
8 Siting Council's Procedures. This hearing
9 is held pursuant to divisions of Title 16 of
10 the Connecticut General Statutes and of the
11 Uniform Administrative Procedures Act upon a
12 petition from Windsor Solar One, LLC, for a
13 declaratory ruling pursuant to Connecticut
14 General Statutes 4-176 and 1650k for the
15 proposed construction, maintenance, and
16 operation of 3-megawatt AC solar
17 photovoltaic electric generating facility
18 located at 445 River Street,
19 Windsor, Connecticut and associated
20 electrical interconnection.

21 The petition was received on
22 November 13th, 2023, the Council legal
23 notice and the date -- of the date and time
24 of this public hearing was published in the
25 Hartford Courant on January 9th, 2024. On

1 this Council's request, the petitioner
2 erected a sign in the vicinity of the
3 proposed site as to inform the public of the
4 name of the petitioner, the type of
5 facility, the public hearing date, and
6 contact information for the Council,
7 including the website and phone number.

8 Please be advised that the Council does
9 not issue permits for stormwater management.
10 If the proposed project is approved by the
11 Council, the Department of Energy and
12 Environmental Protection, also known as
13 DEEP, stormwater permit is independently
14 required. DEEP could hold public hearings
15 for any stormwater permit applications.
16 Please also be advised that the Council
17 evaluation criteria under the statute does
18 not include the consideration of property
19 value.

20 This public comment session is reserved
21 for members of the public who have signed up
22 in advance to make brief statements. These
23 limited appearance statements are not
24 subject to questions from the parties or the
25 Council. And members of the public making

1 statements may not ask questions of the
2 parties or the Council.

3 In accordance with the public hearing
4 notice and in fairness to everyone who
5 signed up to speak, these public statements
6 will be limited to three minutes. Please be
7 advised that written comments may be
8 submitted by any person within the 30 days
9 of this public hearing.

10 I wish to note for those who are here
11 and for the benefit of your friends and
12 neighbors who are unable to join us for this
13 public comment session, that you or they may
14 send written statements to the Council
15 within 30 days of the date hereof by mail or
16 by email. Please be advised that any person
17 may be removed from the comment -- public
18 comment session at the discretion of the
19 Council.

20 We ask each person making a limited
21 appearance statement in this proceeding to
22 confine his or her statements to the subject
23 matter before the Council and to avoid
24 unreasonable repetition so that we may hear
25 all the concerns you and your neighbors may

1 have. Please be advised that the Council
2 cannot answer questions from the public
3 about the proposal. A verbatim transcript
4 will be made of this hearing and deposited
5 in the Windsor Town Clerk's Office for the
6 convenience of the public.

7 At this time I request the petitioner
8 make a brief, very brief presentation to the
9 public describing the proposed facility, and
10 I understand Bryan Fitzgerald will be making
11 that presentation. Mr. Fitzgerald, please.

12 MR. FITZGERALD: Yes, Mr. Morissette, and
13 thank you. On the screen should be
14 displayed figure 5, site plan. Good
15 evening, members of the Siting Council, Town
16 of Windsor, residents, and neighbors. My
17 name is Bryan Fitzgerald. I'm the Director
18 of Development for Verogy and the Windsor
19 Solar One project. Thanks for your time
20 this evening and earlier today.

21 Windsor Solar One is a proposed
22 3-megawatt solar photovoltaic array located
23 at 445 River Street. The parcel bounded to
24 the south by River Street, to the west by
25 Old River Street.

1 The proposed project would be installed
2 across approximately thirteen and half acres
3 of land formerly used to grow tobacco and
4 hay. Access to the proposed project would
5 originate off of River Street as identified
6 in the plan, here, as you can see about two
7 thirds of the way up the page there is a
8 pink/red maroon line that bisects the blue
9 figures, which represent the solar panels on
10 the plan. That access road, again,
11 originates off of River Street.

12 The proposed project would consist of
13 about 7,280 solar modules with 24 string
14 level invertors. The panels will be mounted
15 on single access tracker racking systems at
16 about 9 feet above grade of their maximum
17 height. The proposed project is anticipated
18 to produce about 5,513,000 kilowatt hours of
19 electricity each year. That's enough to
20 power about 760 homes annually. The proposed
21 project would also include a landscape
22 buffer to be planted running north and south
23 along River Street. To orientate yourself
24 on the page here, the western extent of the
25 property along River Street is marked by a

1 red property boundary. In the green space
2 indicated between that property boundary
3 moving east before you reach the blue
4 panels, is where the landscaping buffer
5 would be planted. This proposed landscaping
6 planting would consist of Eastern Red
7 Cedars, White Oaks, Evergreens, a mix of
8 Serviceberry and other Holly Evergreen
9 species type bushes. These evergreens, these
10 Red Cedars would be about 6 to 7 feet at the
11 time of planting.

12 The solar projects like
13 Windsor Solar One do not create any air
14 emissions and are commonly referred to as
15 zero carbon resource energy systems. Again,
16 that means they just don't produce any air
17 emissions when in operation. The project
18 would not use any water nor would it create
19 any wastewater as a result of operations.

20 In 2023 the proposed project was awarded
21 a 20-year contract through a competitive
22 auction administered by CTDEEP and
23 Eversource energy. The proposed project
24 will sell electricity and renewable energy
25 certificates to Eversource through the

1 shared clean energy program. For the SCEF
2 program, 2.5 cents of every kilowatt hour
3 produced is allocated to the bills of
4 participating subscribers of which
5 60 percent need to be low to moderate income
6 customers. That results in \$137,000 a year
7 of approximate net benefit to subscribing
8 customers.

9 The proposed project will also
10 incorporate a co-use agricultural plan
11 consisting of sheep grazing throughout the
12 proposed project area. This insures
13 agricultural productivity will continue
14 across the entire parcel. This plan was
15 approved by the Department of Agriculture in
16 their letter on November 27, 2023. Again,
17 thank you all for your time this evening.
18 We appreciate your feedback.

19 MR. MORISSETTE: Thank you
20 Mr. Fitzgerald.

21 MR. FITZGERALD: Thank you.

22 MR. MORISSETTE: I'd like to make a
23 correction to my opening statement. The
24 petition was filed by Windsor Solar One.
25 That's a correction, please, for the record.

1 We will now call upon Gracie Maine to
2 make a public statement followed by Diane
3 Lehan. Gracie Maine, please, good evening.

4 MS. MAINE: Hi, it's D'Arcy Maine.

5 MR. MORISSETTE: D'Arcy, thank you.

6 MS. MAINE: Hi, thank you so much for
7 letting me speak today. I live at
8 418 River Street, so right across the road
9 from the proposed site. Again, I appreciate
10 the opportunity to speak today and also for
11 the chance to publicly voice my opposition.

12 While I'm in favor of developing and
13 using alternative energy sources, I'm
14 incredibly disturbed at the idea of placing
15 a solar farm in the middle of a residential
16 area. When my husband and I first received
17 the letter informing us of this proposal, we
18 did as many did, and began to research the
19 company behind this plan and became aware of
20 the solar farm that they developed on
21 Middle Road in East Windsor.

22 From there we read complaint after
23 complaint about the experiences of the
24 residences there and surrounding area. One
25 near-by resident described it as a very

1 high-pitched ringing noise in a Journal
2 Inquirer story, another called it a whining
3 noise that travels. So as others, I'm sure
4 in this meeting did, we drove out for
5 ourselves on a sunny day to that site in
6 East Windsor and we can confirm those
7 complaints to be accurate. The noise was
8 shockingly unbearable. Those same residents
9 have said they are no longer able to have
10 their windows open on a nice day or sit on
11 their porches because of the sound.

12 When we moved to Windsor in 2021 it was
13 a large park so we can enjoy being outside,
14 and we've loved being able to do that with
15 with our one-year-old daughter and our dog,
16 who you might hear in the background
17 currently. The idea of not even be able to
18 open our windows is devastating.

19 While I know Bryan just said, or I've
20 seen the company say, there will be minimal
21 impacts on those around the River Street
22 location, the company did say that to those
23 in East Windsor as well. So we don't --
24 from my standpoint we don't have a reason to
25 trust that will be true. Those in

1 East Windsor have been dealing with this now
2 for years and it seems like there have been
3 minimal solutions.

4 Aside from the noise, I also have many
5 questions about the potential health risk
6 such a development poses. I know because of
7 the relative newness of such developments in
8 residential areas, there doesn't seem to be
9 much reputable evidence either way just yet.
10 But I can safely say I don't want my family
11 nor my neighbors to be the guinea pigs when
12 it comes to our safety and health. There
13 are simply too many unknowns.

14 On a personal note, I am 100 percent
15 dependent on a pacemaker device. It keeps
16 me alive, it keeps me functioning, and the
17 idea of living so close to an electric
18 magnetic field is concerning. And it's not
19 a choice I ever would have made and I worry
20 I no longer have a choice. This decision is
21 being made, not by me, nor by my neighbors,
22 but by those who do not live in our
23 community nor share our concerns.

24 So with that I would just ask those
25 tasked with making this decision before you

1 do so I just hope you take a moment to
2 honestly ask yourself if you would want to
3 live directly next to or across from the
4 proposed site and use that to guide your
5 decision-making. Thank you so much for your
6 time.

7 MR. MORISSETTE: Thank you, D'Arcy Maine.
8 We will now continue with Diane Lehan,
9 followed by Donna Grossman. Diane.

10 MS. LEHAN: Okay.

11 MR. MORISSETTE: There you go.

12 MS. LEHAN: Oh, there we go. I actually
13 agree with just about everything that
14 Ms. Maine said. I truly oppose the
15 installation of the utility scale on
16 farmland. There are many other locations of
17 unused farmland within Windsor that are not
18 located in a residential area. I am a
19 retired 30-year resident of Strawberry Hills
20 Association. When I was purchasing my home,
21 I selected this particular one as the
22 backyard faces woods, wetlands, and the
23 Farmington River, and the front yard has
24 bucolic serene view of farmland.

25 The proposed location of this utility

1 scale solar power plant is less than
2 400 feet from my front yard, 100 feet from
3 other homes in the area. I use the term
4 utility scale solar power plant as it is the
5 correct term, rather than the most commonly
6 used term of solar farm, which is blatantly
7 deceptive. Webster's dictionary defines
8 farm as an area of land and its buildings
9 used for growing crops and rearing animals.

10 There were many references in this
11 afternoon's conversation of the Amazon
12 facility. Interesting that that facility
13 necessitated a zoning change, why not this
14 location? What are the plans to somewhat
15 obscure the view from the homeowners? There
16 was a comment during this afternoon session
17 and I will have to paraphrase, they can see
18 Amazon, they'll see this. The Amazon
19 facility is only visible during the winter
20 months as it is completely obscured by
21 foliage during the rest of the year. I also
22 visited East Windsor's East Road facility on
23 a very sunny Sunday. There is an extremely
24 loud constant whirring sound, which will
25 preclude us from having windows open during

1 the summer.

2 But more importantly, are you aware that
3 less than one third of a mile away is the
4 CREC River Street School which provides, and
5 I'm quoting, comprehensive academic and life
6 skills curriculum for students ages 3 to 22
7 who present with a variety of behavioral,
8 communicative, and neurological disorders
9 including autism spectrum disorder, seizure
10 disorders, et cetera. Many of these
11 students are particularly sensitive to
12 noise. This would --

13 MR. MORISSETTE: Thank you, Diane, for
14 coming out this evening. Unfortunately your
15 time is expired. We will now move on to
16 Donna Grossman. Donna are you with us this
17 afternoon? There you are.

18 MS. GROSSMAN: Hi.

19 MR. MORISSETTE: Good evening.

20 MS. GROSSMAN: Hi, I'm Donna Grossman.
21 I live on 781 Kennedy Road. I'm going to
22 read an excerpt from the World Health
23 Organization website. Climate change is
24 impacting human lives and health in a
25 variety of ways. It threatens the essential

1 ingredients of good health, clean air, safe
2 drinking water, nutritious food supply, and
3 safe shelter, and has the potential to
4 undermine decades of progress in global
5 health.

6 Between 2030 and 2050, climate change is
7 expected to cause approximately 250,000
8 additional deaths per year from
9 malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea and heat
10 stress along. The direct damage costs to
11 health are estimated to be between \$2 and
12 \$4 billion per year by 2030.

13 Greenhouse gas emissions that result
14 from the extraction and burning of fossil
15 fuels are a major contributors to both
16 climate change and air pollution. Many
17 policies and individual measures such as
18 transport food and energy use choices have
19 the potential to reduce greenhouse gas
20 emissions and produce major health
21 co-benefits, particularly by abating air
22 pollution. The phaseout of polluting energy
23 systems could lower both carbon emissions
24 and cut the burden of household and ambient
25 air pollution, which cause 7 million

1 premature death per year, end quote.

2 Ideally, every home and business would
3 have their own solar panels on their roofs.
4 I have two sets of solar panels, and I will
5 add, with no negative health impact.
6 Because of the costs, however, that is just
7 not feasible. And that is why solar farms
8 like the proposed one in Windsor are so
9 important. I understand that there are some
10 people who don't want solar farms near them,
11 and all efforts should be made to reduce the
12 negative effects of this farm on them. But
13 I would argue that the lives of my
14 grandchildren out weigh that want. Thank
15 you.

16 And I will add that I went out to that
17 solar farm in East Windsor, I couldn't hear
18 a thing. But I think that's from being old
19 so, you know, I'm going to give everybody
20 else the benefit that they really did hear
21 it. Thank you.

22 MR. MORISSETTE: Thank you, Donna. Thank
23 you everyone for coming out this evening and
24 providing us with your comments. So the
25 Council announces that it will continue the

1 evidentiary session of this public hearing
2 on Thursday, no, excuse me, it's Tuesday
3 March 19th, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom
4 conferencing.

5 A copy of the agenda for the continued
6 evidentiary hearing session will be
7 available on the Council's Petition,
8 Number 1598 web page, along with the record
9 in this matter, the public hearing notice,
10 instructions for public access to this
11 evidentiary hearing session, and the
12 Council's Citizens Guide to Siting Council's
13 Procedures.

14 Please note that anyone who has not
15 become a party or intervenor, but who
16 desires to make his or her views known to
17 the Council, they may file written
18 statements with the Council until the public
19 comment record is closed. Copies of the
20 transcript of this hearing will be filed
21 with the Windsor Town Clerk's Office. I
22 hereby declare this hearing adjourned.
23 Thank you, everyone, for participating.
24 Have a good evening. Thank you.
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1 (The hearing was adjourned at
2 6:49 p.m.)
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1 CERTIFICATE

2
3 I, STEVA BROWN, Professional Certified
4 Verbatim Reporter and Notary Public, do hereby
5 certify that pursuant to notice, the foregoing
6 pages were reduced to writing by me, and this
7 hearing is a true and accurate record of the
8 testimony given by the witnesses. I do hereby
9 state that I took the proceeding on
10 February 8, 2024 by remote means.

11 I further certify that I am neither
12 attorney or counsel for, nor related to or
13 employed by any of the parties to the action in
14 which this proceeding was taken, and further that
15 I am not a relative or employee of any attorney
16 or counsel employed by the parties thereto or
17 financially interested in the action.

18 

19
20 _____
21 Steva Brown, CVR
22 Notary Public,
23 State of Washington

24 My Commission Expires:
25 November 1, 2027
Remote Online Notary Endorsement