

Last night's Planning Board meeting

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Dear members of the Hopkinton Planning Board,

I am writing to you about Wednesday night's meeting. During the Skunk Hill portion of the agenda, some board members made it clear that they did not want to listen to the expert witnesses of the objectors. There was a clear bias, the developers' representatives were treated with respect and deference while the objector's expert witnesses were badgered by multiple town representatives. We were also disheartened to watch as board members laughed and joked with Mr. Craven during a meeting in which residents are hearing irrefutable evidence that their properties will lose value and the environment around their homes is in jeopardy.

You are our representatives, and you have a great responsibility in this town. We count on you to listen to the information provided and make unbiased decisions. At one point a board member said that although "it was unfortunate that the zoning was changed, we have to move forward to shape this project". Yes, the land was rezoned, but the solar project has not been approved. You each have to make 7 positive findings to approve this project and that hasn't happened yet. We ask that you keep in mind that we too bought our homes on large lots surrounded by residentially zoned land only to have it spot zoned to our horror.

Once again, concerned residents sat for hours waiting for a chance to be heard at the tail end of the meeting. This is a huge upheaval in our lives that we have been grappling with for 4 years. Please show consideration for the residents and the effort we are putting forth to defend ourselves. Almost everyone acknowledges (the exception is the few who stand to benefit from the project) that **it would be hard to find a worse place to attempt to cite a large-scale solar facility.** Our environment is at risk both at a personal level, the safety issues are a huge concern for the abutting neighborhoods, and there is no escaping the negative impact on the land itself.

Steven Cabral of Crossman Engineering said that all of the concerns were valid, the developer did not submit an environmentally safe plan. EDP is attempting to cite a solar installation directly abutting 64 private homes in a portion of unfragmented forest on top of ecologically sensitive wetlands. They cannot be trusted to safeguard our natural resources; they didn't even bother to submit a plan that would address basic runoff issues. They have solidified our concerns and proven our point, and yet Mr. Craven gets laughter, and our representatives are met with hostility. It is worth noting that Mr.

Craven voted for the recent solar tax cut that pulled a substantial amount of previously agreed tax revenue out of Hopkinton.

To say that we are concerned with the tone of the hearing is a significant understatement. Please put yourselves in our shoes and ask yourselves how you or your family members would want to be treated in the same circumstance.

Sincerely, LouAnne McCormick