

Mr. George Barrett, Chairman, Wareham Planning Board  
Ms. Sandra Slavin, Chairman, Wareham Conservation Commission  
54 Marion Road  
Wareham, MA 02571

RE: Fearing Hill Road Solar Project  
NOI and Site Plan Review #21-21 and #18-21 Preliminary Subdivision

June 1, 2021

Dear Chairmen Barrett and Slavin,

As property owners within 300 feet of both 91 & 101 Fearing Hill Road (parcel 91-1000 and 74-1007) and as the Wareham Land Trust property stewards for the Town's Fearing Hill Conservation Area (FHCA), we have significant concerns regarding the Notice of Intent and Site Plan Review Application filed by Atlantic Design Engineers, Inc. on behalf of Wareham MA 3, LLC to subdivide the  $\pm 44$  acre parcel to construct a  $\pm 20$  acre solar farm (designated as Lot 2) and another 5 acre lot (designated as Lot 1).

In section 5.0 of the Site Plan Review Application, the applicant requests 3 waivers. We respectfully ask that they be denied for the reasons outlined below.

1) "A waiver is requested from Section 1532.1 "Existing Natural Features" 2. "Individual trees 18" dbh or over." Due to the current woodland status and relative size of the Property it is infeasible to locate all trees greater than 18 inches."

This prime forest land has remained largely undisturbed for generations. There are undoubtedly trees of varying species (likely more species than cited by Goddard Consulting) that are of significant size. However, this only reinforces the value those trees provide by cleaning the air, providing habitat, reducing runoff and erosion as well as sequestering and storing carbon. The project proposes to install approximately 20 acres of solar arrays but there is not a total acreage given for the extent of the clear cutting. An in depth assessment of the project site should be undertaken so as to better understand the ecological impact of the loss of biodiversity.

2) "A waiver is requested to allow clearing and grading within the 50'foot setback along the northeasterly property line that abuts vacant wooded conservation land and wetlands."

The implication appears to be that the "vacant wooded conservation land and wetlands" are less valuable and therefore do not need to be adequately protected. The Town of Wareham purchased the Fearing Hill Conservation Area precisely because those areas are valuable and needed protection. They provide not only recreational opportunities for the general public but have an abundant supply of streams that feed the Weweantic River. If anything, a much larger buffer area should be conditioned so as to protect the water quality for undue runoff.

The wetlands in the northeasterly corner of parcel 91-1000 potentially could be negatively impacted by contamination from runoff and soil erosion that would fill in the wetlands. Wetlands are a valuable resource and should be protected to the fullest extent possible.

3) "A waiver is requested to allow clearing within the 50-foot setback to the future/proposed lot line at the southwest corner of the site."

This waiver requests relief so that clearing can occur in the corner of the project that not only borders wetlands but is close to neighborhood homes and could potentially be seen from Fearing Hill Road. Clearing within the 50 foot setback along the flat old railroad bed will cause excess runoff and erosion of the soils into the wetlands that now occupy the rail bed.



After reading the Site Development Plans, the Final Plan Review Application, the Preliminary Subdivision Plan (#18-21) and Stormwater Report, we have been unable to determine answers to the following questions. These are in no particular order.

A) Why on page 42 of the application (Exhibit G- Interconnection Service Agreement) is the parcel ID listed as Map 74 Lot 1009? This error makes us wonder what else was copy and pasted from another project and that this current project has not been fully vetted.

B) Is any earth removed being taken off site? If so, how much and has/will an earth removal permit be requested from the Board of Selectman?

C) Where on site will the stockpiling of existing topsoil be done?

D) What is the definition of "minimal grading"? It is very difficult to read the proposed contour lines under the depiction of the 7333 panels.

E) Is the meadow-grass seed that is proposed to be used under the panels comprised of native species so as to minimize the potential for drift into the Town conservation property and other abutting parcels? Will some pollinator friendly species be included in the mix?

F) Will the hay bales and curlex sediment logs installed during construction be removed upon completion? NHESP has identified this as prime Box Turtle habitat and Box Turtles can't climb over either of these materials.

G) How will the panels be mounted? Will there be concrete pads?

H) Do the panels move? Is there a noise factor? Is there noise from the batteries or any other part of the project?



I) What mitigation is being proposed to offset the loss of at least 20 acres of mature trees?

J) Will there be clearing outside of the proposed fence? If so, how much? What is the total acreage proposed to be clear cut?

K) How will the proponent ensure that the historically significant stone walls which contain original Land Court markers on the eastern border with the FHCA remain undisturbed?

Thank you for the opportunity to express some of our concerns regarding this large project. We request that this letter regarding our questions and concerns become part of the Planning Board and Conservation Commission records for these projects. The projects will have significant impact on the Fearing Hill neighborhood especially those of us that rely on our wells for potable drinking water and on the health of the ecosystems within the Fearing Hill Conservation Area.

Sincerely,

Nancy L. McHale

Kathleen M. Pappalardo

87 Fearing Hill Road

West Wareham, MA 02576-1438

Cc: Ken Buckland, Dave Pichette