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January 24, 2025

Kane County Zoning Board of Appeals
Attn: Tracy Aris, Chairman & Board Members
719 S. Batavia Ave, Bldg. A
Geneva, IL 60134

RE: Petition Nos. 4654 & 4655 – Rutland East Solar Farm, LLC & Rutland West Solar Farm, LLC
– Commercial Solar Facility Special Use Application

Dear Chairman Aris & Board Members of Kane County Zoning Board of Appeals,

The Village of Hampshire is objecting and protesting the zoning application submitted by Rutland East Solar Farm, LLC and Rutland West Solar, LLC for Commercial Solar Facilities at 16N4285 & 17N030 Reinking Rd., Hampshire, Kane County, Illinois.

The subject properties lie within 1 ½ miles of the Village of Hampshire’s municipal boundaries and is within the Village’s statutory planning area. The Village of Hampshire has adopted its 2004 Comprehensive Plan that provides future planning designation for the subject properties. The Village of Hampshire’s Future Land Use Map as part of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan designates the subject properties for low-density residential use.

Additionally, the Village of Hampshire provides the following response to the findings of fact for a special use per Sec. 25-4-8-2 of the Kane County Zoning Ordinance:

- A. The establishment, maintenance and operation of a commercial solar facility can be detrimental or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare of a community. According to an article and study completed by the Harvard Business Review titled “The Dark Side of Solar Power” dated June 18, 2021, solar panels can be considered hazardous waste due to heavy metals (cadmium, lead, etc.) that solar panels contain. Additionally, according to the article there is a high cost for recycling solar panels compared to disposing solar panels in landfills. The estimated cost to recycle one solar panel is between \$20-\$30, whereas disposing one solar panel in a landfill cost

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between \$1-\$2. By denying this application, Kane County will be preventing the potential disposing of thousands of tons of waste into landfills.

- B. The proposed special use will be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted and will substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood. A study completed by the Florida State University titled "Economic Analysis of Utility-Scale Solar" dated July 2023 found that though tax revenue increased in the initial year of the commercial solar facility, the revenue diminished from year 2 and on due to the depreciation value of commercial solar panels. Additionally, as the expected lifetime of a commercial solar facility is at least thirty years, the land cannot be redeveloped for more favorable uses that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors of Kane County.

- C. The establishment of the special use will impede the normal and orderly development of surrounding properties. As the population of Kane County and the impacted communities of Hampshire and Pingree Grove grows, the Village expects to see interest in commercial development along Route 47 and its intersecting thoroughfares, such as Reinking and Big Timber Rd., which is where the two commercial solar farm facilities are proposed to be located at. Between 2022 and 2024, Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) increased by approximately 6% from 15,300 to 16,300. As the population is expected to continue to grow in Kane County, the Village of Hampshire, and Village of Pingree Grove, it can be reasonably expected that the AADT will continue to grow on Route 47 and its intersecting roads of Reinking and Big Timber. As the AADT grows the interest in development such as residential, commercial, and retail will continue to also grow. By allowing the special use to be approved, it will prevent for more favorable uses that can be enjoyed by the residents and visitors of Kane County.

As the proposed special use applications do not meet the Findings of Fact A-C, the Village of Hampshire recommends that the Kane County Zoning Board of Appeal recommend denial of Petition Nos. 4654 & 4655.

Respectfully submitted,

Mo Khan

Mo Khan
Assistant Village Manager for Development
Village of Hampshire
E: mkhan@hampshireil.org
P: 224-833-4916

Cc: Michael J. Reid, Jr., Village President, Village of Hampshire
Jay Hedges, Village Manager, Village of Hampshire

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