

PETITION BEFORE THE KANE COUNTY ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

IN THE MATTER OF PETITION 4666 — SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR A COMMERCIAL SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY

Petitioners: David and Christine Durrant (37W550 Highland Avenue, Elgin, Illinois 60124)

Applicant: SunVest Solar, LLC d/b/a SV CSG Wilson School Solar, LLC

Property Owner: CHB Family Limited Partnership (Attn: Charles H. Burnidge)

Location: South side of Highland Ave., ~0.7 mi west of Randall Rd., Elgin Township, Kane County, Illinois (PINs 06-08-100-008, 06-08-100-023, 06-08-300-002, 06-08-300-008).

PETITION OF NON-PARTICIPATING NEIGHBORING PROPERTY OWNER

We, the undersigned, are the owners of an established, high-value residential property directly across from and adjacent to the proposed project site. My wife and I have lived and raised her family in this location for approximately 30 years. We hereby lodge this **formal opposition** to Petition 4666. Our home, residential property, and related investments stand to be directly and adversely affected. We were not parties to the original application. We therefore assert our standing as necessary and indispensable participants in this proceeding.

GROUNDINGS FOR DENIAL

I. Failure to Satisfy Special Use Standards (Finding B)

Under the Kane County Zoning Ordinance, Special Use may not be approved if it is **injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity**. Petition 4666 is precisely such a case. The Applicant proposes to site an industrial solar energy facility within **150 feet** of our existing million-dollar estate/home located north and adjacent to the proposed site. The facility's fencing, inverters, access roads, and panel fields will irreparably alter the residential character, diminish views, and materially impair enjoyment. Prior Board actions—including the denials of Petition 4661 Elgin Twp (Petition 4661) and Big Timber Solar (Petition 4644)—confirm that adjacency to residential neighborhoods has potential detrimental impact. To approve Petition 4666 would be an arbitrary and capricious departure from this established precedent.

II. Incompatibility with the Kane County 2040 Land Use Plan.

The Kane County 2040 Land Use Plan emphasizes preserving agricultural land and open space while guiding growth into areas that support healthy, livable communities. It prioritizes land use that protects the character of residential corridors, fosters compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods, and safeguards quality of life. A large-scale commercial project, such as the proposed utility-solar farm, conflicts with this vision.

III. Irreparable Compromise to Existing Residential Corridor

The placement of a commercial solar energy facility within a residential corridor constitutes an adverse land-use incompatibility. Such a development introduces industrial-scale infrastructure into a neighborhood corridor already established for residential living, thereby **diminishing property values and undermining community character**. Moreover, the transformation of open, agricultural, or green space into a utility installation erodes the visual, aesthetic, and social cohesion of the community. In

addition, the proposed project appears to conflict with the annexing and growth plans of the city of Elgin. The growth of cohesive residential communities is vital for the well-being of families and the healthy development of children and should not be compromised by embedded incompatible industrial uses.

IV. Environmental and Drainage Risks

Beyond land-use incompatibility, a solar farm located within a residential corridor raises environmental and safety concerns; including, hazardous material risks, stormwater runoff, and emergency response challenges—that can negatively affect nearby homes. For these reasons, the proposed use is inconsistent with the county’s long-term vision and protective planning framework. In addition, ground-mounted arrays alter natural hydrology, concentrate runoff, and destabilize soils.

V. Potential Adverse Impacts on Property Values

Substantial evidence, including national peer-reviewed studies, confirms that **homes adjacent to industrial-scale solar fields lose market value**. Documented losses depend on proximity, with greatest harm for properties facing fencing and panels rather than farmland other residential property. Petitioners’ homes and related properties represent significant financial investments. To impose such diminution without remedy constitutes taking property rights without just compensation.

VI. Public Health and Safety Concerns.

This project introduces potential significant **unmitigated hazards**:

1. **Fire and Emergency Response:** Utility-scale solar arrays present risks of stranded energy, inverter combustion, and vegetation fires. This possibility underscores the need for **fire district–approved emergency response plans, rapid shutdown systems, all-weather access, interior fire lanes, and funding for specialized training**. No such comprehensive commitments are in evidence here.
2. **Well Water and Soil Contamination:** Modules may contain hazardous materials including lead solder and cadmium compounds. Breakage from hail, fire, or severe weather could leach toxins into the soil and groundwater. Some residents adjacent to and/or surrounding the proposed project rely on **private wells**, and contamination threatens public health. Absent mandatory chemistry disclosure, spill/breakage protocols, well-water testing, and groundwater monitoring, this risk remains unmitigated.
3. **Transformer/EMF Impacts:** Medium-to-large transformers and inverters generate both audible tonal noise and electromagnetic fields (EMF). Noise intrusions may exceed ordinary residential ambient levels; EMF exposure, though subject to ongoing study, raises legitimate health and safety concerns. We are not aware that comprehensive acoustic modeling, EMF assessments, or mitigation measures have been presented. This omission is unacceptable.

VII. Debris Field Risk

Large-scale solar installations introduce the potential for significant storm-related debris. In high-wind, microbursts, or tornadic events, solar panels, racking systems, and associated components may become dislodged, creating **widespread debris fields** that can endanger adjacent homes, farmland, and infrastructure. Unlike typical agricultural or residential structures, solar arrays cover broad contiguous surfaces that function as wind sails, increasing the likelihood of panel detachment and fragmentation. We have lived across from the proposed project for approximately 30 years. We have experienced numerous microbursts, high windstorms, and lightning strikes which directly compromised our property. We have lost countless trees and have suffered significant structural damage to our home and other structures on the property numerous times.

VIII: Potential for Adverse Reflectance and Glare

Modern solar panels are designed to absorb light, although large-scale installations have the potential to create **medium glare** impacting surrounding residences, particularly at sunrise and sunset. The Kane County 2040 Land Use Plan prioritizes healthy living environments and land uses that protect neighborhood character; the risk of glare from a utility-scale solar installation within a residential corridor directly conflicts with this vision by undermining safety, livability, and community well-being.

VII. Possible Deficient Application and Lack of Transparency

The application for Petition 4666 **appears to be deficient and lacks transparency**. It fails to clearly provide complete equipment specifications, protocol for equipment decommissioning and removal due to financial insolvency or secured financial assurances to protect residents in the event of developer insolvency. Additional concerns include proof of long-term viability including adequate bonding, and insurance or escrow funding to cover equipment removal, solar remediation or well water protection in the event the project fails commercially. Without proof of adequate bonding or escrow funds, the community risks being left with abandoned equipment, environmental hazards, and costly remediation. This outcome could have an **adverse impact on the quality of life** of adjacent residents as well as adversely influence their home values. In addition, the application should include foreseeable upgrades and advances in the solar farm infrastructure which could impact neighbors. These apparent omissions fall short of the clear and convincing evidence required for Special Use approval and should compel denial.

ALTERNATIVE LOCATION OPTIONS

Solar farms offer clear environmental and economic benefits when properly sited, these advantages are significantly undermined when they are placed within residential corridors. Commercial solar facilities should be sited in areas that **minimize conflict with established neighborhoods, such as agricultural zones with low residential density, brownfield sites, or along existing utility corridors**. These locations provide the necessary land and infrastructure without disrupting cohesive residential communities or diminishing property values.

By prioritizing non-residential siting, the County can both advance renewable energy goals and protect the integrity, safety, and social well-being of families in established neighborhoods. Responsible placement ensures that the benefits of solar development are achieved without imposing disproportionate burdens on local residents.

RELIEF REQUESTED

Petitioners respectfully demand that Petition 4666 be **DENIED in its entirety**.

Petitioners:

David H. Durrant

37W550 Highland Avenue
Elgin, Illinois 60123

Christine A. Durrant

Date: 8/29/2025