**Subject: Objection to Petition #4666 – Proposed Solar Farm on Highland Avenue, Elgin Township**

Dear Members of the Kane County Zoning Board of Appeals,

I am writing as a concerned resident to **formally object** to **Petition #4666**, which proposes the development of a commercial solar farm on Highland Avenue in Elgin Township, directly adjacent to long-established residential neighborhoods, including West Highland Acres. This site is wholly inappropriate for an industrial-scale energy facility, and I urge the Board to deny this petition.

---

**1. Incompatible with Residential Planning and Elgin's Long-Term Vision**

The proposed solar farm lies within the **City of Elgin's planning jurisdiction**, which designates this land for **Single-Family Detached housing** in the Future Land Use Map. This vision reflects Elgin's long-term commitment to building **residential communities**, not industrial energy infrastructure.

Placing a commercial solar facility directly behind family homes will:

- **Devalue property** in the surrounding area.
- **Discourage homeowners** from investing further in their properties.
- Severely disrupt the **character and livability** of our neighborhood.

Elgin officials have already expressed opposition to the proposed site, and I strongly urge the Board to align with the City's vision for responsible and community-focused development.

---

**2. Environmental and Drainage Risks**

The environmental impact of the proposed solar development is deeply concerning:

- **Soil erosion and runoff** are inevitable due to land grading and root system removal.
- Drain tile systems – including those that have been connected from the solar property to **private drainage systems like mine** – risk flooding, clogging, and long-term infrastructure damage.
- The Water Resources Department has already acknowledged these issues and requires a **drain tile study**. But this is **reactive**, not preventative.

- Once root systems are removed, the soil loses its ability to absorb water, increasing **flood risks** for unincorporated homeowners on **well and septic systems**.

If this project is approved, how will the Board guarantee these problems are addressed **proactively and timely**, before irreversible damage is done?

---

**3. Inadequate Noise and Impact Studies**

The **Noise Impact Assessment** (dated June 16, 2025) was based solely on **aerial imagery**, with **no field verification** of sensitive receptor locations. This is unacceptable.

Additionally:

- 9,000 **mechanized panels** and a **transformer** placed just **301 feet** from homes will produce continuous noise.
- Over time, the mechanical motors will **deteriorate**, likely causing **increased noise levels**.
- Residents will be forced to endure a permanent, industrial soundscape in what is currently a peaceful residential area.

---

**4. Financial Risk and Decommissioning Concerns**

The **Decommissioning Plan** (dated June 19, 2025) presents a **high financial risk** to Kane County and local taxpayers:

- Only **10% of net decommissioning costs** ($29,171) will be secured within the first year.
- Full financial assurance isn't required until **year 11**, by which time the company may have **changed ownership multiple times** or ceased to exist entirely.
- The plan assumes $608,211 in salvage value — these costs including labor are speculative figures that may not reflect market realities 35 years from now.
    - Total Demolition/Removals $833,936
    - Total Salvage $608,211
    - Total Demolition Minus Salvage **$225,800 (10% = 29,171)***

    ***Study specifically states: The net decommissioning costs after accounting for resale and salvage values is approximately $225,800, or $29,171 per MW.**

Who will be responsible if a **shell company walks away** and the solar farm needs to be decommissioned?

---

**5. Climate, Biodiversity, and Safety Hazards**

The proposed solar farm will:

- Increase **local heat** and alter microclimates.
- Disrupt local **ecosystems** and reduce biodiversity due to land clearing.
- Increase fire risk in a warming climate with **more frequent extreme weather events**.
- Introduce waste disposal issues after the **30-year panel lifespan**, with limited recycling infrastructure currently available.
- Risk **toxic chemical leaching** from damaged panels — especially following hail, wind, or tornadoes, like those that have hit nearby in recent years.

These impacts are not temporary. They will affect our environment, our health, and our homes for **decades**.

---

**6. Aesthetic and Community Impact**

Beyond the technical and environmental issues, this project will simply be an **eyesore**:

- Large black-panel arrays are visually intrusive and will **dominate the view** from homes and streets.
- The presence of industrial infrastructure in a residential setting will **erode community identity and pride**, and decrease home values per
- This is not what families moved here to live next to, and certainly not what Elgin envisions for its future.

---

**Conclusion: Please Vote to Deny Petition #4666**

While solar energy is an important step toward a sustainable future, this project is the **wrong project in the wrong place**. The environmental, financial, and community impacts are too significant to overlook.

I urge the Zoning Board to:

- **Respect the City of Elgin's land use plans**,

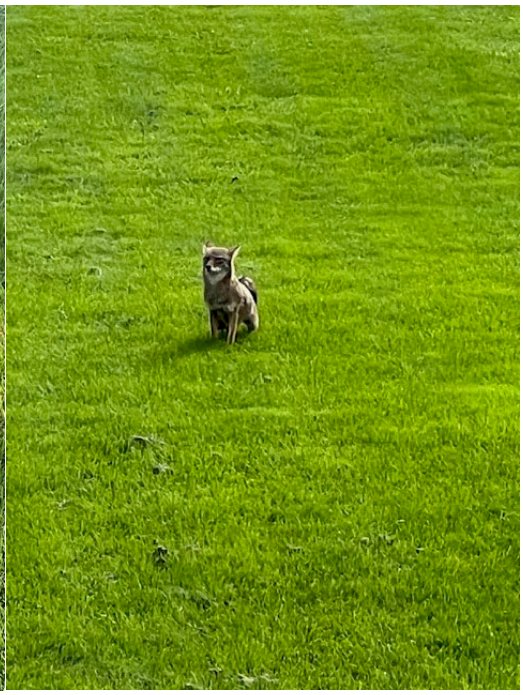
- **Protect homeowners** and taxpayers from long-term financial and safety risks, and
- **Deny Petition #4666** to preserve the character and future of our community.

Thank you for your time, service, and thoughtful consideration of this objection.

Sincerely,

**Jennifer Rhymes**
**12N612 Jackson Drive**
**Elgin, IL 60124**
[redacted]
[redacted]

Here are pictures taken from my backyard at 12N612 Jackson Drive.  As you can see I have various different wildlife, including deer which are not pictured.

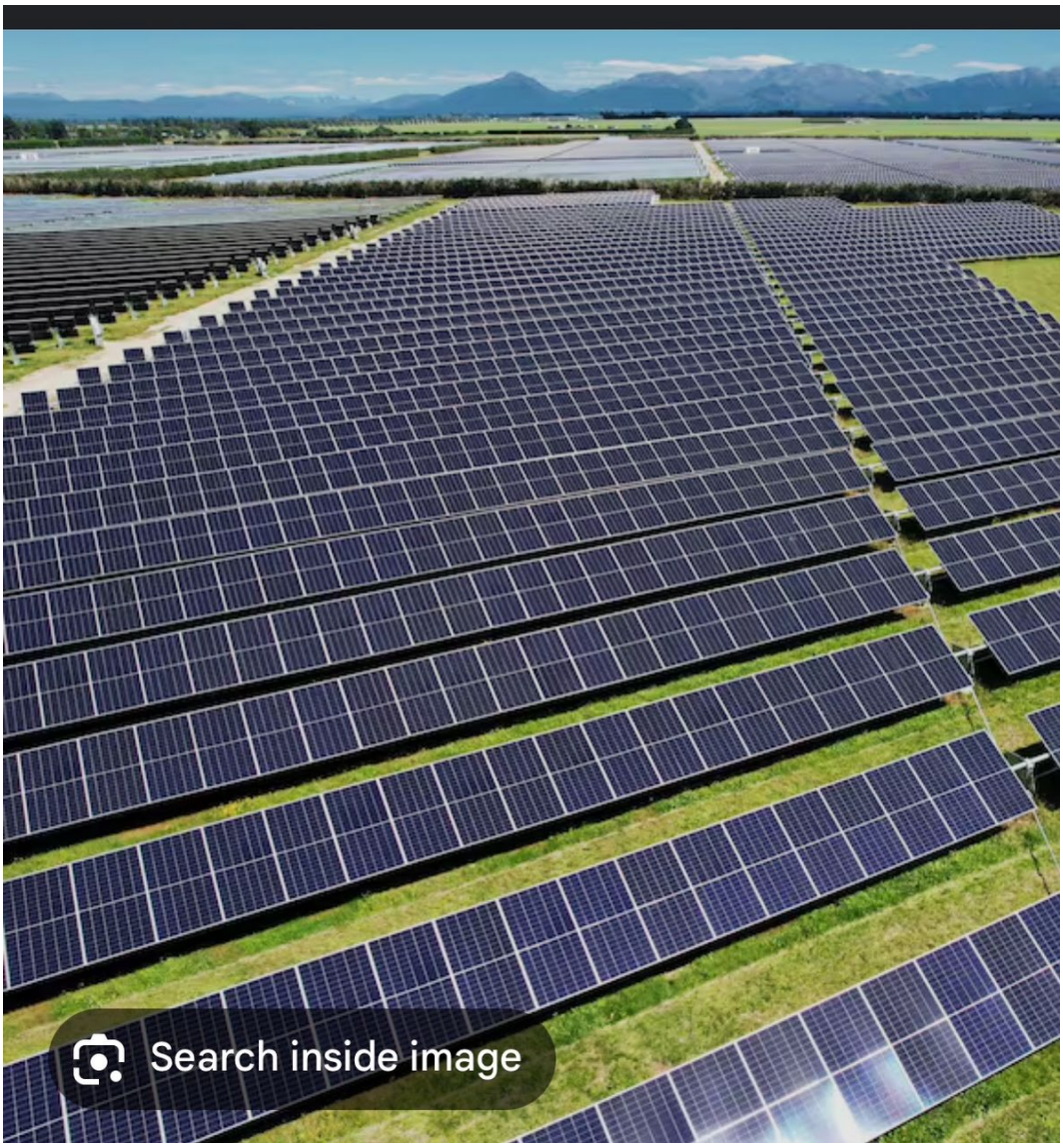



1/125 7.1
100-5
1150/1151

These pictures show out my yard floods.  Mr. Burnidge connected his farming drain tiles to our neighborhoods drain tiles, which run through the back part of my backyard.  I already see this type of flooding from him doing this, putting in solar panels that remove rootballs, etc. will further worsen the absorption of the farmland soil.

This is the proposed solar farm, which will consists of 9000 solar panels (behind my yard – highlighted in red)

This is what me and the rest of my neighbors will see.



This shows how close the farm is and how much of the farm I see.

Weather conditions can get harsh, and high winds.  There is much concern that winds and hail can damage the solar panels, and the chemicals can leach from the panels, as well as the damage it can do to our houses if the solar panels blow into our yards. My house is only 301 feet away. A couple of years ago, a tornado hit about 1-2 miles south of my home, near Bose and Randall road.

These are views to show how close the farm is to our yards, and how much we will still be able to see the solar farm.  This is too close to a residential area like ours. There is plenty of other more viable farmland that would be better for a solar farm.