



5 June 2016

101 Windy Ridge Ln

Ellensburg, WA 98926

Jeff Watson

Designated Permit Coordinator

Project File Number CU-15-00006

Kittitas County Community Development Services

411 N. Ruby St., Suite 2

Ellensburg, WA 98926

Dear Mr. Watson,

Walking or driving by the property (as I do daily as owner of the second property east on the north side of Clerf Road) for which the Conditional Use Permit to the north of Clerf Road east of Kittitas referenced above, I noticed the yellow sign announcing the request for a permit. At first, I thought someone was planning to build a brewery or winery; the name sounded like such establishments in the county. This suggestion seemed ridiculous. When I realized the true nature of the proposal, the adjective that arose is "insane". As both a proponent of non-petroleum based energy sources, and as one of the first to install both solar panels and wind turbine to electrify my home on Whidbey Island in 1998, I am aghast at a proposal that appears to be in complete disregard of basic concepts of sustainable land/earth use. By way of appropriation, OneEnergy Development and/or Iron Horse Solar is apparently attempting to take advantage public concerns about the climate, which is becoming evident in the endangered water resources in this county. They are attempting to slip in a natural resource capitalization project that will benefit few residents here in the name of environmentalist values. Such a charade should be exposed and arrested. I delineate salient points below.

Using (Ag-20) farmland for a solar farm is a poor and contradictory proposal. We (nationwide and locally) are losing farmland to development at alarming rates. Population is rising and the easiest and cheapest resource for development is flat ground near existing infrastructure. This may benefit Iron Horse Solar reducing implementation costs, but long range consequences include reduced agricultural/food producing resources and loss of the public investment in functional irrigation systems; a system which should be improved by the application of new technology and public works. It would be a much more farsighted proposal to pass a bond and apply for state and federal assistance to build the electrical grid it would take to build a better sited solar farm at a higher elevation in the arid hills above the valley floor.

The environmental benefits of solar electricity production do not outweigh the fact that such an extensive solar farm is an industrial facility which seriously impact the livability of an agricultural community such as that surrounding the city of Kittitas. Light and noise pollution, glare, and the eyesore of eight-foot high security fencing in this neighborhood will be significant. Furthermore, there can be no doubt that wildlife, flora and fauna, will be impacted as well. This neighborhood environment includes

deer, coyotes, birds of prey (hawks, eagles, osprey), migratory birds (herons, geese, ducks), song birds (meadow larks, sparrows, finches), and other common species (redwing blackbirds, mourning doves). There is an additional risk to the farming community regarding weed control which will not include the maintenance of invasive species with farming techniques in lieu of chemical or genetically derived control strategies. The Environmental Review and the expected Determination of Non-Significance appear to be more of a check-list than a careful consideration of scientific fact. This is especially true in that this would be the largest such solar farm in Washington State for which there is no precedent.

In addition to Title 17 Zoning, Title 17A Critical Areas, and Fire Code rules; RCW36.70a.030, part 15 ought to be considered by the folks of KCCDS who are reviewing this application.

I assume notification regarding the hearing schedule for this application will be publicized and that those of us who have registered concern will be informed in writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Hein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mark Hein

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elizabeth Lee". The signature is cursive and elegant, with a large initial "E" and a long horizontal stroke.

Elizaabeth Lee