

Planning

From: K S
Sent: Monday, October 2, 2023 7:04 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Proposed Solar Energy Facility

As a tax paying, home owner and resident of Fort Gratiot I do NOT agree with allowing this facility in any of the areas proposed in or around Fort Gratiot Township! A majority of this area is residential and agricultural and does NOT NEED to be industrialized, especially in this aspect considering all the circumstances of what this facility will involve now AND in the future!

Planning

From: James Wilson
Sent: Tuesday, October 3, 2023 10:51 AM
To: Planning
Subject: Solar Project Concerns

Good morning,

I've lived in the Blue Water Area most of my life.

I lived in Utah for several years and can testify to the dangers of allowing a project like this to be approved.

Once beautiful areas reduced to polluted and permanent construction sites.

Once one dirty industrial project is allowed in you open the door for others. Pollution will surely follow.

Fort Gratiot is rural. We like it that way.

I imagine I speak for the majority when I say this.

Fort Gratiot is a quiet escape from the normal grime of industrialized neighborhoods, polluted air, and heavy industrial traffic.

These companies will underdeliver on their promises. I work in general construction and know first hand the amount of waste produced, mismanaged, and discarded inappropriately every day.

This project is a misguided misuse of our valuable Agricultural and rural areas.

Any attempt to move forward with this project should be met with scorn.

I'd pray you choose to do the right thing and keep this impending waste of time, money, valuable land out of our home.

These companies are seeking to undermine the townships power in favor of State Gov. oversight. and you should not allow it.

Protect your home.

Protect my home.

Protect the future home of all those that choose to live here after.

Find a better/ cleaner use of the Agricultural land.

Planning

From: Sarah Beebe
Sent: Wednesday, October 4, 2023 7:51 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Portside Solar, LLC

Good evening,

I have great concern and am expressing my support of NOT allowing Portside Solar, LLC to utilize acreage in our township to build solar farms.

This is not wanted. I, like others, did not buy a home and property in the country so I could look at fields of solar panels.

Sincerely,

Sarah Beebe, RN

Planning

From: Virginia C
Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 3:32 PM
To: Planning
Cc: John Coury
Subject: 10/20/23 solar power/planning meeting

I am writing in support of the solar power project by Portside Solar, LLC. and am unable to attend the hearing scheduled 10/10/23. Please read my correspondence into the planning meeting records.

Virginia Coury

4641 Lakeshore Rd, Fort Gratiot Twp, MI 48059

Planning

From: Chelsea Borko
Sent: Thursday, October 5, 2023 8:47 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Proposed solar farm in Fort Gratiot

October 5, 2023

Dear planning committee of Fort Gratiot,

We live on Spartan Drive in Fort Gratiot. We have very recently become aware of a big situation affecting our neighborhood, and we are very concerned about it. We, along with many, many of our other neighbors are extremely opposed to the proposed solar plant that would be built on the corner of Carrigan Road and Parker Road.

Solar plants have many negative impacts which include (but are not limited to):

1. They pose a big health risk as they emit radiation and EMF (electromagnetic frequency) regardless of what the very limited “studies” that have been conducted conclude. EVEN IF THE SOLAR PANELS THEMSELVES DO NOT EMIT RADIATION, THE EQUIPMENT USED IN THESE FARMS DOES. In fact, many things in our current lives are now being found unsafe when they were previously thought to be ok for use. It was only this past year that sunscreen that was deemed safe by the FDA was found to cause skin cancer. Studies simply have not been concluded for long enough to determine the short term or long term affects of a solar plant. In fact, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT NO ONE LIVE ANY CLOSER THAN 1.2 MILES TO A SOLAR PLANT, and it is recommended that you live even further than that. OUR NEIGHBORHOOD FALLS WELL WITHIN THIS RANGE.
2. It is proven that people who live near solar farms have a higher risk of anemia. Children are especially susceptible to this risk.
3. Even extremely low frequency magnetic fields (which is what solar farms emit) can be carcinogenic or cause cancer according to the European Commission Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identifiable Health Risks
4. They pose a serious threat to the environment, wildlife, and the watershed in the area around where they are built. Aside from the very obvious fact of destroying the wildlife’s habitat, the plant would restrict the movement of wildlife in the area. The removal of vegetation would impact all animal species, including many species of birds, which frequent this area due to its location being adjacent to the Fort Gratiot nature area, let alone Lake Huron.
5. The land that a solar plant is built on is destroyed forever. Construction of such a plant requires the removal of trees, plants, and all brush prior to the plant being built, which creates an ecological waste land. The stripping of this land removes the topsoil, destroys healthy soil organisms, and allows for invasion of invasive plants that take out native species. Even after a solar project is not in use anymore, the land cannot be used for agriculture use for many years after.
6. Solar projects SHOULD NOT be built near wetlands, rivers, streams, tributaries, etc to avoid damage to water quality and to avoid possible contamination disasters. Avian species that migrate, nest, or forage in and around solar sites are greatly affected. A term deemed as “Lake effect” also happens in which birds think the solar panels are a body of water, and they are attracted to them, and they collide with the panels, subsequently causing fatalities.
7. Uncontrolled runoff of water and topsoil is a well documented byproduct of a solar site development and does not come close to stopping with the end of construction. This massive increase in watershed sediment impacts all areas downstream including rivers, streams, estuaries, and all of the drains and creeks along the proposed area. Clearing the land and removing the trees and plants lead to long-term runoff and water contamination

issues. The harmful chemicals contained in the solar components can be leaked into the ground and enter out watershed.

8. Solar plants are very likely to sustain massive damage from storms and when this happens, they are very prone to catch fire. The resulting smoke from solar panels is extremely toxic and have been proven to harm the reproductive, nervous, and digestive systems of humans.
9. They are a huge eyesore and are a big annoyance in terms of noise level
10. They depreciate nearby home values by 5-25%
11. They are extremely inefficient when compared to other forms of energy generation, generating only 1-2% of the power that coal or oil does

To what degree are we willing to harm our children, our land, and our wildlife for the sake of “going green”? Destroying habitat, trees, plants, etc does not seem very much like going green. The production and continued use of solar plants actually indeed uses fossil fuels and natural resources, as components of a solar plant require such materials.

The Fort Gratiot planning committee and the board’s job is to look out for the best interests of the residents of Fort Gratiot, not sell out for financial gain.

Solar plants may be not be a bad thing WHEN BUILT IN THE PROPER AREA, such as a more remote area like the other proposed sites where there are far fewer dwellings. UNFORTUNATELY, OUR NEIGHBORHOOD AND SURROUNDING AREA IS NOT THE CORRECT LOCATION FOR A SOLAR FARM TO BE BUILT.

Please take into consideration the Fort Gratiot residents whose homes are located SO CLOSE to the proposed solar plant on Carrigan Road/Parker Road. OUR LIVES AND THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN ARE AT RISK.

If none of these above numbered points means anything to anyone, please ask yourself this:

Is the extremely minimal power generated by a potential solar plant on Carrigan/Parker Road worth harming the health and safety of the nearby Fort Gratiot residents whose homes lie so extremely close the proposed solar plant?

Sincerely,

The neighbors of Spartan Drive in Fort Gratiot, Michigan

Planning

From: Dick West
Sent: Friday, October 6, 2023 9:13 AM
To: Planning
Cc: Angela West; 1fastss2
Subject: INDUSTRIAL ZONING
Attachments: farm2.jpg; farm3.jpg; fishing pond.jpg

Good morning, this is Richard West and I live at 5321 State Rd in Fort Gratiot. My wife Angela and I will not be able to attend the meeting on Tuesday October 10th regarding the re-zoning from agricultural to industrial. We would attend via zoom if that option is available.

We are both against the re-zoning to Industrial in the areas that were outlined in the letter sent to our home from Fort Gratiot Township. We have lived here for 33 years and Angela's parents since the early 1960's. Our home and property is less than 200 feet from one of the proposed parcels and Angela's parents, Robert and Linda Wessel live directly next to that parcel. We feel the re-zoning of this land will significantly lower the value of our homes and property and for this reason we vote NO to the proposed re-zoning.

Please help protect our land from big corporations and help the next generation of families who stand to inherit this land when we're gone.

Thank you for your time.

Dick West



From: Kamil Cislak
To: Planning
Subject: Solar Project
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 12:54:53 AM

I am unable to attend the meeting on 10/10/2023 in regards to the Solar Project. As a resident of Fort Gratiot, I do not believe that the township or myself as a resident will benefit from the solar project and would like to vote against it.

Thank you

Kamil C.Cislak

From: asphaltcowboy
To: Planning
Subject: Solar field
Date: Sunday, October 8, 2023 10:47:48 AM

Hello My name is Scott Wachtel. My wife and I are residents of Fort Gratiot and really enjoy living here, having moved here from Chesterfield 6 years ago. I wanted to reach out to express my deep concern over the proposed solar development within the township. I think its a very dangerous proposal to bring in this type of development and see no way where the gains can offset the risks. We have good soil and water conditions out here that benefit not only us and the wildlife in the area but also those neighboring communities around us. I am not an expert on solar but from all the research I have done I believe they are incredibly dangerous and toxic. I can not in good conscience support such a risky project in my community that has such high risks for chemical leaks and potential unforeseen environmental consequences. I implore all involved in the planning of this project to look beyond the monetary gain and actually represent the well being of the community that you are to elected and hired by the people to protect and block this development. If such a project is approved in my community my family and I will relocate as this type of project endangers all of us. I am just one person commenting today but my opinion reflects much of the same concern as others in my community. I thank you for your time reading my concerns and look forward to attending the planning meeting regarding this matter.

Scott Wachtel

From: stuewerc629
To: Fort Gratiot Twp Treasurer; Stephen Jones; Planning; Robert Buechler; Vicki Ostrander; Robert Crawford
Subject: 900 acre Solar Panel Project
Date: Monday, October 9, 2023 12:17:42 PM

I would like to voice my concerns in regards to this 900 acre Solar Panel Project that is taking place right in my backyard. I do not approve of this project.

I never received any notice or news about this solar panel project until I received a letter about a public hearing to be taking place on October 10, 2023. **GREAT COMMUNICATION FORT**

GRATIOT!!!!

Question....why were the resident's not notified of this project ?

Why was this not put out for a vote?

How can the township justify this project

How can the township speak for all it's residents?

I am not happy about this and would appreciate some communication to the residents of Fort Gratiot when the TOWNSHIP decides what is best for the community. It is the residents that make up the township, not TOWNSHIP HALL making up the community and all the decisions!!!

Again, I am very displeased with the happenings of the this project. I am **NOT** in favor of this project.

Please reconsider this project

Cathy Stuewer

From: Trevor Defrain
To: Robert Crawford; Robert Buechler; Fort Gratiot Twp Treasurer; Linda Bruckner; George Kish; AJ Armbruster; swilton@fortgratiot.us; Planning; Chris Bolt; Scott Bradley
Cc: Trevor Defrain
Subject: Solar facility
Date: Monday, October 9, 2023 9:25:38 PM

To whom it may concern

I am opposed to the solar facility plan. I did not receive adequate notice to research my concerns. My property value will decrease. I've spent the last 15 years maintaining my yard and home to help increase its value. Now the people in charge of the township have decided that doesn't matter. There isn't enough research to support putting a solar facility this close to the lake. If something goes wrong it will be too late. If this facility is good for the township, all residents would have been notified, the whole county would have been notified. Not one resident will benefit from this, but many will be negatively affected. This plan was not done in good faith. Only notifying the people within 300' because that's what the law states is ridiculous. You work for the people Fort Gratiot Twp and nobody else.

Trevor Defrain
5045 Parker Rd

Planning

From: Angela Defrain
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 3:47 PM
To: Robert Crawford; Robert Buechler; Fort Gratiot Twp Treasurer; Linda Bruckner; George Kish; AJ Armbruster; swilton@fortgratiot.us; Planning; Chris Bolt; Scott Bradley
Subject: Proposed Solar Energy Generation Facility per Order. No. 226.
Attachments: Planning Commission Comments 10-10-23.docx

Good Afternoon,

Please see my attached comments and links to further information.

Thank You,

Angela Defrain

10/10/2023

Angela Defrain
5045 Parker Rd.
Fort Gratiot, MI 48059

Charter Township of Fort Gratiot Planning Commission:

My name is Angela Defrain and I live at 5045 Parker Rd. I oppose the **Proposed Solar Energy Generation Facility per Order. No. 226.** that is being presented tonight. I received a notice about this meeting in the mail on 09/30/23, just 10 days before the meeting. I also received a notice for a regular meeting and the agenda posted online says that this is a hearing. Furthermore, the public notice on the Times Herald website stated that this is a hearing. Is this a hearing or just a regular meeting? This notice was the first time I have heard of a large-scale solar project being considered in Fort Gratiot. The township's master plan does not mention a project like this and neither does our future land use plan 2030. It has become apparent that I am not the only resident of Fort Gratiot and St. Clair County that had no idea something like this was being planned. In a Times Herald article dated 10/07/23 a representative of Portside Solar LLC, Toby Valentino is quoted as saying they have been, "working closely with the local community to bring a responsibly sited community-supported solar project to the area." Considering the fact that no one in the community knew about this plan, I would say they did not work closely with the community. An industrial solar site of this size should not be located so close to Lake Huron and our wetland and nature preserve area. I have included an article for your review from the U.S. Department of Energy titled, **Summary: Solar Impacts on Wildlife and Ecosystems.** The article details some of the impacts that solar fields have on wildlife and the ecosystem. I am also including an article from Central Michigan University titled, **Proposed solar farms cause community concern.** This article discusses runoff in regard to solar panels and is published by a university in our state.

Our property backs up to Doe Creek, a county drainage ditch that empties into Lake Huron. Multiple sections of the solar farm proposal run along that drainage ditch. The drainage ditch, our yard, and those fields flood multiple times each year. The flooding is so bad that the back three acres of our property floods. Sometimes it takes it months to dry up. We have lived here for 15 years, and those fields have always had crops in them. We did not buy our home next to an industrial solar farm. Section 17 of the proposal is located right next to wetland property and the Fort Gratiot Nature Preserve. Again, I oppose the industrial solar site plan that is being presented.

Charter Township of Fort Gratiot Future Land Use Plan 2030

<https://fortgratiot.us/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/MAP-Land-Use-Plan-2030.pdf>

Summary: Solar Impacts on Wildlife and Ecosystems

<https://www.energy.gov/eere/solar/summary-solar-impacts-wildlife-and-ecosystems-request-information>

Proposed solar farms cause community concern

https://radio.wcmu.org/2023-06-01/proposed-solar-farms-cause-community-concerns?fbclid=IwARONjE9tO2DNPeMnOBgF1V_9jHKprrmck5ngs5w3KH8WJhUg25l23XIVdjs

Planning

From: Angela Defrain
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 4:41 PM
To: Planning
Subject: RE: Proposed Solar Energy Generation Facility per Order. No. 226.
Attachments: FB_IMG_1696588058728.jpg; FB_IMG_1696587940816.jpg

Photos of our flooded yard are attached.

Angela Defrain

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Planning <planning@fortgratiot.us>
Date: Tue, Oct 10, 2023, 4:23 PM
Subject: RE: Proposed Solar Energy Generation Facility per Order. No. 226.
To: Angela Defrain, Robert Crawford <rcrawford@fortgratiot.us>, Robert Buechler <rbuechler@fortgratiot.us>, Fort Gratiot Twp Treasurer <treasurer@fortgratiot.us>, Linda Bruckner <lbruckner@fortgratiot.us>, George Kish <gkish@fortgratiot.us>, AJ Armbruster <ajarmbruster@fortgratiot.us>, Chris Bolt <cbolt@fortgratiot.us>, Scott Bradley <sbradley@fortgratiot.us>

We have forwarded your email and attachment to the Planning Commission members and have printed copies out to be placed at their seats. Thank you for contacting this office.

Fort Gratiot Community Development Office

Planning | Zoning | Lot Changes | Floodplain Management

Office: (810) 385-4489 x1113 | planning@fortgratiot.us

Find us on the web @ www.fortgratiot.us

From: Angela Defrain
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 3:47 PM
To: Robert Crawford <rcrawford@fortgratiot.us>; Robert Buechler <rbuechler@fortgratiot.us>; Fort Gratiot Twp Treasurer <treasurer@fortgratiot.us>; Linda Bruckner <lbruckner@fortgratiot.us>; George Kish <gkish@fortgratiot.us>; AJ Armbruster <ajarmbruster@fortgratiot.us>; swilton@fortgratiot.us; Planning <planning@fortgratiot.us>; Chris Bolt <cbolt@fortgratiot.us>; Scott Bradley <sbradley@fortgratiot.us>
Subject: Proposed Solar Energy Generation Facility per Order. No. 226.

Good Afternoon,

Please see my attached comments and links to further information.

Thank You,

Angela Defrain



Planning

From: Audrey Baer
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 4:18 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Re: New Message (sent by contact form at Fort Gratiot)

Thank you for forwarding my correspondence in time for the meeting.

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 10, 2023, at 3:37 PM, Planning <planning@fortgratiot.us> wrote:

Good afternoon,

I am sorry I missed your call. I'm not sure what number you called, as my cell phone voicemail isn't full, nor is the office phone. If you would like to discuss, please call (810) 385-4489. Your correspondence will be forwarded to the planning commissioners prior to the start of tonight's meeting.

Thank you,
Fort Gratiot Community Development Office
Planning | Zoning | Lot Changes | Floodplain Management
Office: (810) 385-4489 x1113 | planning@fortgratiot.us
Find us on the web @ www.fortgratiot.us

From: Website Contact
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 3:00 PM
To: Robert Crawford <rcrawford@fortgratiot.us>
Subject: New Message (sent by contact form at Fort Gratiot)

First Name: Audrey
Last Name: Baer
E-Mail: baer159
Subject: Proposed Solar Project

Message: I am a resident of Fort Gratiot and I am opposed to the solar project. I do not want this forced on the citizens of Fort Gratiot, or myself.

I tried calling the Planning Department, but they would not answer and their voicemail is full. Please make sure this email gets to them today before they make any decisions.

From: Robert Crawford <rcrawford@fortgratiot.us>
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 3:01 PM
To: Planning <planning@fortgratiot.us>
Subject: Fw: New Message (sent by contact form at Fort Gratiot)

Planning

From: lindajbutler81
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2023 5:59 PM
To: Planning
Subject: Industrial Solar

Dear Fort Gratiot Township Planning Commission:

My husband and myself are unable to attend the planning meeting this evening, but would like to voice our opposition to the solar energy proposal. We have concerns with regard to the lowering of property values and contamination of ground water, including well water and water running in and out of Lake Huron. We reside on Brace Road where we do not have access to city water and are dependent on well water. The proposed solar sites would be positioned in the field directly across the road from our home and also to the east of our neighbor's property. These sites would be connected to Doe Creek/Port Huron Watershed, which in turn, directly connects to Lake Huron. We have concerns related to the health of our own family and other families in this community. We urge you to please oppose this land proposal.

Respectfully,

Matthew and Linda Butler
3856 Brace Rd.
Fort Gratiot, MI 48059

Sent from my iPhone

First Name

JIM

Last Name

THELANDER

Email

[REDACTED]

City

FORT GRATIOT

Message

Dear Township Officials, I'm writing in support of the Portside Solar Project. This project will boost local tax revenue while creating hundreds of local in demand construction jobs and providing income for local farmers and community members. Additionally, the Portside Solar project will promote cleaner air and water for future generations.

Additionally it would be in my view DUMB not to support the project.

Thank you,
Dr. James E Thelander
5802 Lakeshore