

1 PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO
 2 BEFORE THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD
 3 IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF SYCAMORE CREEK
 4 SOLAR, LLC FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
 COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED
 5 CASE #20-1762-EL-BGN

6 - - -
 7 The following PUBLIC HEARING was held before
 8 Administrative Law Judge Patricia Schabo.
 9 - - -

10 Date and Time: Thursday, July 22, 2021
 6:00 p.m.
 11 Place: Bucyrus Public Libnrary
 12 200 East Mansfield Street
 13 Bucyrus, Ohio
 14 Reporter: Marie B. Fresch RPR RMR CRC
 15 Registered Merit Reporter
 Notary Public, State of Ohio

16 APPEARANCES:

17 ON BEHALF OF SYCAMORE CREEK SOLAR, LLC:

18 Ms. Anna Sanyal
 19 Vorys Sater Seymour and Pease LLP
 20 52 East Gay Street
 Columbus, Ohio 43216-1008

21 ON BEHALF OF THE CRAWFORD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
 22 AND THE CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES:

23 Mr. Anthony E. Core
 24 Squire Patton Boggs LLP
 2000 Huntington Center
 25 41 South High Street
 Columbus, Ohio 43215

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1 MS. SCHABO: The Ohio Power
2 Siting Board has assigned for public hearing at this
3 time and place, Case Number 20-1762 EL-BGN, which is
4 captioned In the Matter of the Application of Sycamore
5 Creek Solar, LLC for a Certificate of Environmental
6 Compatibility and Public Need.

7 My name is Patricia Schabo and I am the
8 Administrative Law Judge with the Board's Legal
9 Department who has been assigned to conduct our hearing.

10 We also have some individuals here from our Office
11 of Public Affairs. You probably chatted with them on
12 your way in. If you have questions this evening about
13 the Board's processes, if you have questions about the
14 hearing this evening, or if you need help with questions
15 such as accessing documents from our docket, Miss Kocher
16 and Miss Perry can help you this evening.

17 If you have any specific questions about the
18 project itself, please direct those inquiries to
19 representatives of Sycamore Creek, who are also here.

20 At this time, I will take appearances of counsel.
21 On behalf of the Applicant?

22 MS. SANYAL: Your Honor, I
23 will attempt to project from here. Anna Sanyal on
24 behalf of the Applicant, Sycamore Creek Solar LLC, with
25 the Vorys Law Firm, 52 East Gay Street, Columbus Ohio,

1 43215. Thank you.

2 MS. SCHABO: Thank you.

3 Are there any other parties present this evening
4 that would like to make an appearance at this time?

5 MR. CORE: My name is
6 Anthony E. Core, representing both Crawford County
7 Commissioners and Cranberry Township Trustees, with the
8 law firm Squire Patton Boggs.

9 Commissioners are here, I'm not sure about
10 Trustees, but it's not my or their intention to speak
11 tonight, but just to listen.

12 MS. SCHABO: All right. Just
13 so you do know, you do have the opportunity as counsel,
14 if you need to or want to ask a clarifying question of
15 any of the witnesses, you will have that opportunity to
16 do so. I often forget to offer it up, but if you do
17 have something, just catch my attention some way.

18 Anyone here with the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation?

19 Okay. That is another intervener in the case.

20 Anybody here for staff of the Board? No. Okay.

21 All right. So the subject of tonight's public
22 hearing is an application that was filed with the Board
23 on February 12th, 2021, by Sycamore Creek Solar LLC,
24 which you'll also hear me refer to as the Applicant or
25 simply Sycamore Creek.

1 With its application, the Applicant seeks the
2 Board's approval of its plan to construct, maintain, and
3 operate an up to 117 megawatt solar-powered electric
4 generation facility here in Cranberry Township, Crawford
5 County, Ohio.

6 Are we still in Cranberry Township?

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: No.

8 MS. SCHABO: No. Not here in
9 Cranberry Township, but still here in Crawford County,
10 Ohio?

11 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Still Crawford
12 County.

13 MS. SCHABO: What township
14 are we in?

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: City of Bucyrus.

16 MS. SCHABO: All right.

17 Thank you.

18 The Board Staff filed its Report of Investigation
19 on July the 7th, 2021. This staff report is a
20 recommendation, but does not necessarily reflect what
21 the Board's ultimate decision in this case will be.

22 The purpose of this evening's public hearing is to
23 receive testimony regarding the application from people
24 in the local community who are affected by the proposed
25 project, but who are not parties to the case.

1 Tonight's hearing is not a question and answer
2 session, but rather an opportunity to let the Board know
3 what you think about the proposal of the facility. As I
4 said earlier, if you have questions about the project,
5 specific to the project, please take this opportunity to
6 talk to one of the Applicant's representative that are
7 here this evening.

8 Tonight's local public hearing is only one aspect
9 of the process in this case. An evidentiary hearing is
10 also scheduled for August 5th, 2021. The Board office
11 is in Columbus. The purpose of the evidentiary hearing
12 is for the parties and the Board's Staff to provide
13 testimony and other evidence regarding the proposed
14 facility.

15 I will note, however, that as of today, July 22nd,
16 we did issue an order that granted a joint motion by all
17 of the parties to call and continue that hearing. So,
18 what will happen is on August 5th, we'll open the
19 record, I'll take the appearance of counsel like I did
20 earlier this evening, and then we'll adjourn or take a
21 break until August 25th, 2021. We will then reconvene
22 again at the Office of the Commission, and on August
23 25th, we will start to take evidence.

24 If you have any questions about that, flag me down
25 at the end of evening and I will answer to the best of

1 my ability.

2 Tonight's hearing is being transcribed by a court
3 reporter. She is the most important person in the room.
4 As you testify, please speak clearly so that the court
5 reporter can accurately reflect your comments on the
6 record. Any testimony given will be incorporated into
7 the official record of the case, and it will be reviewed
8 and considered by the Board in making its final
9 determination on the application.

10 If you've prepared a written statement from which
11 you are making your testimony, and you happen to have an
12 extra copy, you can provide that to the court reporter.
13 It will not be an exhibit to the record or anything like
14 that, but she can use it to cross check what you said to
15 ensure the accuracy of the statement when it's
16 transcribed.

17 After we finish with this introduction, I will
18 begin by calling witnesses forward in the order the
19 names are listed. We currently have six. Each person
20 will be permitted to speak once about the proposed
21 facility.

22 Before you present your testimony, I'll ask that
23 you give me a second so I can swear you in or so I can
24 take your oath or affirmation about what you're about to
25 say is true.

1 I will also ask you to start your comments by
2 stating and spelling your name for the record, by
3 providing your address, including your township, and
4 letting me know if you live or work in the project area.

5 Again, if you're on a spiel, the big important
6 thing is that I get you sworn in. We can get the other
7 information from you at the end with those clarifying
8 questions.

9 Should you decide that you do not want to testify
10 when I call your name, you can pass to the next witness;
11 not a problem. At the end of the list, I will revisit
12 it; and if you've passed, I'll give you another
13 opportunity.

14 If you've not signed up, but you decided that you
15 would like to make a statement, I will give you the
16 opportunity to make the statement at that time. Your
17 input is really important to us.

18 If you decide that you would prefer to file a
19 written statement or written comments in the case
20 docket, the ladies from the Office of Public Affairs can
21 answer your questions about how to do that. Also once
22 you finish testifying or if you were just here to
23 observe, you can leave at any time you wish.

24 As I said, we appreciate your participation in
25 tonight's hearing and we want to make sure that everyone

1 who gets, everyone who wishes to testify is given that
2 opportunity, so don't be shy.

3 So, at this time, I will begin calling witnesses.
4 Be patient with me, with handwriting and names and
5 knowing I'm doing my best. My last name gets
6 mispronounced a lot, so I do my best.

7 Our first witness I believe is David Harrer.

8 THE WITNESS: Do I just come
9 up?

10 MS. SCHABO: Yes, sir, please
11 do.

12 MS. KOCHER: I just want to
13 offer anybody, there is a whole front row, if you're
14 having trouble hearing in the back, you can feel free to
15 move up at this time if you would like to.

16 MS. SCHABO: No one wants to
17 sit in the front row ever; like a rule.

18 MS. KOCHER: I thought I
19 would offer it.

20 MS. SCHABO: All right. How
21 close was I?

22 THE WITNESS: It's Harrer.

23 MS. SCHABO: Harrer, okay.
24 That was an R. See, I tried. Mr. Harrer, would you
25 raise your right hand for me.

1 DAVID HARRER
2 Being first duly sworn, testified as follows:
3 MS. SCHABO: Thank you.
4 Please state your name and spell your name and address
5 for the record.
6 THE WITNESS: It's David
7 Harrer, H A R R E R. My address is 213 Gates Entry, two
8 words, in Peach Tree City, Georgia, zip code, 30269.
9 MS. SCHABO: Okay.
10 THE WITNESS: What else did
11 you need?
12 MS. SCHABO: What township
13 you live in, but I'm guessing that's not relevant if
14 you're from Georgia.
15 THE WITNESS: It's Peach Tree
16 City, it's not a township.
17 MS. SCHABO: Whether you work
18 or reside in the township area.
19 THE WITNESS: I do not work or
20 live in the particular area, but I'll talk about my
21 relevance in a minute.
22 MS. SCHABO: Okay.
23 Thank you. Welcome to the front row.
24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: We can hear
25 better.

1 MS. SCHABO: You can.

2 All right. Well, thank you, Mr. Harrer. You may
3 proceed with your testimony.

4 THE WITNESS: Okay. Well, I
5 just want to say thank you for allowing me to come and
6 speak. And I'm not quite certain that I really know all
7 the ins and outs of OPSB types of issues and things that
8 are going to go on, but my paradigm coming here tonight
9 was it's likely that there is going to be some people
10 who are going to be opposed to the project, so I wanted
11 to come and express my feelings. I am in favor of the
12 project. So, I wanted to explain kind of why I am
13 personally in favor and why that might matter to the
14 Board.

15 So I was born and raised in Crawford County. And
16 my, part of my property is going to be utilized for the
17 project. And so, I just wanted to be, like I said, have
18 a chance to come here and talk a little bit.

19 My dad basically operated the farm from a long time
20 ago. And he was, he was a guy who wanted to make the
21 farm operate as efficiently as possible. He spent a lot
22 of time clearing out old trees and brush and stuff,
23 trying to improve the productivity of the farm.

24 And he was also a bit of a backyard inventor. And
25 he had several patents on different types of devices

1 that kind of improved the efficiency of the farm. And
2 just kind of evidence of the process there where he was
3 kind of a forward thinker, he was one of the only guys
4 around the area that refused to operate a diesel tractor
5 because he didn't like the emissions that came out of
6 the diesel tractor.

7 So, he had a tractor that ran on propane, which was
8 quite advanced thinking compared to kind of where we are
9 today where you see busses and trains and lots of things
10 running on LNG because of the emissions. So he was kind
11 of forward thinking in his thinking there about how do
12 we make our environment kind of clean.

13 And so, I'm quite certain that if he was still
14 alive, that he would be in favor of using his farm to
15 put on some solar panels to try to improve the
16 environment by providing clean energy, providing perhaps
17 some jobs for the area, some badly needed jobs for the
18 area, providing some tax revenue for the area, trying to
19 help with the schools and with kind of essential
20 services. I'm quite certain that he would be very happy
21 with the opportunity to use his farm as a solar
22 provider.

23 And so, the whole issue of property rights to me is
24 kind of important. That's another thing I wanted to
25 talk about a little bit tonight. Again, thinking there

1 may be some people that are opposed to the overall
2 property, or project, I just wanted to kind of remind
3 the Board that when you live in the country, kind of
4 where these, this project is going to be built, one of
5 the advantages of living in the country is you don't
6 have HOA type of issues, Homeowner Association issues.

7 Where I live in Peach Tree City in Georgia, we have
8 an HOA. And I'm not allowed, for example, to put a shed
9 in my backyard. I'm just not allowed to do that. It's
10 in the covenants. It's a covenant that's a document
11 that's about a hundred pages long and that's something
12 that's specified in there. I just can't do it. I also
13 can't make any changes to the outside of my house if I
14 want to without getting a board approval.

15 Well, one of the things about living in an area
16 where our farm is located, is we don't have HOAs. And
17 so, I feel like as a landowner, I really should have the
18 right to do what I want to do with my property and not
19 be subject to somebody else's wishes or desires.

20 So, I just wanted to bring that point up to the
21 Board, one of the things I was thinking about when I
22 thought about property rights.

23 Somebody might say, well, I don't really want to
24 have a solar power plant kind of in my area, but me as a
25 farmer, I could theoretically take my farm and decide

1 that I wanted to raise hogs or chickens or something
2 that's going to create a lot of noise and a lot of maybe
3 offensive odors. And really no one would have any
4 ability to say, oh, I can or cannot do that, because
5 that's just what I can do with my farm.

6 But it seems like with this solar power plant
7 issue, that perhaps there is other people that might
8 have the ability to say yes or no on whether or not it
9 would be okay for this project to go forward.

10 Another way to look at that as I look, thought
11 about this is, I could perhaps as a farmer decide I want
12 to put an array of panels on my farm to provide power
13 for my local farm operations. As long as I'm off grid,
14 I don't think I would have to have, in this particular
15 area anyway, I don't think I would have to have
16 anybody's approval to do that. So, I just wanted to
17 point those things out to the Board.

18 Another thing as I was doing some research on this,
19 I did find a study, a couple studies actually that were
20 done in Illinois, Indiana, North Carolina and Tennessee
21 in 2016 through 2019, that showed that property values
22 have not generally been negatively impacted when a solar
23 project kind of came into an area. So, there is some
24 data that talks about that.

25 Another thing I wanted to say is I think this

1 project is going to be good for the State of Ohio, and
2 the local community. I know I just saw recently Apple
3 just came out with an announcement. I'm just going to
4 read something that they publicly put out.

5 They said that they were going to, or that they had
6 commitments from over 70 suppliers to use 100 percent
7 renewable energy for Apple production, which is the
8 equivalent to nearly 8 gigawatts in commitments to power
9 and manufacturing of its products. Once completed,
10 these commitments will avoid over 14.3 million metric
11 tons of CO2, and that's the equivalent of taking more
12 than 3 million cars off the road. So, end of quote.

13 The result of that is that power from things like
14 these, this photovoltaic project that we're
15 contemplating for Sycamore Creek is going to be in high
16 demand. And lots of companies are doing what Apple is
17 doing. And I think we need more of these type of
18 projects to fill the need, so we as a country can become
19 more carbon neutral, which seems to be a general goal
20 for the country.

21 It's also going to help the State of Ohio achieve
22 it's 2006 renewable portfolio standard which is 8.5%.
23 And these kind of projects again are needed in order for
24 Ohio to be able to meet that goal that they've
25 established.

1 So, we are first approached in 19, or sorry, in
2 2017 by a company called First Solar, and they expressed
3 interest in using our farm as part of a project. And
4 I'm a licensed Professional Engineer with 35 years
5 experience at Caterpillar. And my most recent role
6 before I retired was Director of their Product Support
7 Department for the Electric Power Division of Electric
8 Power. It's a four billion dollar portion of
9 Caterpillar's business.

10 And in that business, I saw a lot of solar
11 projects. We actually sold solar power type projects,
12 and I seen a lot of those type of projects built. And
13 so I was very comfortable working with First Solar.

14 So when we first signed up our agreement, it was
15 with First Solar, and that was like a no-brainer for me.
16 And I just also want to say to the Board, First Solar
17 obviously sold their rights to the project to National
18 Grid Renewables and that's who we've been working with
19 now. And I've had, most of my interaction has been with
20 those guys. And I just have to say they've acted in
21 every respect in my opinion very professional.

22 They seem to be very serious about the project. I
23 think they have a lot of intelligence, a lot of
24 experience in this area. And I have personally no doubt
25 that they're going to be able to execute this project in

1 accordance with their drawings and their designs. And I
2 think it's going to be a very high quality project. I
3 have no doubt that they'll operate it very effectively.
4 And so I just wanted to put that part out there.

5 So, that's really the comments that I had. I just
6 wanted to say again to the Board, thank you for giving
7 me the opportunity to express my opinions. Again, my
8 basic premise for coming here was I wanted you all to
9 understand I feel very strongly about personal property
10 rights and we should be able to do what we want with our
11 property and not have to worry about what other people
12 say about that. So, that's it.

13 MS. SCHABO: Thank you.

14 Does anyone have, either of the attorneys have
15 questions for the witness? No. Okay.

16 Thank you so much, Mr. Harrer.

17 It's like a pop quiz. Don Phenicie.

18 THE WITNESS: Phenicie.

19 MS. SCHABO: Close.

20 All right, Mr. Phenicie. If you would raise your
21 right hand.

22 DONALD PHENICIE

23 Being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

24 MS. SCHABO: Thank you.

25 Please state and spell your name and address for the

1 record.

2 THE WITNESS: Donald Phenicie,
3 P H E N I C I E. 5661 Stevens Road, New Washington,
4 Ohio, 44854.

5 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. And
6 New Washington, is that Cranberry Township?

7 THE WITNESS: Yes, that's
8 Cranberry Township.

9 MS. SCHABO: Do you work or
10 reside in the project area?

11 THE WITNESS: Yes, I do.

12 MS. SCHABO: Thank you very
13 much. You may proceed.

14 THE WITNESS: Okay. I guess
15 there is a lot of questions. Why did they pick that
16 area to go to? I just like, I farmed all my life and I
17 lived on, not one of the farms that's in the project,
18 but right by it. We farmed around these high
19 transmission towers all my life. They went through
20 there. They've been a nuisance.

21 Now, and that's what attracted the solar people to
22 come there, because they need someplace to transport
23 that electricity without -- that's why they're not going
24 elsewhere; the power lines are there.

25 So, now is a time for us to kind of get rewarded

1 for all the years that we put up with them. We get no
2 revenue off them, but yet we have to farm around them.
3 They've been a nuisance all of our life. And they say,
4 why did your forefathers let them go through there?

5 Well, if you do a little research, a lot of them
6 signed up for those towers because they wanted to help
7 develop the people on farther west. So now, the solar
8 people are going to give us a reward to sign our acreage
9 in for that.

10 So I feel it's just a good opportunity for the
11 farmers that want to. They're not forcing us; it's kind
12 of voluntarily. But it's just part of life. It's
13 freedom. They're not going to be abusing the land
14 because they'll have cover underneath it so there won't
15 be any more, actually there should be less erosion than
16 what we have now, because of the grass underneath it or
17 the -- and they won't let noxious weeds grow in it
18 because that's part of their contract.

19 So I feel they'll be good stewards to the soil,
20 environment. Not only the energy they produce, but
21 while they're keeping the grass and everything under
22 control underneath it.

23 And, for the county commissioners, the schools,
24 what will this do to our schools tax-wise? Anybody
25 that's opposed to them, I would like to say, are you

1 ready to vote for another tax levy to help fund these,
2 and the county vice versa, they need money for other
3 sources. So it's a good opportunity to increase your
4 tax valuation.

5 So, I really don't see where the negative is coming
6 from, if you look at the big picture. And they can say
7 about production. Is there anybody here that's
8 undernourished because we're going to be taking acreage
9 out of production? There is still plenty of production.
10 And farmers have showed that in the past, that if the
11 demand is there, they will do their best to produce.

12 So, I just thank you for the opportunity; and
13 hopefully you will go along with what they've been
14 proposing. Like David said, I think they will be good
15 stewards and good for the community.

16 MS. SCHABO: Well, thank you
17 for your comments.

18 I don't see any questions.

19 I will say I'm not on the Board, so I don't get to
20 make the final decision, but I do get to pass the
21 information along.

22 Charles Stockmaster.

23 Mr. Stockmaster, if you would raise your right
24 hand.

25 CHARLES STOCKMASTER

1 Being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

2 MS. SCHABO: Thank you. If
3 you would state and spell your name and address for the
4 record.

5 THE WITNESS: Charles
6 Stockmaster, C H A R L E S, S T O C K M A S T E R.
7 Address, 6049 Swabb, S W A B B, Road, New Washington,
8 Ohio.

9 MS. SCHABO: So, that is in
10 Cranberry Township, correct?

11 THE WITNESS: Yes.

12 MS. SCHABO: Do you work or
13 reside in the project area?

14 THE WITNESS: Yes.

15 MS. SCHABO: Thank you very
16 much, sir. And your testimony, please proceed.

17 THE WITNESS: I live on the
18 corner of Heetrich, H E E T R I C H, Road and Swabb, and
19 it is next to the Harrer farm. The Harrer farm is back
20 of me, however you want to say, he could say I'm back of
21 him.

22 But that being said, it is a farming community.
23 And if you look at Mr. Harrer, he doesn't even live
24 around here. If you look at Mr. Phenicie, he lives
25 three miles from there. They don't have to sit there

1 and look at the panels. The panels are going to be
2 there and it's going to be there for the rest of my
3 life.

4 I'm not in favor of it. That being said, I guess
5 that's all I can say on that part.

6 But I got drainage going that way. We got a
7 surface ditch which has to be maintained and we got a
8 12-inch tile that goes across both of those properties
9 down to Heetrich Road where the Red Run crosses Heetrich
10 Road. And that tile needs to be preserved and have
11 access to it to repair it. And the ditch on the Harrer
12 property as well as the Phenicie property needs to be
13 accessible for maintenance.

14 I guess that's about all I really have to say.

15 MS. SCHABO: All right.

16 Thank you.

17 THE WITNESS: Yep.

18 MS. SCHABO: No questions.

19 Brent McCarty.

20 Mr. McCarty?

21 THE WITNESS: Yep.

22 MS. SCHABO: Will you raise
23 your right hand for me.

24 BRENT McCARTY

25 Being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

1 MS. SCHABO: Thank you very
2 much. Please state and spell your name and address for
3 the record.

4 THE WITNESS: Brent McCarty,
5 M C C A R T Y, 1188 Dublin Road, Columbus, 43215.

6 MS. SCHABO: I know you don't
7 live in the township. Do you work or reside in the
8 project area?

9 THE WITNESS: I do work in the
10 area.

11 MS. SCHABO: Okay. Please
12 proceed with your testimony.

13 THE WITNESS: On behalf of the
14 Operating Engineers Union Local 18, I am here in support
15 for the approval of the Sycamore Creek Solar Project.
16 The Operating Engineers are the individuals who operate
17 heavy equipment such as bulldozers, excavators, and
18 backhoes and so on. The roads and bridges you drive on
19 were more than likely built by the members of Local 18
20 with their fellow union tradesmen and women.

21 Although we do not have an agreement signed with
22 the developers of this project to perform the work, we
23 believe our local signatory contractors will secure this
24 work, thus providing our members with numerous
25 employment opportunities, in turn higher paying wages,

1 healthcare benefits, apprenticeship programs continue to
2 grow because of the solar industry.

3 We encourage the Ohio Power Siting Board to support
4 the jobs of the men and women of Local 18 by approving
5 the Sycamore Creek Solar Project. That was it.

6 MS. SCHABO: Thank you very
7 much.

8 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.

9 MS. SCHABO: No questions.

10 Carl Neutzling.

11 THE WITNESS: We give you
12 tough names to pronounce, don't we?

13 MS. SCHABO: All right. So I
14 must have come close.

15 THE WITNESS: You were close.

16 MS. SCHABO: All right.
17 Well, if you would raise your right hand for me.

18 CARL NEUTZLING

19 Being first duly sworn, was examined and testified as
20 follows:

21 MS. SCHABO: Could you state
22 and spell your name for the record.

23 THE WITNESS: My name is Carl
24 Neutzling, N E U T Z L I N G. I reside at 2850 Alta,
25 A L T A, West Road, Mansfield, Ohio, 44903.

1 I represent the construction electricians that work
2 in Crawford County.

3 MS. SCHABO: All right.
4 Please proceed with your testimony.

5 THE WITNESS: Well, I'm a long
6 time member of the International Brotherhood of
7 Electrical Workers Local 688 in Mansfield. Over my
8 years of employment, I have worked many places in and
9 around Crawford County. I have watched the transition
10 from coal generation to lower or no carbon emissions
11 such as solar. Our rural area with the vast farmland is
12 particularly suited to be a great area for this project.

13 I speak in complete support of the job to Sycamore
14 Creek Solar Project will provide. These direct jobs
15 will have lasting impact on our area. I know that the
16 IBEW stands ready to provide workers necessary to
17 complete the project in a safe timely manner.

18 The IBEW has well-established training programs to
19 ensure this happens. It is also our intention that if
20 given the opportunity, these jobs will become lifelong
21 careers in the electrical construction industry. Good
22 paying, steady jobs with benefits. Jobs that this
23 entire area is in need of.

24 Thank you for your time this evening. I look
25 forward to working with Ohio Power Siting Board

1 providing any information that might ensure this project
2 moves forward.

3 MS. SCHABO: Thank you very
4 much Mr. Neutzling.

5 Any questions?

6 Thank you. You may be seated.

7 Dennis Auck.

8 MR. AUCK: That's me, Your
9 Honor. I'm here, I'm a Cranberry Township Trustee. I
10 just must have signed the wrong paper.

11 MS. SCHABO: Well, welcome.
12 Thank you for joining us this evening.

13 So, that completes the list of folks that did sign
14 in to testify; however, if you're in the room and you
15 live in the area, you work in the area, if you have
16 feelings about the project, for the project, against the
17 project, now is your time to let us know how you feel.

18 So, ooh, I have a taker.

19 It's going to be real important, I can't even try,
20 so I have to have you say your name and then state it,
21 spell it, and then I'll swear you in.

22 THE WITNESS: Your Honor, it's
23 Jeremy Welch, J E R E M Y, W E L C H.

24 MS. SCHABO: Hiding the easy
25 ones; aren't you? Mr. Welch, if you would raise your

1 right hand.

2 JEREMY WELCH

3 being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

4 MS. SCHABO: Thank you very
5 much. Proceed.

6 THE WITNESS: So, I live at
7 3331 East Augusta Drive Northwest, McConnelsville, Ohio.
8 43756.

9 I'm a business rep with the Carpenters Union. We
10 have over 18,000 members who live here in Ohio. I did a
11 quick search just before the meeting started. We have
12 271 members that live here in this county.

13 I want to give a little insight of what this
14 project would mean to me personally. I grew up and I
15 lived in a small rural community in Southeastern Ohio
16 that is very economically distressed. Haven't been very
17 good jobs there for as long as I can remember, as long
18 as my parents can remember.

19 When I became a Business Rep, I spoke to a lot of
20 parents and grandparents in that area, and they wanted
21 to know how they could get their kids and their
22 grandkids into a union so they could get livable wages
23 and decent benefits without having to travel.

24 The thing was, they had to use contractors that
25 would pay that, you know. A lot of my members have to

1 travel to Columbus to find that kind of work, to find
2 that kind of life. Again, 271 members live here in this
3 county. That's a lot of jobs for people that don't have
4 to travel. That means you get to see your kids, your
5 grandkids more often.

6 That's just with the Carpenters Union. We heard
7 from the Operating Engineers Union and the IBEW. They
8 have workers here also who want to work here. I think
9 everybody wants to see their kids and grandkids more
10 often. So, this is a great opportunity for them.

11 I'd also implore the County Commissioners, check
12 into the pilot program. You guys are worried about your
13 tax money. That's a good opportunity to keep those tax
14 dollars here in this community. So, that is directly
15 contingent on the County Commissioners.

16 So, that's pretty much all I have to say, but we
17 have 18,000 members that are in favor of this project,
18 and all of these projects across Ohio. Thanks.

19 MS. SCHABO: Thank you.

20 All right. Is there anyone else that would like to
21 make comments or provide testimony for our record?

22 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can I reply to
23 Charlie Stockmaster's comments?

24 MS. SCHABO: We only allow
25 one testimony at a time, or per hearing, so I can't let

1 you come back up and testify, but we can have a
2 conversation after we're off the record.

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Well, he has a
4 very good point on the tile and drainage and we're very
5 concerned about that as putting our properties in,
6 because if they don't maintain them tile, they're going
7 to really have a hard time servicing them on the
8 properties they have in them. So they are aware that
9 there is a drainage problem, or drainage needs to be
10 maintained.

11 MS. SCHABO: All right. So
12 we have a point of consensus, which is also good. Thank
13 you.

14 Ma'am?

15 MS. WEATHERBIE: Can I speak?

16 MS. SCHABO: You may. Please
17 come on up. And again, I'm going to have to ask that
18 you provide your name and address.

19 THE WITNESS: Laura
20 Weatherbie, W E A T H E R B I E, 5113, Chatfield,
21 C H A T F I E L D, Center Road, New Washington, Ohio,
22 44854. And that is Cranberry Township and I live
23 directly across from where the proposed site of that.

24 MS. SCHABO: Okay. Thank
25 you. Raise your right hand.

1 LAURA WEATHERBIE

2 being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

3 MS. SCHABO: Thank you very
4 much. Please, Ms. Weatherbie.

5 THE WITNESS: I would like to
6 say I'm against the project. I moved out of the big
7 city with the HOAs and that type of environment where
8 people are on top of you to the country. Built my dream
9 house three years ago, to look across to my family's
10 farm. That was sold several years ago when my
11 grandfather passed away. And I bought that land to live
12 at that land to look out into the country, not to see
13 how many acres of solar fields across.

14 So, yes, there is revenue that's coming into the
15 people who own the land, but the people who own the land
16 do not have to look at that field every single day of
17 their life from here to, it will be here when I'm gone
18 if it goes through.

19 So that is not what I signed up for when I moved to
20 the country and I'm against this project.

21 MS. SCHABO: Okay. Thank you
22 for your statement.

23 Okay. Anthony Rogers? Come on up.

24 THE WITNESS: Hi, my name is
25 Anthony Rogers. I showed up for support. I am a UEW --

1 MS. SCHABO: Hold up, turn
2 around. Raise your right hand. As long as the court
3 reporter can hear you, you can stand where you wish, but
4 first I must swear you in.

5 THE WITNESS: Okay.

6 ANTHONY ROGERS
7 being first duly sworn, testified as follows:

8 MS. SCHABO: All right.
9 Could you please state and spell your name and address
10 for the record?

11 THE WITNESS: My name is
12 Anthony Rogers, A N T H O N Y, R O G E R S. My address
13 is 4828 County Road 29, Galion, 44833.

14 MS. SCHABO: All right. Is
15 that, is that in Cranberry Township?

16 THE WITNESS: That's actually
17 in -- I just moved there. I don't know the Township.

18 MS. SCHABO: Okay. That's
19 fine.

20 THE WITNESS: It's in Galion,
21 Ohio.

22 MS. SCHABO: All right. And
23 do you live or work in the project area?

24 THE WITNESS: I live in
25 Galion, and I work in Columbus.

1 MS. SCHABO: Okay. Feel free
2 to provide your testimony.

3 THE WITNESS: I just came here
4 for support for the solar.

5 MS. SCHABO: You got to make
6 sure that our court reporter can hear you.

7 THE WITNESS: I just came for
8 the support.

9 MS. SCHABO: All right.

10 THE WITNESS: Okay.

11 MS. SCHABO: Perfect.

12 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

13 MS. SCHABO: All right. I've
14 got a hand in the back.

15 All right. Okay. Again, if you would state and
16 spell your name.

17 MS. GIBSON: Mike Gibson,
18 G I B S O N.

19 MS. SCHABO: And your
20 address, and just let me know if you are in Cranberry
21 Township or you work or reside in the township.

22 THE WITNESS: 5464 State Route
23 16, Deshler, Ohio, 43516 and I directly represent the
24 200 plus carpenters, millwrights, and pile driver
25 members that live in the area.

1 MS. SCHABO: Okay.

2 THE WITNESS: I'm the Senior
3 Representative for the carpenters of these 19 northwest
4 counties.

5 And I come from a very small rural area similar to
6 this. My town maybe that is 1200 people. The high
7 school I graduated is 68 people. And I spent a lot of
8 time baling, cleaning stalls, detassling corn, much like
9 some people in this area did. But a lot of that work
10 dried up. Machinery, a lot of manufacturing plants shut
11 down. And again we're left with a gigantic rural
12 community with no jobs, and not everybody farms.

13 A lot of the farmers in the area have put up their
14 own solar fields and solar arrays. Down the lane
15 they've cleared fence rows and cleared whole fields and
16 put up their own. So, it's, it does generate revenue.

17 When they go through a grid company, it helps the
18 schools because everybody gets tired of voting every
19 year for another operating levy, another service levy,
20 another sports levy. This will help relax that so it
21 doesn't happen so much.

22 But again, there are farmers in other areas putting
23 up their own solar arrays to help their own farm
24 operations, and it seems like a pretty good idea when
25 you have the open area and landowners that are using,

1 willing to utilize land to do it.

2 So, that's all I have to say.

3 MS. SCHABO: All right.

4 Thank you very much.

5 Mr. Gibson, could you come back up? We're going to
6 do this in reverse order.

7 Do you swear or affirm that everything you just
8 said was the truth?

9 THE WITNESS: I do.

10 MS. SCHABO: Thank you.

11 All right. I don't have any more names. Do I have
12 any more hands?

13 Okay, seeing no one, I would like to thank
14 everybody for coming here this evening. If you have
15 questions about the project, please talk to the
16 representatives from Sycamore Creek.

17 If you have questions about our process, about Ohio
18 Power Siting Board, corner me or one of the ladies out
19 in the hall and we will do our best to answer those
20 questions.

21 I would like to thank Bucyrus Public Library. It's
22 gorgeous and they accommodated us this evening, and I
23 appreciate that.

24 That concludes this evening's public hearing. It
25 will be, the whole transcript will be submitted to the

1 Board for their consideration, as they make a
2 determination on Sycamore Creek's application.

3 Again, we can't thank you enough for your
4 participation. Have a great evening, and we're
5 adjourned.

6 (Off the record).

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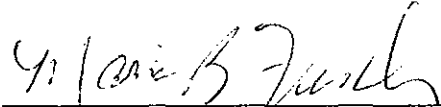
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Marie B. Fresch, Registered Merit Reporter, and Notary Public in and for the State of Ohio, duly commissioned and qualified, do hereby certify that the witnesses were duly sworn prior to the taking of testimony, that the testimony of said witnesses was taken by me in machine shorthand and was thereafter reduced to typewritten form by me and that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the testimony so given by the witnesses and that this public hearing was taken at the time and place specified in the foregoing caption.

I further certify that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this proceeding was taken; and, further, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially interested, or otherwise, in the outcome of this action; and that I have no contract with the parties, attorneys, or persons with an interest in the action, as defined in Civil Rule 28(D).

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal of office at Norwalk, Ohio, on the 25th day of July, 2021.


MARIE B. FRESCH, RPR RMR CRC
Notary Public, State of Ohio
My Commission expires: 10-9-2023

Ohio

Power Siting Board

Public Hearing

Case number

PLEASE SIGN-IN ONLY IF YOU WISH TO PROVIDE TESTIMONY

Hearing Date:

Name (Please Print)

Address

1. David Harrex HARRIS

213 Gates Entry Peachtree City GA 30269

2. Don Phenicie

5661 Stevens Rd
New Washington OH 44854

3. CHARLES STOCKMASTER

6049 SW ABB RD
New Washington OH 44854

4. Brent McCarby

1188 Dublin Rd
Columbus OH 43235

5. Carl Neutzling

2850 Alta West Rd
Newfield OH 44803

6. Denis Auck

5802 Vanden Rd
New Washington OH 44854

7.

8.

9.

10.

Ohio

Power Siting Board

Public Hearing

Case number

PLEASE SIGN-IN ONLY IF YOU WISH TO PROVIDE TESTIMONY

Hearing Date:

Name (Please Print)

Address

11.

Anthony Rogers

4828 County Rd 29 44833

12.

13.

Mike Gibson

14.

15.

Laura Wathorby (?)

16.

17.

Jeremy Welch (?)

18.

19.

20.



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