

**From:** [Puco ContactOPSB](#)  
**To:** [Puco Docketing](#)  
**Subject:** comment for 21-0036-EL-BGN  
**Date:** Monday, March 8, 2021 10:16:51 AM

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Regarding: 21-0036-EL-BGN

To Whom it May Concern:

Our names are Chris and Amanda Baumgartner. We have lived in our home since 2015. We received a letter that a solar project is being proposed in our neighborhood. With the proposed plan map it shows that our property will be surrounded by the project by three sides of our property. We have many concerns with this project being proposed. We reached out to the project manager and attended the public meeting. Even with participating we still have major concerns that are not being looked at.

Our road Marion Williamsport Road is a very busy road. This part of the road was constructed in order to allow factory traffic to bypass going through the city. There are major corporations that use this by pass. Whirlpool, POET Biorefining, and many other plants that are in the industrial area on Kellogg Parkway. As a result this is a high traffic area. Adding to the industrial traffic, the NS Railroad is at the end of our road. This causes major back ups on the road. Nearly every day there is a back up on our road from Main Street all the way to Kellogg Parkway. We are very concerned with adding construction traffic for the building of this solar farm. We have asked the project team about this issue. We were told they will be doing a construction route investigation. We feel this is something that should have been looked at before deciding on a project area.

Another concern that we have is the visual aspect that will disrupt the area. When presented the project team explained it has little visual disruptions. Even showing pictures of how minimally you could see the panels. However, when asked what time of day the pictures were taken in the public meeting, we were told at around noon. Therefore the panels would be flat. When asked if there were pictures of the panels at their fullest height, there were none given at the meeting. We feel that presents distrust in the project. By telling people it will be minimal, visual disruption is not true. We have included photos to show what we will be losing with this project. Along with that we find out at the meeting that there will be a 6-7 foot fence put up around the project. Along with barbed wire. Again we are not sure how that will not visually disrupt our area. In this area we have a beautiful wildlife area. Our concern is with what happens to the animals in this area. When asked this in the meeting we were told that the fence would be animal friendly. How does that work with allowing animals such as deer to come and go, but also keep people out?

We understand that our property neighbors are free to do what they like with their property, however, it is zoned as agriculture. We do not see how constructing large structures for acres and acres is still agriculture. We were told in the meeting there is a good neighbor program with this project, however, no one has reached out to us personally. We received a letter in the mail and we had to contact the project manager in order to have our questions and concerns heard.

We understand this project is in the early stages, however, we have major concerns for this project. We have spoken with many neighbors in the area and they are concerned as well. For the

sake of our neighbors and ourselves, we ask that we have in person meetings. We know another project in our area held a public, in person meeting during this year. It is important for people to be heard. When we were using the virtual platform for the last meeting, we had difficulty with connecting to the meeting. We had to use our computer and our phone in order to be present. Plus we are people who use virtual meetings weekly for work. We have concerns for others in our community that would not be able to be in a virtual meeting. We feel that in person public meetings are important and need to happen in this case.

The following questions are recent questions that were brought up by a group of neighbors. We are awaiting a response to these questions. I sent questions on February 22. They let me know they have been busy, but could give me a call to discuss. I asked for the answers in writing because I was sharing them with others in the area that were concerned. On March 1 the project manager said she would try to get back to me this week with answers.

\* Do the fire departments need special training in case of fires with the panels? Also is there a certain distance away that a fire department needs to be to the solar farm?

\* Are there government subsidies that are being given for this project? Along with that would there be tax abatements from the local government?

Thank you for your time. We hope that our concerns are looked at when deciding if this is the best place for this project.

Chris and Amanda Baumgartner

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Summary: Public Comment Public Comment of Chris and Amanda Baumgartner, via website electronically filed by Docketing Staff on behalf of Docketing